

Start with a Bang  
By Ora Emmerich  
UCCE El Dorado County Master Food Preservers

Start the summer with a big bang, and plan to attend the free public education classes offered by the Master Food Preservers of El Dorado County. These great folks have prepared all year to be ready for these classes, and the trained volunteers hope to share all the tips, tricks and knowledge they have accumulated with the attendees. The classes begin this week, on July 7<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 a.m. in the UCCE building at 311 Fair Lane in Placerville. The first class, titled “Food Safety and Basic Water Bath Canning” repeats on Thursday, July 12 in the evening, from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. in the same location as the Saturday class.

Home preserved food tastes great and allows the preserver to control the ingredients, an important concern for many people who strive to eat foods not laden with pesticides, hormones or antibiotics. A more important concern, however, must be the safety of the food. The MFP volunteers explain the various illnesses which may occur with improperly handled food, and present the correct methods for preparation, storage and preservation of many types of food. Learn how to keep the kitchen free of pathogens and the family safe from food poisoning.

MFP Mary Grove heads the first public class for this year, and will give a wonderful presentation of basic water bath canning following the food safety lecture. The water bath canning method of preserving utilizes boiling water to eliminate pathogens from high acid foods. Cutting edge techniques insure the safety of this canning method, and MFP volunteers present answers to any and all questions about water bath canning. A live demonstration always helps to remember the technique, but should there be any forgetting, the class handout dictates the correct steps to successful water bath canning. Displays of tools and equipment, along with a list of what not to buy, insure that each class member becomes quite knowledgeable on the proper way to handle water bath canning.

All recipes and methods used in the public education classes have been approved by the University of California Davis Extension Program. The volunteers teach by lecture and demonstration, with tested recipes for most classes. Those attending will leave with not only delicious recommendations, but with the knowledge to safely preserve food at home.

For questions about safe home food preservation, or to schedule a speaker for organizations or clubs on the topics of food safety or food preservation, call the Master Food Preservers at (530) 621-5506. For more information, be sure to go to the Master Food Preserver website at [http://cecentralsierra.ucanr.org/Master\\_Food\\_Preservers/](http://cecentralsierra.ucanr.org/Master_Food_Preservers/). Sign up to receive our new Master Food Preservers E-Newsletter at <http://ucanr.org/mfpnews/>.