



** This news release from K-State Research and Extension is available online at <https://ksre-learn.com/preserving-chocolate-sauce>

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It's almost canning season: Have you thought about chocolate?

K-State food scientist outlines safety considerations for preserving chocolate sauces

By Pat Melgares, K-State Research and Extension news service

MANHATTAN, Kan. – Chocolate sauce is not the first product home cooks think of when they are canning summer foods.

And yet, what a delicious idea, says Kansas State University food scientist Karen Blakeslee.

“Chocolate sauce is a great homemade product to give as a gift, especially for the holidays,” said Blakeslee, who is also coordinator of [K-State’s Rapid Response Center for Food Science](#). “It’s a fun option to make instead of traditional canned foods.”

Blakeslee seems to have no problem listing the many uses of canned chocolate sauce, including toppings for such simple desserts as ice cream, cheesecake and strawberries; or dressing up a plate with a drizzle of chocolate before serving a piece of cake or pie.

However, she cautions that canning chocolate sauce safely comes with some food safety risks.

“Chocolate sauces are low acid foods, which could be a risk for botulism food poisoning,” Blakeslee said. “There are no chocolate sauce recipes that have been tested for pressure canning.”

There are also very few recipes that have been tested to be water bath canned, she said. Those that are used often contain fruit or bottled lemon juice to raise the overall acidity of the canned product.

“These also contain unsweetened cocoa powder, which has a red-brown color,” Blakeslee said. “Recipes that list cocoa powder as an ingredient use unsweetened cocoa powder.”

She advised home canners against using Dutch-process or alkalized unsweetened cocoa powder because those products lower the overall acidity, leading to an unsafe product. Never substitute hot chocolate or cocoa mixes, chocolate syrups or chocolate bars.

A safe alternative to canning chocolate sauce is freezing, according to Blakeslee. The National Center for Home Preservation provides [guidelines online for a freezer chocolate fudge sauce](#).

“Do not can any chocolate sauce recipes that contain dairy products,” Blakeslee said. “There are no safe methods or recipes to can any dairy products. These types of chocolate sauces are best stored in the refrigerator or freezer.”

Blakeslee publishes a monthly newsletter called [You Asked It!](#) that provides numerous tips on being safe and healthy. More information is also available from [local extension offices](#) in Kansas.

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FOR PRINT PUBLICATIONS: Links used in this story
Rapid Response Center for Food Science, <https://www.rrc.k-state.edu>

National Center for Home Food Preservation: Freezer Chocolate Fudge Sauce, <https://nchfp.uga.edu/resources/entry/chocolate-sauce#gsc.tab=0>

You Asked It! monthly newsletter, <https://www.rrc.k-state.edu/newsletter>

K-State Research and Extension statewide offices, <https://www.ksre.k-state.edu/about/statewide-locations.html>

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