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In This Issue:

- Basic Food Preservation

Recipe:

- Grape Jelly



The Dietitian's Desk

Welcome to "The Dietitian's Desk!" This monthly newsletter is committed to providing insightful nutritional information and facts that promote a healthy lifestyle inside and outside of Sodexo's outstanding school nutrition program.

If you have any questions or comments, feel free to contact me at:
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Basic Food Preservation

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With the spring season in full swing and summer just around the corner, one of the easiest and fun ways to keep those fresh flavors all year long is food preservation! Most of the time, when we hear the term "food preservation" we think jams, jellies, and pickles. But there are so many other methods that produce different textures and results that are sometimes the better options for keeping a foods nutrients intact! Below are some of the more well-known methods for preserving the spring and summer bounty:

- **Freezing** This is a preservation method that is often not thought of as a preservation method since it's a fairly common and easy practice! Most foods freeze well, except produce with a high water content, cream-based items, and cooked starchy foods such as noodles and rice. When freezing vegetables, make sure to blanch them to inactivate enzymes that cause them to ripen and to destroy any microorganisms on the surface of the vegetables.
- **Canning** There are three scientifically tested and approved methods of canning for home food preservation: pressure canning (best for low acid foods), water bath canning, and atmospheric steam canning. These methods heat food in sealed jars until the food is hot enough to destroy spoilage organisms.
- **Pickling** This is a method of preserving food in an edible, antimicrobial liquid and is broadly classified into two categories: chemical pickling (brine, vinegar, alcohol, & vegetable oil) and fermentation pickling. Common chemically pickled foods are cucumbers, peppers, corned beef, and eggs. Fermented pickles include sauerkraut and kimchi.
- **Jellying** We often first think of fruit-based jellies, jams, and preserves, but meats and seafoods have been jellied for centuries! Jellying is defined as any form of food preserved in a material that solidifies to form a gel.
- **Drying** Also known as dehydrating, this method of food preservation removes enough moisture from the food so bacteria, yeast, and molds cannot grow. All you need is low humidity, a source of low heat, and air circulation!

**Grape Jelly
(with powdered pectin)**

Ingredients:

- 5 cups grape juice
- 1 package powdered pectin
- 7 cu



Directions:

To make jelly, begin by measuring the grape juice into a kettle. Add pectin and stir well. Place on high heat and stir constantly, bring quickly to a full rolling boil that cannot be stirred down. Add sugar, continue stirring, and heat again to a full rolling boil. Boil hard for 1 minute and then remove from heat; skim off foam quickly. Pour the hot jelly immediately into hot, sterile jars, leaving ¼ inch headspace. Wipe rims of jars with a dampened clean paper towel; adjust two-piece metal canning lids. Process the jars of jelly in a Boiling Water Canner for 5 minutes for half-pints or pints.