

## POINTERS FOR SHOW COOKING – RELISHES, CHUTNEYS, JAMS AND PICKLES

This section showcases the heritage of preserving practices that have been used over the centuries. Jams, preserves, chutneys and pickles were made to ensure a regular food supply by the storage of an abundance of fruit and vegetables available during a good season. Preserving is about concentrating sugars for jams, using vinegar for chutneys, relishes, sauces and pickles, preserving in oils and drying of the fruits and vegetables for the lean seasons and when out-of-season.

The colour of the product depends on the fruit and the level of cooking, but the darker products show a more traditional cooking method.

The following points will be taken into consideration:

- Clean bottles and jars, plain labels with no commercial or personal identification, glass polished and free of finger prints.
- Correct size of container – 375 gm for straight classes and 250 gm for collections.
- Colour and flavour according to type.
- Jars and bottles sealed only with lids or cellophane.
- Attractively presented.

### CHUTNEYS & RELISHES:

- Spreadable consistency, correct preparation of fruit and vegetables eg tomatoes peeled.
- Chutneys and Relishes are made from fruits and/ or vegetables and contain pieces of fruit and/ or vegetables in the product.
- The addition of vinegar is the most important factor and this ingredient preserves the product.
- The addition of sugar and spices balances the vinegar flavour and generally makes the product tasty.
- The product should have a spoonable consistency and not show signs of too much moisture weeping around the product in the jar or on a plate.
- Relish is cooked for less time than chutney and mostly contains fruit.



### PICKLES AND BOTTLED FRUITS:

- Even size, good quality, clarity.
- Good preparation in peeling and cutting according to type.
- Onions pickled all the way through and made close to Show using a good white vinegar.
- Attractively arranged in container.

### JAMS AND MARMALADES:

- Spreadable consistency, even distribution of fruit, seed and peel according to type.
- Clarity (marmalades).
- No crystallisation.
- Jams should be made from fruit and contain pieces of fruit. They should have a gelled structure, either naturally or by using added pectin.
- A balance of sweetness and acidity aids the enjoyment of the product. For example, strawberry jam will have more of an acidic taste when compared to fig jam because the fresh fruit itself reflects this.
- Jams should be of good colour and flavour, thick enough so that when dropped from spoon, will stay 'dropped'.

- Should have a nice pearly shine.
- Cook jam slowly before adding sugar and boil briskly after sugar has been added.
- Add lemon juice at start of cooking as it brings out the pectin in fruit.
- Jams lose colour with age.
- Make sure bottle is full enough so that when lid is placed on bottle, there is no gap between jam and lid.
- Always pack jams so they will not lean sideways during transportation to the show.
- Always line the inside of lids with white cardboard or heavy paper.
- Most judges prefer no hats.
- Marmalades should have pieces of peel which are edible.
- The judge will consider if a reasonable attempt has been made to use the whole fruit so that some juice and whole fruit is in the product.
- Marmalade is normally a little transparent.
- There should be a balance of acidity and sweetness although there is a Sweet Marmalade.
- They should have a gelled structure, either naturally or with added pectin.

#### SAUCES:

- Correct pourable consistency, no separation.
- Sauces are much like chutneys. Whether a sauce should have tiny chunks of fruit and/or vegetables, or contain seeds, is a personal choice.
- They should be pourable from the bottle and not too thin.
- Consider where the particular sauces are used and whether they would be acceptable with seeds or small chunks.

#### SPREADS:

- Spreadable consistency, no curdling.

#### JELLIES:

- Jellies should be made from the strained juice of cooked fruits and sugar, and contain no pieces of fruit.
- They should have a gelled structure either naturally or with added pectin.
- A balance of sweetness and acidity aids in the enjoyment of the product.
- They can be made from the extracted juice of the fruit, or from the water extraction of the fruit as with quinces when the fruit is boiled in water to obtain colour and flavour and the resultant 'juice' makes the jelly.

Individual new jars are available from Green Living – check out their website to find the nearest retail outlet - [www.greenlivingaustralia.com.au](http://www.greenlivingaustralia.com.au).