

Homemade Strawberry Jam

Uploaded by: Michelle Day at www.michellestastycreations.blogspot.com

Recipe from: Sure-Jell

Here's what you need:

6 cups crushed strawberries, - I use my emulsion blender or a regular blender to crush the berries but leave small bits of fruit (measured after they are crushed)

4 cups sugar, MUST BE REAL WHITE SUGAR - NO SUBSTITUTES

1 box Sure-Jell lower sugar premium fruit pectin, pink box

1/2 tsp. butter or margarine

4 pint sized jars, sterilized, and they need to be hot when the jam is finished cooking

4 lids and seals

Tongs for hot jars and seals

Wide mouth canning funnel

Ladle or measuring cup with a spout

*** Please follow the directions that come with the pectin for the best results***

This is how I make my jam.

I start by washing all jars and lids (rings) in the dishwasher and I time it so the dishwasher is finished right as I start the cooking process so they are still very hot when the jam is cooked. I have also pre-washed the jars and when I start cooking the jam I place them in a large pan and cover with boiling water (not turned on). They will sit in the hot water until each jar is ready to use.

**You never want pour HOT jam into a cold jar; it could break and you could get very hurt and/or burned.

Bring a small pot of water (a couple of inches high) to a boil and toss in the seals then turn off the heat and let sit until needed. This will soften the seal and get it ready to use.

Measure the EXACT amount of sugar into a bowl and set aside.

Place 1/4 cup of the pre-measured sugar into a small bowl and add the fruit pectin. Stir to combine and set aside.

Measure the exact amount of strawberries into a 6 - 8 quart saucepan. Stir the pectin mixture into the strawberry puree in the pan. This takes a few minutes to really completely stir into the fruit. You have to smush the spoon against the sides with any lumps you find. Add the butter or margarine to help reduce foaming.

Bring the mixture to a full rolling boil (a boil that doesn't stop bubbling when stirred) on high heat, stirring constantly. This will be very hot so I use a very long spoon for stirring. Be very careful because it will be bubbling and spitting at you.

Add the sugar and continue to stir, stir, stir quickly until it is all dissolved (the sugar will reduce the temperature so the boiling will stop for a short time). Return to a full rolling boil and boil for EXACTLY 1 minute, stirring constantly. Holy Moly it's like boiling lava but much prettier :)

Once the 1 minute is up, remove from heat and skim off any foam into a small dish to discard.

Moving quickly but safely, remove two jars from the dishwasher or pan of hot water (dumping the water out first) using either a hot pad or tongs so you don't get burned, and set on a cutting board. Place the wide mouth funnel inside the jar and carefully fill with hot jam using a ladle or measuring cup with a spout. Fill to within 1/8-1/4" from the top of each jar.

Quickly wipe the jar rim and threads with a clean damp wash cloth making sure to remove any sign of jam so that the seal works correctly. Cover with a seal and screw the lid on tightly. Repeat with the rest of the jars until finished. I always turn my jars upside down and leave for 5 minutes then turn right side up and let stand at room temperature for 24 hours. - I'm not sure where I got this method but I've been using it for years and have never had a problem. I would suggest if you've never canned anything before PLEASE FOLLOW ALL DIRECTIONS THAT COME WITH THE PECTIN. The rest of you, I know everyone has their own way of canning so proceed as you will.

When the jam starts to cool in the jars you will hear them POP which signals that they are vacuum sealed. Seals can also be checked (after jars cool completely) by pressing the middle of the lid with your finger. If lid springs back the seal didn't work and refrigeration is needed. Sealed jars can be stored in a cool, dry, dark place for up to a year.

Refrigerate any jars that don't seal or any that you have opened.

It is always good to test the seals after jars have cooled by unscrewing the lids and GENTLY press up on the seal with a finger. It should be very tight. If for some reason it lifts the seal didn't work and the jam needs to be refrigerated. Opened jam can be stored in the refrigerator for up to 3 weeks, if it lasts that long :)

This jam makes the most delicious PB&J's.

I really hope you give homemade jam making a try. It's really not that hard and once you get the hang of it, you'll never go back to store bought.

Serves - 4 pints