1931

EC*84 Revised 1931 Pickles and Relishes

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PICKLES AND RELISHES

The preservation of food with salt or vinegar, either with or without the addition of spices or sugar, is commonly known as pickling. The predominating flavor determines the kind of pickle—sour, sweet, spice, dill, oil or mustard. Relish is a term variously applied to finely, evenly chopped pickles. As the term is commonly used it refers to chopped mixtures preserved with vinegar and spices.

Pickles and relishes have little nutritive value. However, when used in moderation, they serve as appetizers because of their pungent, spicy flavor. They are not easily digested and for this reason are not to be given to children and are to be used in moderation by adults.

Green and partially ripe vegetables and fruits are generally used for pickling. Fruits commonly used for pickling are peaches, pears, apples, cherries, and watermelon rinds. Among the most common vegetables used are cucumbers, beets, tomatoes, onions, carrots, beans, and cabbage. The cucumber lends itself to the greatest variety as it may be used for sweet, sour, dill, oil, sliced or mustard pickles or in combination with other vegetables.

Suggestions for Pickling Cucumbers

Always use fresh vegetables and fruits with a good grade of cider vinegar and fresh spices. The spices should be bought fresh each year. A mixture commonly known as pickling spices may be obtained loose or in packages or they may be blended at home. A good flavor is obtained by using cloves, pepper corns, stick cinnamon, mace, tiny red peppers, mustard seed, allspice, bay leaves, and ginger root.

Spices should be used in moderation so as not to conceal the flavor of the fruit or vegetable. If spices are tied in a thin cloth bag, they may be removed when pickles are sufficiently flavored. Loose spices make pickles dark. A bitter flavor is developed if spices are boiled with vinegar for a long time. Long boiling also spoils the flavor of vinegar.

Horse radish root added to pickles helps to prevent mold. It should not be boiled, but when used in pickles which are to be heated, it is added after they are removed from the fire.

Grape leaves added to cucumber impart a bright green color and characteristic flavor. The color may also be brightened by pouring the vinegar over cold and heating gradually to boiling.

Use agate or porcelain lined kettles because of the chemical action of the acid in vinegar on metals.

It is not advisable to use alum in any great amount to make pickles crisp, since alum is an astringent which tends to contract the tissues of the body. If proper methods are followed in preparing pickles, the salt and acids in the brine will produce the desired firmness without the addition of alum.
There are some individuals who use saccharine for sweetening liquor for pickles. Saccharine is a chemical derived from coal tar which is 500 times as sweet as sugar. Recently some scientific experiments have been conducted but so far the investigations do not merit the use of it. From this it seems advisable to use sugar instead of other sweetening agents.

**Brining**

A tender, crisp and solid texture are desirable characteristics of a pickle. These are developed by fermentation which is usually brought about in the brining process. This makes the tissue firmer and extracts water from them. The strength of the brine depends on the length of time the product is to remain in it. Too strong brine softens and spoils their texture while too weak solution permits spoilage. After the brining process the tissues are better prepared to absorb the flavored vinegar or syrup because some of the surplus juice has been extracted.

Farmers’ Bulletin No. 1438 on Making Fermented Pickles, gives the following:

"Proper curing of cucumbers requires from six weeks to two months, or possibly longer, according to the temperature at which the process is carried out and the size and variety of the cucumbers. Attempts to use short cuts or to make pickles over-night, as is sometimes advised, are based on a mistaken idea of what really constitute a pickle.

"Curing of cucumbers is marked by an increased firmness, a greater degree of translucency, and a change in color from pale green to dark or olive green. These changes are uniform throughout the perfectly cured specimen. So long as any portion of a pickle is whitish or opaque it is not perfectly cured.

"After proper processing in water, salt pickles may be eaten as such or they may be converted into sour pickles, sweet pickles, mixed pickles, or pickle relish."

The amount of brine necessary to cover the cucumbers is equal to about one-half the volume of the material to be fermented. For example, if a 3 gallon jar of cucumbers are to be preserved, 1 1/2 gallons of brine will be required. To make the brine use 3 3/4 c. salt to 1 1/2 gal. water. Pour over the cucumbers, then the following day add 1 lb. salt (2 3/8 c.) for every ten pounds of cucumbers used. This is necessary to maintain the strength of the brine. Use a weight on top of a cover which fits inside the jar, so as to hold the pickles below the surface of the brine.

At the end of the first week and at the end of each succeeding week for five weeks, add one-fourth pound of salt. Place the salt on the cover so as to avoid it from sinking to the bottom. Skim off the scum which will no doubt form.

The brining process makes it possible for the busy housekeeper to leave her pickle making until cool weather. After the pickles are cured in the brine, they must receive a processing in water to remove the excess salt. This is best done by placing the pickles in a suitable vessel, cover them with water and heat them slowly to a lukewarm temperature, holding it at this point for 10 to 12 hours, stirring frequently. The water is then poured off and the process is repeated if necessary until the pickles have only a slightly salty taste.

**Sour Pickles**

After the pickles are brined, and processed in water, cover with vinegar. A 45 or 50 grain strength is usually recommended. After two weeks change to new
vinegar as the brine within the pickles will reduce the strength. If one prefers very sour pickles, remove the pickles from the first vinegar to a second vinegar of a stronger strength.

**Sweet Pickles**

A sweet liquor made by dissolving sugar in vinegar to which spices are added, is used for sweet pickles. The amount of sugar used depends upon the sweetness of the pickle desired. Six pounds of sugar to one gallon of vinegar gives satisfactory results.

Since sweet pickles have a tendency to become shriveled and tough, it is advisable to cover the pickles with plain vinegar for one week. After this discard the vinegar and cover the pickles with a sweet liquor made by adding four pounds of sugar to a gallon of vinegar. If a sweet pickle is desired, gradually add more sugar until the desired sweetness is obtained.

Spices are usually added to sweet pickles. One ounce of whole mixed spices to 4 gallons of pickles gives a good spicy flavor. Tie the spices in a cloth bag, place in vinegar and heat to boiling point and hold at that temperature for about one half hour. Remove the bag of spices after the desired flavor has been obtained. The sugar may be added to the hot vinegar and then poured over the pickles.

**Dill Pickles**

(Taken from Farmers' Bulletin 1438)

"Place in the bottom of the jar a layer of dill and one-half ounce of mixed spice. Then fill the jar, to within 2 or 3 inches of the top, with washed cucumbers of as nearly the same size as practicable. Add another half ounce of spice and layer of dill. It is a good plan to place over the top a layer of grape leaves. In fact, it would be well to place these at both the bottom and top. They make a very suitable covering and have a greening effect on the pickles.

"Pour over the pickles a brine made as follows: Salt, 1 pound; vinegar, 1 pint; water, 2 gallons. Never use a hot brine at the beginning of a fermentation. The chances are that it would kill the organisms present, thus preventing fermentation.

"Cover with a board cover or plate with sufficient weight on top to hold the cucumbers well below the brine.

"If the cucumbers are packed at a temperature around 86 degrees F., an active fermentation will at once set in. This should be completed in 10 days to 2 weeks, if a temperature of about 86 degrees F. is maintained. The scum which soon forms on the surface and which consists usually of wild yeasts, but often contains molds and bacteria, should be skimmed off.

"After active fermentation has stopped, it is necessary to protect the pickles against spoilage. This may be done in one of two ways:

(1) Cover with a layer of paraffin. This should be poured while hot over the surface of the brine or as much of it as is exposed around the edges of the board cover. When cooled this forms a solid coating which effectually seals the pickles.

(2) Seal the pickles in glass jars or cans. As soon as they are sufficiently cured, which may be determined by their agreeable flavor and dark green color, transfer them to glass jars, and fill either with
their own brine or with a fresh brine made as directed. Add a small quantity of dill and spice. Bring the brine to a boil, and, after cooling to about 150 degrees F., pour it over the pickles, filling the jars full. Seal the jars tight and store in a cool place.

"The plan of preserving dill pickles by sealing in jars has the merit of permitting the use of a small quantity without the necessity of opening and rescaling a large bulk, as is the case when pickles are packed in large containers and sealed with paraffin."

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Failures</th>
<th>Causes</th>
<th>How to Avoid</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hollow pickles</td>
<td>Allowing too long a period to intervene between gathering and brining.</td>
<td>Brine within 24 hrs. after gathering. Use soft water.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Faulty development.</td>
<td>Grade cucumbers carefully and use only well developed ones.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Faulty nutrition of cucumber</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Darkened pickles</td>
<td>Hard water. Lime will discolor pickles. Presence of lime which is alkaline often found in hard water may prevent proper acid formation. Iron is also objectionable.</td>
<td>Use soft water. If hard water is used, add a small amount of vinegar (1 qt. vinegar to 40 gallon barrel). Serves to overcome alkalinity it may take 2 or 3 qt. of vinegar to overcome alkalinity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shriveled</td>
<td>Placing in too strong salt or vinegar</td>
<td>Tie spices in small bag and remove when pickles are sufficiently flavored.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Remaining too long in brine</td>
<td>Use weaker brine or vinegar solution at first and gradually strengthen.</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>Reheating vinegar too often.</td>
<td>Remove at end of 48 hrs.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Too much sugar (1 lb. sugar equals 2 cups)</td>
<td>Heat vinegar not more than 3 or 4 times.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Place pickles in plain vinegar for one week, the discard vinegar. Cover with liquor made by adding 4 lb. sugar to a gallon of vinegar. To add sugar later pour the vinegar from the cucumbers, reheat vinegar to dissolve the sugar and then pour it on pickles while warm. It is well not to exceed 6 lbs. to a gallon of vinegar.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Failures</th>
<th>Causes</th>
<th>How to Avoid</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Soft or slippery</td>
<td>Bacteria</td>
<td>Wash well to remove dirt.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pickles exposed above</td>
<td>Weight pickles to keep below brine.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Brine too weak or too</td>
<td>Use approximately (3\frac{1}{2}) c. salt to 1\frac{1}{2} gal. water. For dill pickles use (2\ 3/8) c. salt to 1 pt. vinegar and 2 gal. water.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fermentation</td>
<td>Dilute vinegar if too sour. If diluted too much, pickles become soft from fermentation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Overcooking</td>
<td>Heat pickles only short time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Scum</td>
<td>Frequently remove.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mold</td>
<td>Exposure to air</td>
<td>Pour off vinegar, reheat and pour back or use fresh vinegar. Pour hot paraffin over the surface.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Note: The following abbreviations will be used in the recipes:
\[t\] - teaspoon \[T\] - tablespoon \[C\] - cup)

**Sauerkraut**

10 pounds cabbage \(\frac{1}{2}\) pound salt

Remove the outer green leaves. Never use decayed or bruised leaves. Quarter the heads and shred finely. Pack in a clean bag or earthenware crock. Small containers are recommended for household use. Sprinkle a little salt in the container, put in a layer of three or four inches of shredded cabbage, then pack down with a wooden utensil like a potato masher. Repeat with salt, cabbage, and packing until the cabbage is all used. Press the cabbage down as tightly as possible. Cover with a cloth and glazed plate. Place a weight on top of the plate, use flint or granite. Skim off the film which forms when the fermentation starts and proceed according to the above directions. When the sauerkraut is at just the right stage, it may be canned as follows: Place in jars, make a partial seal, process for thirty minutes in the boiling water bath, remove and seal tightly.

**Sauer Kraut**

Shred cabbage fine. Pack into 2 quart jars tight enough to start the flow of liquid. Then add 1\(\frac{1}{2}\) salt and fill jar with water which has been boiled and then cooled. Seal and store.
Sweet Spiced Vinegar for Fruit Pickles

1 qt. vinegar  
2 oz. stick cinnamon
4 lb. brown sugar  
½ oz. whole cloves

Prepare fruit as for canning. Make syrup by boiling vinegar and sugar. Add spices. Cook fruit in syrup until just tender. Seal.

Beet Relish

12 small beets (cooked until almost tender)  
3 onions (about size of an egg)
Salt to taste.

Grind beets and onions. Add vinegar, salt and seal. Chopped beets and grated horse-radish make a relish which is delicious served with cold meat or fish. It may be made of canned beets.

Cherry Olives

Wash and cut off blossom end of cherries, but do not stem. Pack into glass jars and cover with a mixture of:

One pint mild vinegar
One pint water
One tablespoon salt

Seal.

Spiced Cherries

Remove the seed from firm red cherries. Cover with vinegar and let stand 24 hours. Drain the cherries but do not press. Measure, and to 1 quart of cherries add 1 quart of sugar. Let the mixture stand for 24 hours, stirring occasionally until the sugar is dissolved. Place in sterilized jars, adding 6 whole cloves and a stick of cinnamon measuring about 3 inches to 1 quart of the fruit. Seal and store in a cool place.

Watermelon Pickle

4 lbs. watermelon rind  
4 lbs. granulated sugar
Limewater made with 2 qt. of cold water and 10 grams of 2 T. whole allspice
2 T. of lime  
10 small pieces of stick cinnamon
1 pt. water

Select rind from a firm, not over-ripe melon, and before weighing trim off green skin and pink flash. Cut in inch cubes and soak for 2½ hours in the limewater. Drain, cover with fresh water, cook for 1½ hours, or until tender, and add more water as it boils off. Let stand overnight in this same water, and next morning drain. Bring to the boiling point the vinegar, one pint of water, sugar, and spices tied loosely in cheese cloth. Add the drained watermelon, and boil gently for two hours, or until the syrup is fairly thick. Remove the spice bag, pack the watermelon pickle in sterilized glass jars, seal air tight and store in a cool place.

Cucumber Pickles

100 small sized cucumbers  
1 T. cloves
1 pt. fine salt  
1 T. pepper sauce
Boiling water to cover  
1 oz. stick cinnamon  
1 piece mace
Sweetened vinegar  
½ c. grated horse-radish

Wash cucumbers and cover with boiling water in which salt has been dissolved. Cover and let stand 48 hours. Then drain and wipe each pickle carefully. Pour into jars and cover with vinegar in which spices have been boiled 10 minutes. Have spices tied in a muslin bag and add to jar. Add horse-radish. Cover tightly.

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Bread and Butter Pickles
(Nancy Hanks Pickles)

24 medium cucumbers
3 T. salt
10 onions
1 t. celery seed
1 t. mustard seed

Cut the cucumbers into small pieces, sprinkle salt over them and let stand for 3 hours. Add onions cut small and remainder of ingredients, and cook until the mixture has boiled well. Put into jars and seal while hot.

Variation: Put whole cucumbers into a weak brine solution over night, then slice, pack in jars, cover with a spiced vinegar solution to which a little olive oil has been added.

Mustard Pickle

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1 pt. whole small cucumbers</th>
<th>1 qt. vinegar</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 pt. sliced cucumbers</td>
<td>1/4 T. flour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 pt. small whole onions</td>
<td>1 c. brown sugar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 c. string beans</td>
<td>3 T. powdered mustard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 sweet green peppers</td>
<td>3/4 T. turmeric</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 sweet red peppers</td>
<td>1 t. celery seed (crushed)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 pt. cauliflower or 1 pt. small green tomatoes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Wash and cut up vegetables before measuring. Put all vegetables into brine (1/3 c. salt to 1 qt. water) over night. Freshen in clear water for 2 hr. Let the vegetables stand in liquor of one-half vinegar and one-half water for 15 minutes, and then cook in same liquor until nearly tender. Drain thoroly.

To make mustard dressing, rub all dry ingredients together until smooth, then add hot vinegar slowly, stirring to make smooth paste. Cook over pan of water, stirring carefully until sauce thickens. Pour mustard dressing over drained vegetables while hot. Mix well and pack into jars. Seal.

Cauliflower Pickles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>6 oz. small cucumbers</th>
<th>2 T. celery salt</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1/4 c. salt</td>
<td>1/2 t. white mustard seed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 lb. small white onions</td>
<td>1/3 c. olive oil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 qt. vinegar</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Slice but do not peel the cucumbers (Potato slicer may be used). Sprinkle them with the salt and let stand over night. Drain and add onions which have been sliced thin, the celery salt and mustard seed. Beat together the oil and vinegar, adding vinegar slowly. Pour over cucumbers and onions. Mix and can in hot sterilized jars. Seal.

Ripe Cucumbers (Sweet)

Pare as thin as possible, cut in any desired way and remove seeds and loose membrane. Soak 24 hours in salt and water, then 24 hours in clear water. Rinse in another pan of clear water and drain. Cook in the following: 1 qt. vinegar, 4 lbs. of sugar, 1 c. of cinnamon, cloves, and cinnamon budes. (Tie in bag). Cook spice in vinegar a few minutes before adding pickles and leave in vinegar while cooking the cucumbers. Cook cucumbers until they become transparent (about 20 minutes).
**Chili Sauce**

- 12 ripe tomatoes
- 2 onions
- 1 red pepper, chopped
- 4 stalks celery
- 1 green pepper
- 2 c. vinegar

Peel tomatoes and slice. Put all into preserving kettle. Heat gradually. Cook slowly 2 1/2 hours.

**Piccalilli**

- 1/2 bu. green tomatoes
- 2 oz. white mustard seed
- 2 pk. green peppers
- 2 oz. stick cinnamon
- 2 pk. onions
- 3 oz. cloves
- 2 medium sized cabbages
- 2 oz. allspice berries
- 1 1/2 c. salt

Wash tomatoes and peppers, peel onions, and cut the cabbage into quarters. Chop vegetables. Sprinkle with salt, mix it thru vegetables. Cover and let stand over night. In the morning drain. Add sugar, mustard seed and the remaining spices tied in a thin cloth bag. Pour on just enough vinegar to cover vegetables, bring to boiling point and let simmer 6 hours. Remove spice bag, fill jars with mixture and seal.

**Green Tomato Pickle**

- 3/4 c. salt
- 2 oz. mixed spices
- 2 c. water (weak brine)
- Cloves
- 1 gal. sliced tomatoes
- Allspice
- 2 qt. vinegar (dilute if strong) Tied in a cloth
- Mustard seed
- 2 medium sized onions Stick cinnamon:
- 1 1/2 c. brown sugar
- 1 t. celery seed

Scald tomatoes in weak brine solution. Drain and let stand 1 to 2 hours in a weak vinegar solution (1/2 c. vinegar, 2 c. water). Put vinegar, sugar and spices in an enamel kettle and boil 15 to 20 minutes. Drop in a few tomatoes at a time and scald thoroly. Avoid long cooking as the shape is spoiled. Place in sterile jars. Cook down the liquor and pour over tomatoes and seal. Too much sugar will make the pickles shrivel.

**Ripe Tomato Relish**

- 3 pt. ripe tomatoes peeled and chopped
- 1 c. celery chopped
- 6 T. mustard seed
- 4 T. red pepper chopped
- 1/2 t. each of cloves, cinnamon, allspice, and nutmeg
- 4 T. onion chopped
- 4 T. salt
- 2 c. vinegar or enough to cover mixture
- 6 T. sugar

Mix vegetables with salt and let stand over night. Drain and add spices and vinegar. Seal in sterilized jars.

**Tomato Catup**

- 1 pk. ripe tomatoes
- 1/4 t. cayenne
- 1 T. celery seed
- 1/4 c. salt
- 1 qt. vinegar
- 1 T. ground cinnamon
- 3/4 lb. sugar
- 1 t. ground mace
- 1/2 t. ground cloves

Wash, cut up, cook, and strain tomatoes. Add other ingredients and boil until the right consistency. Seal.
Pepper Relish

12 red peppers
12 green peppers
12 onions

Chop the peppers and onions, cover them with boiling water and let stand five minutes, drain off the liquid. Add the vinegar, sugar, salt and boil five minutes. Pour into scalded jars and seal.

Stuffed Pepper Mangoes

Make a brine (1 c. salt to 1 gal. water). Soak peppers 24 hours. Remove from brine, rinse in fresh water. Carefully cut a circle around the stem of the pepper, and save to replace. Remove seeds and white sections. Soak in clear cold water 2 hours. Drain well. Fill with relish not too tightly. Replace top and tie or sew on. Fill jar, pour on spiced vinegar. Process 15 minutes in a hot water bath.

Relish for Filling

1 pt. cabbage
1 pt. sweet green pepper
1 pt. white onion
1 pt. sweet red pepper

Chop separately and measure, after chopping cabbage, onion and peppers. Mix, add sugar, spices and vinegar. Let stand several hours before using to blend flavors.

Spiced Vinegar for Storing

1 gal. vinegar
1 c. grated horseradish
1 1/2 T. celery seed
1 T. sugar

Clover, nutmeg and grated onion may be used if desired.

(Prepared by Florence J. Atwood, State Extension Agent, Foods and Nutrition)