

Pickled Cucumbers

BREAD-AND-BUTTER PICKLES

Ingredients:

6 pounds of 4- to 5-inch pickling cucumbers
8 cups thinly sliced onions (about 3 pounds)
½ cup canning or pickling salt
4 cups vinegar (5 percent)
4½ cups sugar
2 tablespoons mustard seed
1½ tablespoons celery seed
1 tablespoon ground turmeric
1 cup pickling lime (optional - for use in variation below for making firmer pickles)

Yield: About 8 pints

Preparation: Wash cucumbers. Cut ¹/₁₆-inch slices off blossom ends and discard. Cut into ³/₁₆-inch slices. Combine cucumbers and onions in a large bowl. Add salt. Cover with 2 inches crushed or cubed ice. Refrigerate three to four hours, adding more ice as needed.

Preparation Variation for Firmer Pickles:

Wash cucumbers. Cut ¹/₁₆-inch slices off blossom ends and discard. Cut into ³/₁₆-inch slices. Mix 1 cup pickling lime and ½ cup salt to 1 gallon water in a 2- to 3-gallon crock or enamelware container. CAUTION: Avoid inhaling lime dust while mixing the lime-water solution. Soak cucumber slices in lime water for 12 to 24 hours, stirring occasionally. Remove from lime solution, rinse and resoak 1 hour in fresh cold water. Repeat the rinsing and soaking steps twice more. Handle carefully, as slices will be brittle. Drain well.

To Make Pickles: Add sugar and remaining ingredients in a large pot. Boil 10 minutes. Drain and add cucumbers and onions and slowly reheat to boiling. Fill jars with slices and cooking syrup, leaving ½-inch headspace. Adjust lids and process

according to the recommendations in the table or use low-temperature pasteurization treatment explained at the end of this fact sheet.

Storage: After processing and cooling, jars should be stored four to five weeks to develop ideal flavor.

Squash Variation: Substitute slender (1 to 1½-inches in diameter) zucchini or yellow summer squash for cucumbers.

QUICK FRESH-PACK DILL PICKLES

Ingredients:

8 pounds of 3- to 5-inch pickling cucumbers
2 gallons water
1½ to 1¼ cups canning or pickling salt
1½ quarts vinegar (5 percent)
¼ cup sugar
2 to 2¼ quarts water
2 tablespoons whole mixed pickling spice
3 tablespoons whole mustard seed
About 14 heads of fresh dill OR 5 tablespoons dill seed

Yield: 7 to 9 pints

Procedure: Wash cucumbers. Cut ¹/₁₆-inch slices off blossom ends and discard, but leave ¼ inch of stem attached. Dissolve ³/₄ cup salt in 2 gallons water. Pour over cucumbers and let stand 12 hours. Drain. Combine vinegar, ½ cup salt, sugar and 2 quarts water. Add mixed pickling spices tied in a clean white cloth. Heat to boiling. Fill jars with cucumbers. Add 1 teaspoon mustard seed and 1½ heads fresh dill per pint. Cover with boiling pickling solution, leaving ½-inch headspace. Adjust lids and process according to the recommendations in the table on the back page or use the low-temperature pasteurization treatment.

QUICK SWEET PICKLES

May be canned as either strips or slices.

Ingredients:

8 pounds of 3- to 4-inch pickling cucumbers
 $\frac{1}{3}$ cup canning or pickling salt
4½ cups sugar
3½ cups vinegar (5 percent)
2 teaspoons celery seed
1 tablespoon whole allspice
2 tablespoons mustard seed
1 cup pickling lime (optional - for use in variation below for making firmer pickles)

Yield: About 7 to 9 pints

Preparation: Wash cucumbers. Cut $\frac{1}{16}$ -inch slices off blossom ends and discard, but leave $\frac{1}{4}$ inch of stem attached. Slice or cut in strips, if desired. Place in bowl and sprinkle with $\frac{1}{3}$ cup salt. Cover with 2 inches of crushed or cubed ice. Refrigerate three to four hours. Add more ice as needed. Drain well.

Preparation Variation for Firmer Pickles:

Wash cucumbers. Cut $\frac{1}{16}$ -inch slices off blossom ends and discard, but leave $\frac{1}{4}$ inch of stem attached. Slice or strip cucumbers. Mix 1 cup pickling lime and $\frac{1}{2}$ cup salt to 1 gallon water in a 2- to 3-gallon crock or enamelware container. CAUTION: Avoid inhaling lime dust while mixing the lime-water solution. Soak cucumber slices or strips in lime water solution for 12 to 24 hours, stirring occasionally. Remove from lime solution and rinse and resoak 1 hour in fresh cold water. Repeat the rinsing and resoaking twice more. Handle carefully because slices or strips will be brittle. Drain well.

To Make Pickles: Combine sugar, vinegar, celery seed, allspice and mustard seed in 6-quart kettle. Heat to boiling.

Hot pack: Add cucumbers and heat slowly until vinegar solution returns to boil. Stir occasionally to make sure mixture heats evenly. Fill sterile jars, leaving $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch headspace.

Raw pack: Fill jars, leaving $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch headspace. Add hot pickling syrup, leaving $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch headspace. Adjust lids and process according to the recommendations in the table or use the low temperature pasteurization treatment.

Storage: After processing and cooling, jars should be stored four to five weeks to develop ideal flavor.

Variation: Add two slices of raw whole onion to each jar before filling with cucumbers.

SWEET GHERKIN PICKLES

Ingredients:

7 pounds cucumbers ($\frac{1}{2}$ inch or less)
 $\frac{1}{2}$ cup canning or pickling salt
8 cups sugar
6 cups vinegar (5 percent)
 $\frac{3}{4}$ teaspoon turmeric
2 teaspoons celery seeds
2 teaspoons whole mixed pickling spice
2 cinnamon sticks
 $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoons fennel (optional)
2 teaspoons vanilla (optional)

Yield: 6 to 7 pints

Procedure: Wash cucumbers. Cut $\frac{1}{16}$ -inch slices off blossom ends and discard, but leave $\frac{1}{4}$ inch of stem attached. Place cucumbers in large container and cover with boiling water. Six to 8 hours later, and on the second day, drain and cover with 6 quarts of fresh boiling water containing $\frac{1}{4}$ cup salt.

On the third day, drain and prick cucumbers with a table fork. Combine and bring to boil 3 cups vinegar, 3 cups sugar, turmeric, and spices. Pour over cucumbers. Six to 8 hours later, drain the pickling syrup into a saucepan. Add 2 cups each of sugar and vinegar to the syrup and reheat to boil. Pour over pickles.

On the fourth day, drain the syrup into a saucepan. Add another 2 cups sugar and 1 cup vinegar. Heat to boiling and pour over pickles. Six to 8 hours later, drain the pickling syrup into a saucepan. Add 1 cup sugar and 2 teaspoons vanilla to syrup and heat to boiling. Fill sterile pint jars with pickles and cover with hot syrup, leaving $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch headspace. Adjust lids and process according to the recommendations in the table on the back page or use the low-temperature pasteurization treatment.

14-DAY SWEET PICKLES

Can be canned whole, in strips or slices

Ingredients:

4 pounds of 2- to 5-inch pickling cucumbers (if packed whole, use cucumbers of uniform size)
¾ cup canning or pickling salt (separated - ¼ cup on each of the first, third and fifth days)
2 teaspoons celery seed
2 tablespoons mixed pickling spices
5½ cups sugar
4 cups vinegar (5 percent)

Yield: About 5 to 9 pints

Procedure: Wash cucumbers. Cut 1/16-inch slices off blossom ends and discard, but leave ¼ inch of stem attached. Place whole cucumbers in suitable 1-gallon container. Add ¼ cup canning or pickling salt to 2 quarts water and bring to a boil. Pour over cucumbers. Add suitable cover and weight. Place clean towel over container and keep the temperature at about 70 °F.

On the third and fifth days: Drain salt water and discard. Rinse cucumbers and rescald cover and weight. Return cucumbers to container. Add ¼ cup salt to 2 quarts fresh water and boil. Pour over cucumbers. Replace cover and weight, and re-cover with clean towel.

On the seventh day: Drain salt water and discard. Rinse cucumbers and rescald containers, cover and weight. Slice or strip cucumbers, if desired, and return to container. Place celery seed and pickling spices in small cheesecloth bag. Combine 2 cups sugar and 4 cups vinegar in a saucepan. Add spice bag; bring to a boil and pour pickling solution over cucumbers. Add cover and weight and clean towel.

On each of the next six days: Drain syrup into a saucepan. Remove spice bag and place in syrup. Add ½ cup sugar to syrup and bring to a boil. Remove cucumbers and rinse. Scald container, cover and weight daily. Return cucumbers to container; add boiled syrup, spice bag and cover weight; and re-cover with towel.

On the 14th day: Drain syrup into saucepan. Fill sterile pint jars or clean quart jars, leaving ½-inch headspace. Add ½ cup sugar to syrup and bring to boil. Remove spice bag. Pour hot syrup over cucumbers, leaving ½-inch headspace. Adjust lids and process according to the recommendations in the table or use the low-temperature pasteurization treatment.

REDUCED-SODIUM DILL PICKLES

4 pounds (3- to 5-inch) cucumbers, sliced
6 cups vinegar
6 cups sugar
2 tablespoons canning salt
1½ teaspoons celery seed
1½ teaspoons mustard seed
2 large onions, thinly sliced
8 heads fresh dill

Yield: About 8 pints

Procedure: Wash cucumbers. Cut 1/16-inch slices off blossom ends and discard. Cut cucumbers in ¼-inch slices. Combine vinegar, sugar, salt, celery and mustard seeds in large saucepan. Bring mixture to a boil. Place two slices of onions and half a dill head in each pint jar. Fill jars with cucumber slices, leaving ½-inch headspace. Add a slice of onion and half a head dill on top. Pour hot pickling solution over cucumbers, leaving ¼-inch headspace. Remove air bubbles. Wipe jar rims. Adjust lids. Process 15 minutes in boiling water bath.

REDUCED-SODIUM SWEET PICKLES

4 pounds (3- to 4-inch) cucumbers, sliced

Brining solution:

1 quart distilled white vinegar
1 tablespoon canning salt
1 tablespoon mustard seed
½ cup sugar

Canning syrup:

1⅔ cups distilled white vinegar
3 cups sugar
1 tablespoon whole allspice
2¼ teaspoon celery seed

Yield: About 5 to 9 pints

Procedure: Wash cucumbers and cut 1/16-inch slices off blossom ends and discard. Cut cucumbers into ¼-inch slices. In a large saucepot, mix the ingredients for the brining solution. Add the cut cucumbers, cover and simmer until the cucumbers change color from bright to dull green (about 5 to 7 minutes). At the same time, mix canning syrup ingredients in a saucepan. Bring syrup to a boil. Drain the cucumber slices. Pack cucumbers in jars, leaving ½ inch headspace. Fill jars to ½ inch from top with hot canning syrup. Remove air bubbles. Wipe jar rims, adjust lids. Process 10 minutes in a boiling water bath.

LOW TEMPERATURE PASTEURIZATION TREATMENT

The following treatment results in a better product texture but must be carefully managed to avoid possible spoilage. Place jars in a canner filled half-way with warm (120 to 140 °F) water. Then, add hot water to a level 1 inch above jars. Heat the

water enough to maintain 180 to 185 °F water temperature for 30 minutes. Check with a candy or jelly thermometer to be certain that the water temperature is at least 180 °F during the entire 30 minutes. Temperatures higher than 185 °F may cause unnecessary softening of pickles.

TABLE 1. RECOMMENDED PROCESS TIMES FOR CANNED PICKLED CUCUMBERS IN A BOILING-WATER CANNER

			PROCESS TIME (MIN) AT ALTITUDES OF:			
Canned Product	Style of Pack	Jar Size	0-1000 ft.	1001-3000 ft.	3001-6000 ft.	Above 6000 ft.
Bread-and-Butter Pickles	Hot	Pints or Quarts	10	15	15	20
Quick Dill Pickles	Raw	Pints	10	15	15	20
		Quarts	15	20	20	25
Quick Sweet Pickles	Hot	Pints or Quarts	5	10	10	15
	Raw	Pints	10	15	15	20
		Quarts	15	20	20	25
Sweet Gherkin Pickles	Raw	Pints	5	10	10	15
14-Day Sweet Pickles	Raw	Pints	5	10	10	15
		Quarts	10	15	15	20

For more information on home canning, contact your local Extension agent.

Sources:

1. USDA (1994). *Complete Guide to Home Canning* Agriculture Information Bulletin No. 539.
2. Reynolds, Susan and Paulette Williams. *So Easy to Preserve*. Cooperative Extension Service, The University of Georgia. Revised by Judy Harrison, 1993.

This information has been reviewed and adapted for use in South Carolina by P.H. Schmutz, HGIC Information Specialist, and E.H. Hoyle, Extension Food Safety Specialist, Clemson University.

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