

# HOME & GARDEN

## Green tomato pickles for winter meals

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At Rudy and Vera's the door is always open and the table always seems set for an uninvited guest or two. Their house is the only place I have ever known where three or four of my children and I could turn up announced at dinnertime and be welcomed in. Their open hearts and easy generosity are indicative of a richness in their lives that has nothing to do with a bank account.

Part of that richness is the prolific garden that Vera has tended in the backyard for years. Out of its abundance she has fed ranks of hearty teen-age appetites. Now she grows enough for Rudy and herself and a year's worth of uninvited guests so harvest time is still busy in Vera's kitchen. One of the last tasks of the season is the preparation of her Green Tomato Pickles.

These pickles are made over a few days, but the actual amount of time spent working with them is not onerous. The trick is always to keep the tomatoes covered by the liquid. This can be accomplished by setting a jar of water on a dinner plate and keeping the tomatoes weighted down. The time is well worth it because these crisp, tart pickles are an excellent accompaniment to winter meals.

### VERA'S GREEN TOMATO PICKLES

Wash and quarter 4 to 5 lbs. very green tomatoes.

Mix 2 cups pickling salt with one gallon of water. Pour over the tomatoes and let stand a week. Be sure all tomatoes are submerged in the brine.

After one week, pour off the brine and cover tomatoes with 1 gallon of boiling water mixed with 1 tablespoon alum.

### BETWEEN THE ROWS

Let stand 24 hours, then drain and cover with 1 gallon boiling water and let stand another 24 hours.

Drain and cover with the following boiling mixture:

2½ qts. cider vinegar  
6 cups sugar  
1 stick cinnamon  
1 tablespoon celery seed  
1 tablespoon whole cloves

Let stand for three days.

Pour off the liquid and reheat it adding an additional cup of sugar. Pour over tomatoes and let stand three days.

Repeat this until 3 additional cups of sugar have been added to the vinegar mixture.

After the third cup of sugar has been added and the mixture boiled and poured over the tomatoes, ladle into hot sterilized canning jars and seal. This recipe does not call for a hot water bath unless the seals don't take. Makes 6 or 7 pints of delicious pickles that are worth all the time they take.

Green tomatoes make lots of good relishes, but they are also good for dessert — see this recipe for mincemeat.

### GREEN TOMATO MINCEMEAT

3 qts. prepared green tomatoes  
3 qts. prepared apples  
1 cup ground suet  
1 lb. raisins  
2 tablespoons grated orange rind

2 tablespoons grated lemon rind  
5 cups packed brown sugar  
¾ cup white sugar  
½ cup water  
1 tablespoon cinnamon  
¼ teaspoon ground cloves  
¼ teaspoon ground allspice  
2 teaspoons salt

Prepare tomatoes by putting through a food grinder using a coarse blade. Peel and core the apples and put them through the grinder as well as the suet. Combine all ingredients in a large pot and bring to a boil, stirring frequently. Reduce heat and simmer until dark and thick — this will take 2 to 3 hours. Stir occasionally. Pour into pint jars, allowing half inch head room and process in a boiling water bath for 25 minutes. This will take 8 pints or enough for eight 8-inch pies.

Green tomatoes don't have to be processed and canned to be enjoyed. They can be sliced and pan fried and served as a delicious side vegetable. If this is a particular favorite, and you want to extend its pleasures into the winter, you can slice the green tomatoes, dip them in cornmeal and then freeze. When it is time to serve, pan or deep fry them without defrosting and then will retain all their goodness.

With the putting by of green tomatoes the garden is pretty well closed down. Carrots are still waiting to come into the root cellar and the brussel sprouts and kale are still flourishing through the frosts, but the compost pile is high with garden debris and the patches of cover crop are going strong. At the same time the garden is closing down there is promise of next spring's fertility — and chores.

# Major projects require precaution

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