

## ***Preserving***

Preserved food was common in early Sackville kitchens because it could slow or even stop the food's decomposition. For centuries, mankind has been preserving food in one way or another. Settlers had four main methods to preserve food, which included freezing, drying, canning and pasteurization.

Food has been dried for centuries. The earliest date of dried foods is 12 000 B.C. when different food would be dried by being placed out in the sun. The most popular foods to be dried were fruit, vegetables, herbs and fish. Fish would be draped over wooden racks out in the sun to dry and then would be packaged for sale. Fruits and vegetables were the natural choice for drying because they dried completely naturally. This meant that the settlers did not have to coat the fruit or vegetables with anything. Herbs were dried because they would last longer and their flavor would not change.

Freezing food was used for the sole purpose of preventing the foods decomposition. Settlers would submerge the food in either cold water or ice. Once submerged, the foods temperature would drop, aiding its preservation. This became popular because the food could last much longer once it was frozen.



**Preserved food would have been served on a table much like the one above, featured in the Fultz House Museum's dining room.**

Settlers would place food in clay containers to avoid them from spoiling. As time continued, the clay containers turned into heavy crocks, some of which can still be used today. Early in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, food started to be canned. This later became known as

canning. Canning is when food is placed in an airtight container. This type of preservation lengthened the foods shelf life from one to five years.

Pasteurization is the same as preserving today. Settlers would boil their food and then place it in a sealed jar to store. Some popular choices for pasteurization were berries, fruit and vegetables. The vegetables would be pickled and then stored, and the berries and fruit would make a sweet and tasty jam or jelly.

Many people still enjoy preserves today, especially when they have been picked and made at home. The Fultz House Museum has a sour cherry tree in their garden adjacent to the W. J. Grace Cooperage. The cherries have been picked in the past and made into wonderful jam or jelly.

All of these preservation methods are still used today, although some of the motives behind some of them have change. Fruit and herbs are still very popular dried, but fruit is more commonly dried because people enjoy it, rather than to avoid decomposition. Freezing is very popular today, and a freezer is common in most homes today.





**Pictured above and on the previous page, are kitchen gadgets and tools in the Fultz House Museum kitchen, some of which would have been used in preserving food.**