



## Common Canning Problems

**Problem:** Canned foods; loss of liquid from glass jars during processing. This is not a sign of spoilage; do not open to replace liquid. However, if at least half of the liquid is lost, refrigerate the jars and use within two to three days.

**Cause:** Lowering pressure in canner suddenly after processing period.

**Prevention:** Do not force pressure down by placing canner in a draft, opening the vent too soon, etc. Allow pressure to drop to zero naturally; wait 2 minutes before opening.

**Cause:** Fluctuating pressure during processing in pressure canner.

**Prevention:** Maintain a constant temperature throughout processing time.

**Cause:** Failure to work out air bubbles from jars before processing.

**Prevention:** Remove by running a plastic spatula or knife between food and jar.

**Cause:** Improper seal for the type of closure used.

**Prevention:** Follow the manufacturer's directions for closure used.

**Cause:** Jars not covered with water in water bath canner.

**Prevention:** Jars should be covered with 1 to 2 inches of water throughout processing period.

**Cause:** Starchy foods absorbed liquid.

**Prevention:** None

**Cause:** Food packed too tightly in jars can boil over during processing and start a siphon.

**Prevention:** Leave the appropriate headspace.

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**Problem:** Imperfect seal; discard food unless the trouble was detected within a few hours. Canned food can safely be recanned if the unsealed jar is discovered within 24 hours. To re-can, remove the lid and check the jar sealing surface for tiny nicks. Change the jar if necessary; add a new treated lid and reprocess using the same processing time.

**Cause:** Chips or cracks in jar.

**Prevention:** Examine carefully by rubbing finger around the mouth of the jar.

**Cause:** Failure to follow recommended directions for closures used.

**Prevention:** Follow manufacturer's directions.

**Cause:** Particles left on mouth of jar.

**Prevention:** A clean, damp cloth should be used to remove any seeds, seasonings, etc. that prevent a perfect seal.

**Cause:** Using old closures that should be discarded.

**Prevention:** Do not reuse rubber rings and self-sealing metal lids. Do not use rusty bands.

**Cause:** Lifting jars by top or inverting while hot.

**Prevention:** Use jar lifters for removing jars from canner, grasping below lip. Leave in upright position.

**Cause:** Fat on jar rims.

**Prevention:** Trim fats from meats. Add no extra fat. Wipe jar rim well.