Canning Food for Holiday Gifts

Home canned foods make wonderful and thoughtful holiday gifts for family and friends. Apples, oranges, and pears are some of the fruits that are “in season” this time of the year and are perfect for canning. They can be used to make jams and jellies and then given as holiday gifts or used as additions to holiday menus. Check out the following recipes and surprise your friends and family with special gifts and treats this season!

**Pear-Apple Jam**

2 cups peeled, cored and finely chopped pears  
1 cup peeled, cored and finely chopped apples  
6½ cups sugar  
¼ teaspoon ground cinnamon  
½ cup bottled lemon juice  
6 ounces liquid pectin  

Crush apples and pears in a large saucepan and stir in cinnamon. Thoroughly mix sugar and lemon juice with fruits and bring to a boil over high heat, stirring constantly. Immediately stir in pectin. Bring to a full rolling boil and boil hard 1 minute, stirring constantly. Remove from heat, quickly skim off foam and fill hot, sterile jars leaving ¼-inch headspace. Wipe jar rims and process for 5 minutes in a boiling water bath.

**Yield:** About 7 to 8 half-pint jars

**Pear Marmalade**

2 pounds pears  
4½ cups sugar  
1 cup water  
2 oranges (optional)

Procedure: Wash and cut pears into small strips or pieces. Peel and cut up the oranges, discarding seeds and membranes, using one-half the peel chopped into small pieces. Combine all ingredients in a large saucepot. Cook rapidly until thick and transparent, stirring frequently as it thickens. Pour hot marmalade immediately into hot, sterile canning jars, leaving ¼-inch headspace. Wipe jar rims and adjust lids. Process for 5 minutes in a boiling water bath.

**Yield:** About 2 half-pint jars

**Apple Butter**

8 pounds apples  
2 cups cider  
2 cups vinegar (5 percent acidity)  
2¼ cups white sugar  
2¼ cups packed brown sugar  
2 tablespoons ground cinnamon  
1 tablespoon ground cloves

Wash, remove stems, quarter and core fruit. Cook slowly in cider and vinegar until soft. Press fruit through a colander, food mill, or strainer. Cook fruit pulp with sugar and spices, stirring frequently. To test for doneness, remove a spoonful and hold it away from steam for two minutes. It is done if the butter remains mounded on the spoon. Another way to determine when the butter is cooked adequately is to spoon a small quantity onto a plate. When a rim of liquid does not separate around the edge of the butter, it is ready for canning. Fill hot apple butter into sterile half-pint or pint jars, leaving ¼-inch headspace. Adjust lids and process 5 minutes in a boiling water-bath canner.

**Yield:** About 8 to 9 pints

For more recipes and detailed canning instructions see:  
http://www.clemson.edu/extension/hgic/food/food_safety/preservation/