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Canning Fish

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Missouri lakes, rivers, and streams are a source of fine fresh water fish.

Fish are a very perishable product. If possible, keep them alive until ready to dress. Use fish or preserve them as quickly as possible after they are caught. Avoid bruising or exposure to wind or sun as spoilage starts early and progresses rapidly. Keep dead fish in a water-proof container on ice rather than in ice water. Water causes dead fish to become soggy.

Preparation

Kill fish with a knife and let the blood run out. Bleeding is best done by sticking the fish in the back of the head. Immediate bleeding delays spoilage and makes them look and taste better.

Clean and scale at once. Wet fish are easier to scale than dry fish. Fish may be scaled more easily if dipped quickly in boiling water. Wash. Remove entrails. Remove backbone from very large fish (10 pounds or more) so they pack easier into the jars. Cut fish into lengths to fit the jar. Fish may be cut into fillets with bones and tail removed if desired. Remaining blood may be drawn from the fish by soaking for 10 minutes to 1 hour (depending on size of fish) in a brine made of 1 cup of salt to 1 gallon of water. This tends to make the fish more firm. The brine should be fresh and used no more than twice.

Canning

Do not use jars larger than pints to can fish. Heat penetration is essential for safety. Wide mouth jars or tin cans are best for canning fish. Plain tin cans are satisfactory for most fish but "C" enamel is suggested for shell fish.

Remove the fish from the brine and drain.

Pack tightly into jars, alternating heads and tails for tight pack. Pack skin side next to the glass. Leave $\frac{1}{2}$ inch head space. Add no water or oil. Add $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon salt to each pint jar if desired.

Clean tops of jars well. Put on the lids. Screw



Cut pieces of fish to fit height of jar. Alternate heads and tails for closer pack.

bands firmly tight. Put jars into the canner and process pint jars 100 minutes (1 hour and 40 minutes) at 10 pound pressure.

Remove canner from heat and allow pressure gauge to return to zero. Wait one more minute. Open the petcock and release any remaining steam. Open canner and remove jars to cool.

Store in a cool dark place.

Canning Fried Fish

Precooked fish should be no more than half done when packed into the jars for canning. This means they are only partially browned.

Prepare the fish as instructed above. Cut fish to fit the jars. Dip in salted cornmeal and fry in deep fat. Drain thoroughly.

Pack into jars while still hot. Do not add anything.

Clean tops of jars well and put on the lids. Process pint jars for 100 minutes at 10 pound pressure.

Remove from heat and allow pressure to return to zero. Wait one more minute. Open canner and remove jars to cool.

Canned or Leftover Fish

Turn canned or leftover fish into interesting stew, cakes, loaf, or casseroles. Season to your liking with onion, tomatoes, celery, carrots, lemon juice, paprika, or other flavorings.

Baked Fish Loaf

1 egg beaten
¼ cup light cream or condensed milk
2 cups cooked or canned fish, flaked or mashed
¾ cup dry bread crumbs
½ teaspoon salt
¼ teaspoon paprika (if desired)
2 teaspoons lemon juice
1 tablespoon butter, melted
2 tablespoons parsley, minced or dried (may be omitted)
1 small onion minced

Mix together well the egg, cream and fish. Add other ingredients and mix well. Put into a greased loaf pan. Bake in a hot oven 400 degrees Fahrenheit for 30 minutes. Serve hot with tomato sauce.

Tomato Sauce

1 onion chopped
2 tablespoons butter
1 tablespoon flour
1 cup cooked tomatoes
Salt and pepper
1 teaspoon sugar

Cook onion in butter slowly until soft but not brown. Add flour and blend until smooth. Add tomato and simmer until thickened, stirring all the time. Season with salt, pepper and sugar to taste. If too thick, thin with more tomato juice or water.

Fish-Potato Cakes

1½ cups cooked fish, broken or mashed
1½ cups cold mashed potatoes
3 tablespoons chopped onion
1 egg, beaten
½ teaspoon salt
Pepper to season

Mix ingredients together well. Make into 12 cakes. Fry in hot fat 3 or 4 minutes or until brown. Turn cakes and fry until brown on second side. Drain on paper towel or clean cloth to take up excess fat. Makes 6 servings or more.

Fish Stew

2 cups cooked fish, cut or mashed
1 cup chopped onions
⅓ cup fat
3½ cups tomatoes
2 cups potatoes, diced
1 cup water
¼ cup catsup
½ teaspoon salt
Pepper to taste
2 cups mixed vegetables (corn, lima beans, peas, carrots, green beans, or other left-over canned vegetables).

Fry onions in fat until soft but not brown. Add the potatoes and water. Cover and simmer 20 minutes. Add the fish, tomatoes, catsup, seasonings, and mixed vegetables. Cover and simmer 15 minutes longer.

If you wish, you may add a pint of cream and heat but not boil. Sprinkle with paprika if desired.

Fish Scalloped Potatoes

1½ to 2 cups cooked fish, broken or mashed
2 tablespoons chopped onion
2 tablespoons fat
2 tablespoons flour
1½ teaspoons salt
Pepper to season
2 cups milk
1 cup grated cheese
5 cups sliced cooked potatoes

Heat the oven to 350 degrees F. Fry the onion in the fat until soft but not brown. Stir in the flour, salt and pepper. Add the milk, stirring all the time. Cook (stirring) until thickened. Add cheese. Heat and stir until cheese is melted. Rub a baking dish with fat. Spread half the potatoes in the dish. Cover potatoes with fish. Spread remaining potatoes over fish. Pour the cheese sauce over the potatoes. Bake for 25 to 30 minutes or until hot through.

References

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