

**HUNTERDON COUNTY 4-H & AGRICULTURAL FAIR
August 20-24, 2025**

**Division: Home Canned Foods
Entries taken – Tuesday, August 19
9:00 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.**

Contest Rules

1. There will be no pre-registration and there will be no prize money. Ribbons will be awarded to 1st, 2nd and 3rd place winners. Ribbons may be picked up at the tent following judging on Tuesday, August 19 until 5:00 p.m. on Sunday, August 24, when the Fair closes.

2. All entries are to be registered and received at the Agricultural Tent on Tuesday, August 19 (day before the Fair opens) from 9:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Exhibitor will be given an exhibitor card to fill out and accompany the entry. Please note the Exhibitor's name **may not appear on the entry**, only on the exhibitor card.

Judging will begin at 3:00 p.m. on Tuesday, August 19, 2025.

3. There are **two Subdivisions** for entries: A) **Jams, Jellies and other Sweet Spreads** and B) **Canned Fruits, Vegetables, Pickles, Relishes, Sauces and other Foods**. All classes are open to all exhibitors, but subject to the Contest rules and regulations.

4. All entries must be submitted in jar sizes as specified in a tested recipe for that particular product. All jars must be clearly labeled with name of product & date prepared. Two jars of the same product must be entered. Each jar must have an exhibitor tag.

5. Products must have been processed within the last 12 months, according to a tested recipe (see more below). Jars must be properly vacuum-sealed, with 2-piece lids, and rust-free ring bands. The jar should exhibit appropriate headspace as indicated in a tested recipe for that product. Flavor not be judged in the case of low-acid foods that are pressure canned.

6. One entry jar will be opened for judging and the other used for display. The opened jar may be picked up on Tuesday, August 19 after 8:00 p.m. in the Agricultural Tent. **THE UNOPENED JAR MUST REMAIN FOR DISPLAY. NO ENTRY IS ALLOWED TO BE REMOVED PRIOR TO THE END OF THE FAIR.**

7. After the exhibits are arranged, they will be under exclusive charge of the Fair Committee. The management may at any time remove an exhibit which is in bad condition. Exhibits must be picked up by the exhibitor Sunday, August 24 at 5:00 p.m. Those exhibits still present after 5:30 p.m. will be forfeited by the owner and disposed of. A card containing the name and address of the exhibitor will be attached to the exhibit after it has been judged.

8. General scoring for all classes will be based on appropriate product characteristics including container and pack, color and texture, and flavor and aroma.
9. Each entry must have a completed “**Home Canned Foods Entry Sheet**” (available online at the Hunterdon County 4-H and Agricultural Fair website) which documents method of preparation according to latest USDA or other approved guidelines.
10. A full recipe must accompany the entry. A printed copy of the recipe from a tested source is acceptable, providing it shows all necessary information. Recipes must include:
 - the recipe source
 - a complete list of ingredients
 - amount of each ingredient
 - preparation method
 - Processing method, time and/or pressure
11. Judges reserve the option to disqualify any entry if proper processing and recipe source cannot be documented. This includes providing evidence of adhering to use of tested recipe guidelines for jar size, pack method, mixture ingredients/proportions, method of processing, and processing time and/or pressure.
In order to guarantee the judging of safe, properly prepared food products, all entries will be judged and tasted at the judge’s discretion.
12. Exhibitors are strongly encouraged to follow one of three reliable sources for current and tested canning recipes, as follows:
 - USDA’s Complete Guide to Home Canning- 2015 Edition:
<https://nchfp.uga.edu/resources/category/usda-guide#gsc.tab=0>
 - USDA’s National Center for Home Food Preservation:
<https://extension.uga.edu/publications/detail.html?number=B989&title=so-easy-to-preserve> So Easy to Preserve, 6th Edition, 2014
 - Ball Canning Recipes: <https://www.ballmasonjars.com/recipes?fdid=recipes> or Ball Blue Book, 2018 37th Edition or later.

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Important Note: Recipes submitted from other sources, including personal recipes, internet sites or magazines, may be subject to disqualification unless the judges are quickly able to confirm that the recipe adheres to the parameters for a tested recipe for that same product. Judges do not have access to reference sources other than those listed above, at the time of judging, for recipe verification.

For more information about approved and tested recipes, please refer to the “**Home Canned Foods Entry Sheet**” or contact Rutgers Cooperative Extension of Hunterdon County, Dept. of Family and Community Health Sciences, 908-788-1342 or Grenci@njaes.rutgers.edu.

Subdivision A: Jams, Jellies and other Sweet Spreads

CLASSES:

A tested recipe from one of the above sources must be available for any entry for the judges' reference.

JAMS:

A soft spread made by combining crushed or chopped fruits with sugar and cooking to form a gel. Commercial pectin may or may not be added. If added, the brand and type of pectin must be specified. Jams can be made with a single fruit or with a combination of fruits. They should be firm but spreadable. Jams do not hold the shape of the jar.

*Only for Class Number #612 exhibitor may enter more than one entry as long as it is different kind of Jam Combination.

- 600 Apricot
- 601 Blackberry
- 602 Black Raspberry
- 603 Blueberry
- 604 Cherry
- 605 Currant
- 606 Gooseberry
- 607 Grape
- 608 Peach
- 609 Plum
- 610 Red Raspberry
- 611 Strawberry
- 612 Any Combination Jam (standard recipe must be available)
- 613 Any Other Jam (standard recipe must be available)

Note: Due to new information about acidity levels, **elderberries** may only be canned as a jam or jelly by a specific weight-based method: <https://extension.missouri.edu/publications/hes141>.
Tested recipes are not available for whole elderberry fruit or fruit syrup.

JELLIES:

A translucent, semi-solid soft spread made by combining fruit juice or acidified vegetable juice with sugar and cooking to form a gel. Commercial pectin may or may not be added. If added, the brand and type of pectin must be specified. A jelly is free from crystals and sediment, tender, and not sticky.

*Only for Class Number #635 exhibitor may enter more than one entry as long as it is different kind of Jelly Combination

- 620 Apple
- 622 Black Raspberry

- 623 Blueberry
- 625 Crab-apple
- 626 Currant
- 627 Elderberry
- 629 Grape
- 630 Mint
- 631 Plum
- 632 Quince
- 633 Red Raspberry
- 634 Strawberry
- 635 Any Combination Jelly (standard recipe must be available)
- 636 Any Other Jelly (standard recipe must be available)

BUTTERS, CONSERVES, MARMALADES, AND PRESERVES

Butters-

A soft spread made by slowly cooking fruit pulp and sugar to a consistency thick enough to mound on a spoon and spread easily. Spices may be added per a tested recipe. A butter is free from lumps and seeds or separated liquid.

- 650 Apple Butter
- 651 Grape Butter
- 652 Peach Butter
- 653 Pear Butter
- 656 Tomato Butter
- 657 Any Other Butter (standard recipe must be available)

Conserves-

A soft spread similar to jam made with a combination of two or more fruits, along with nuts and/or raisins. If nuts are used, they are added during the last five minutes of cooking.

- 660 Apricot Conserve
- 661 Cherry Conserve
- 662 Cranberry Conserve
- 663 Grape Conserve
- 664 Peach Conserve
- 665 Pear Conserve
- 666 Plum Conserve
- 667 Any Other Fruit Conserve (standard recipe must be available)

Marmalades-

A soft spread that contains pieces of citrus fruit and peel evenly suspended in transparent jelly. A marmalade is cooked in small batches and brought rapidly to, or almost to, the jelling point.

Marmalades are similar in structure to jam.

- 670 Peach Marmalade
- 671 Orange Marmalade
- 672 Any Other Marmalade (standard recipe must be available)

Preserves-

A soft spread in which the fruit is preserved with sugar so it retains its shape and is transparent, shiny, tender and plump. The syrup varies from the thickness of honey to that of soft jelly. A true preserve does not hold its shape when spooned from the jar.

- 680 Blackberry Preserves
- 682 Cherry Preserves
- 684 Peach Preserves
- 685 Pear Preserves
- 686 Plum Preserves
- 687 Raspberry Preserves
- 688 Strawberry Preserves
- 689 Tomato Preserves
- 690 Any Other Fruit Preserves (standard recipe must be available)
- 691 Any Other Vegetable Preserves (standard recipe must be available)
- 692 Fruit Honey Spread

Subdivision B: Canned Fruits, Vegetables, Pickles, Relishes, Sauces and other Foods (except Sweet Spreads)

CLASSES:

A tested recipe from one of the above sources must be available for any entry for the judges' reference.

Canned Fruits and Vegetables

- 700. Applesauce
- 701. Beets
- 702. Blackberries
- 703. Blueberries
- 704. Carrots
- 705. Cauliflower
- 706. Cherries
- 707. Corn
- 708. Peaches (except **white peaches** (per 2018 guidance from USDA <https://nchfp.uga.edu/how/can/canning-fruits-and-fruit-products/peaches-halved-or-sliced/#gsc.tab=0>)

- 709. Pears
- 710. Peas
- 711. Plums
- 713. Pumpkin (1" cubed only, no mashed product)
- 714. Quince (method for jelly/preserves only)
- 715. Raspberry
- 716. Rhubarb
- 717. Salsas
- 719. Succotash
- 720. Tomato Juice
- 721. Tomato Ketchup
- 722. Tomato Sauce- Plain
- 723. Tomato Sauce- Mixtures
- 724. Tomatoes, whole
- 725. Tomatoes, stewed
- 726. Tomato-based Sauces (Barbecue Sauce, Ketchup) Sauce
- 727. Any other canned Fruit
- 728. Any other canned Vegetable

PICKLES AND RELISHES

- 728. Bread and Butter Pickles
- 729. Chow-Chow Relish
- 730. Dill Pickles
- 732. Sweet Pickles
- 733. Pickled Beets
- 734. Pickled Cucumbers
- 735. Pickled Peppers
- 736. Pickled Zucchini
- 737. Any Other Pickle
- 738. Beet Relish
- 739. Corn Relish
- 740. Cucumber Relish
- 741. Green Tomato Relish
- 742. Pepper Relish
- 743. Salsas
- 744. Tomato Relish
- 745. Zucchini Relish
- 746. Any Other Relish
- 747. Spiced Apples
- 748. Chili Sauce
- 749. Barbecue Sauce
- 750. Spiced Peaches
- 751. Spiced Pears
- 752. Spiced Watermelon
- 753. Any other