

Preparing Asparagus for Canning: Spears or Pieces¹

United States Department of Agriculture, Extension Service²

Quantity: An average of 24-1/2 pounds is needed per canner load of 7 quarts; an average of 16 pounds is needed per canner load of 9 pints. A crate weighs 31 pounds and yields 7 to 12 quarts -- an average of 3-1/2 pounds per quart.

Quality: Use tender, tight-tipped spears, 4 to 6 inches long.

Procedure: Wash asparagus and trim off tough scales. Break off tough stems and wash again. Cut into 1-inch pieces or can whole.

Hot pack -- Cover asparagus with boiling water. Boil 2 or 3 minutes. Loosely fill jars with hot asparagus, leaving 1-inch headspace.

Raw pack -- Fill jars with raw asparagus, packing as tightly as possible without crushing, leaving 1-inch headspace.

Add 1 teaspoon of salt per quart to the jars, if desired. Add boiling water, leaving 1-inch headspace.

Adjust lids and process as recommended in [Table 1](#) or [Table 2](#) according to the method of canning used.

Table 1. Recommended process time for asparagus in a dial-gauge pressure canner.

			Canner Pressure (PSI) at Altitudes of			
Style of Pack	Jar Size	Process Time	0-2,000 ft	2,001-4,000 ft	4,001-6,000 ft	6,001-8,000 ft
Hot and Raw	Pints	30 min	11 lb	12 lb	13 lb	14 lb
	Quarts	40	11	12	13	14

*After the canner is completely depressurized, remove the weight from the vent port or open the petcock. Wait 10 minutes; then unfasten the lid and remove it carefully. Lift the lid with the underside away from you so that the steam coming out of the canner does not burn your face.

Table 2. Recommended process time for asparagus in a weighted-gauge pressure canner.

			Canner Pressure (PSI) at Altitudes of	
Style of Pack	Jar Size	Process Time	0-1,000 ft	Above 1,000 ft
Hot and Raw	Pints	30 min	10 lb	15 lb
	Quarts	40	10	15

*After the canner is completely depressurized, remove the weight from the vent port or open the petcock. Wait 10 minutes; then unfasten the lid and remove it carefully. Lift the lid with the underside away from you so that the steam coming out of the canner does not burn your face.

1. This document is Fact Sheet FCS 8301, a series of the Department of Family, Youth and Community Sciences, Florida Cooperative Extension Service, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, University of Florida. Publication date: May 2003. Revised: July 2005. Reviewed: May 2011. This document was extracted from the Complete Guide to Home Canning, Agriculture Information Bulletin No. 539, USDA. Please visit the EDIS website at <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu>.
2. Reviewed for use in Florida by Amy Simonne, assistant professor, Food Safety and Quality, Department of Family, Youth and Community Sciences, Cooperative Extension Service, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, University of Florida, Gainesville FL 32611.