



South Dakota Cooperative Extension Service

Adjusting for Altitude

Using the process times for canning food at sea level may result in spoilage or foodborne illness from microorganisms if you live at altitudes of 1,000 feet or more. Water boils at lower temperatures as altitude increases. Lower boiling temperatures are less effective for killing bacteria. Increasing the process time or canner pressure compensates for lower boiling temperatures.

South Dakota's altitudes range from 1,200- to 6,000-feet above sea level. Therefore, when using the USDA

canning guides, select the proper processing time or canner pressure for the altitude where you live.

Use one of the following resources to determine the altitude in your geographical area:

1. County Extension Office
2. Review YD4H217, "Altitude Map of South Dakota"
3. Contact the local district conservationist with the Soil Conservation Service

This information was adapted from the "Complete Guide to Home Canning," Agriculture Information Bulletin No. 539 USDA (Revised 1994), Guide 2.



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