

Strawberry Jam with Homemade Pectin

Ingredients

7 1/2 pounds of strawberries (9 pints)
6 cups of sugar
Juice from 3 lemons (a scant 1/2 cup) I used Meyer lemons
The juice of a small orange
2 cups of homemade pectin

Directions

Prepare 7 pint jars with lids and screws. I run the jars through the dishwasher and keep them warm, or put them in a pot with water and boil them for 10 minutes with the screws. Keep the lids in simmering water or follow the manufacture's instructions.

Put two small plates in the freezer. Wash, clean, and quarter or half the strawberries depending on size, leaving the small ones whole. Mash half the strawberries lightly. Add the sugar to a large (the larger the better) tall pot. Add the juices. Warm up this mixture over medium heat and partially melt the sugar stirring constantly so it won't stick to the bottom. A wooden spoon with a long handle works great.

Add the rest of the ingredients and bring it to a boil at high heat. The mixture will bubble up, rising high (that's where the tall pot comes in handy.) After a while the jam will boil down, forming darker, smaller bubbles. Cook this at medium heat stirring occasionally until the mixture reaches the thickness you like. My jam cooked for about 40 minutes. Test your jam for consistency by putting a small spoonful of the jam on the small cold plate you kept in the freezer.

Turn off the heat, and carefully ladle the jam into the prepared canning jars leaving some space at the top. I use a wide mouth funnel for this and it works great. Clean the lid with a wet, clean towel and put the lid onto the jar. Screw on the bands. Turn the jar upside down onto a clean towel. After the jars have cooled turn them over. Usually my jars are all properly sealed at this time, but if they're not I put them in a water bath until they seal. Before you store your jams check your lids for seals. Lids should not flex up and down when center is pressed and you should not be able to lift them with your finger tips.