

## **Extension Notes**

Personal Column for July 20, 2010

By Gary Hall, Iowa State University Regional Extension Education Director

### **Check That Canning Gauge**

In today's economy, many Iowans are taking advantage of the land and garden spaces that are available to them to grow their own foods. A way to preserve that bounty and to enjoy throughout the year is by freezing, drying, or canning those foods.

To be ready for preserving your harvest, the first step is to ensure your canning equipment is in good, working condition.

Pressure canners may have a dial gauge for indicating the pressure or a weighted gauge, for indicating and regulating the pressure. Home canners who have dial gauges should have them checked annually to be sure of the dial's accuracy. Weighted gauges do not need to be tested.

Testing of dial gauge pressure canners is offered by Iowa State University Extension. To have a dial-gauge canner tested, bring the canner lid only – the entire canner is not needed. The pressure gauge and all vents and openings in the lid will be checked for proper functioning.

Please call your County Extension Office to set up a date and time to have your pressure canner gauge tested.

Food preservation information and answers to your questions is available by calling the Iowa State University toll free Answer Line at 1-800-262-3804. The Answer Line is staffed Monday through Friday from 9:00 AM – Noon and 1:00 PM – 4:00 PM.

As you begin to pick vegetables from your home gardens and can your extra produce, it is important to use research based directions to guarantee proper produce preservation and prevent illness. Then you can enjoy the fruits of your labor for many months.

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