CLEAR-JEL IDEAS

TIPS FOR USING CLEAR-JEL

- Clear-Jel will mix with cold water or fruit juice just like cornstarch.

- To make pies or toppings with low or no added sugar, you can substitute concentrated apple or grape juice for part of the liquid and reduce the sugar.

- To make pies with artificial sweetener, you will want to add the sweetener after the filling is slightly cooled. Do not can with the artificial sweeteners because it will shorten the storage time for the filling.

- Clear-Jel can be used in any recipe calling for cornstarch. Substitute an equal amount.

- Pie fillings made with Clear-Jel can be made and placed directly in baked or unbaked pie shells. For unbaked pie shell, bake pie at 425°F for 20 minutes or until golden brown.

FREEZING TIPS

Products with Clear-Jel can be frozen. It is important to leave adequate head space because the thickened filling will expand when frozen.

To prevent runniness when thawed, cook filling for 2-3 minutes after the fruit is added to the thickened sauce. It is very important that the fillings be thoroughly cooled before freezing.

There are two methods that can be used to freeze pie fillings:

Method I—Freeze in jars or freezer cartons, leaving adequate head space. To use the frozen filling, thaw before putting into the unbaked pie shell.

Method II—Put the cooled filling into an unbaked pie shell and freeze. This will give a product similar to the commercially frozen pies. To bake, place frozen pie in oven and bake at 425°F for about 20 minutes, then reduce heat to 375°F and bake until filling is hot and bubbly and crust browned, about 30-40 minutes; OR thaw pie and filling and bake at 425°F for 20-25 minutes or until crust is brown and filling hot.

Remember that the lemon juice is necessary for both frozen and canned fillings. It helps to stabilize the starch.
RECIPES

FRUIT GLAZE (Can also be dried for leather)
2¾ cup fruit juice  ¾ cup sugar (optional)
¼ cup + 1 Tbsp. Clear-Jel  2 tsp. lemon juice

Mix sugar and Clear-Jel. If sugar is omitted, mix Clear-Jel with a small amount of cold fruit juice. Add Clear-Jel mixture to fruit juice in a heavy kettle. Cook using medium heat until mixture thickens and comes to a boil, stirring constantly. Add lemon juice and boil for 1 minute. Remove from heat and serve hot or cold.

The fruit glaze is great for cake fillings, icing, shortcake, ice cream toppings, fruit salad dressings, pancake, waffle syrup, etc. The glaze can be dried like fruit leather for a fruity snack.

FRUIT SPREADS USING CLEAR-JEL
¼ cup plus 1 Tbsp. Clear-Jel
½-1 cup sugar (more or less depending on sweetness desired)
2 cups crushed fruit or juice
1 Tbsp. bottled lemon juice

Mix sugar and Clear-Jel. If sugar is omitted, mix Clear-Jel with a small amount of cold fruit juice in a blender. Add Clear-Jel mixture to fruit or juice in a large saucepan. Cook on high heat until mixture thickens and comes to a boil, stirring constantly. Add lemon juice and boil for 1 minute. Pour into pint or half-pint jars, refrigerate after cooled.

NOTE: If the mixture is too thick, add a small amount of juice; if too thin, mix a little more Clear-Jel with a small amount of cold juice and add to mixture; bring to a boil. The spread will thicken as it cooks and not thicken much more when cooled. You can gauge the thickness as the fruit spread is cooking.

FRUIT DROPS
¼ cup + 2 tsp. Clear-Jel*  1 cups fruit juice or puree
¼ cup sugar (optional)  1 Tbsp. bottled lemon juice (optional to maintain color and flavor)

Mix sugar and Clear-Jel. If sugar is omitted, mix Clear-Jel with a small amount of cold fruit juice. Add Clear-Jel mixture to fruit juice or puree in a heavy kettle. Cook using medium heat until mixture thickens and comes to a boil, stirring constantly. Add lemon juice. Boil one minute. The microwave can be used to cook mixture. Microwave 5-6 minutes on high power. Stir once or twice as mixture thickens. Cool mixture by placing pan containing the filling in a sink with cold water; stir filling to cool it down. Spoon mixture into cake decorator cones made from wax paper or into a self-sealing plastic bag. (Close bag and cut tip off one corner.) Squeeze drops from bag or cone onto plastic-covered drying trays lightly oiled or sprayed with cooking spray. Dry drops in food dehydrator or in a warm oven. If drying in an electric oven, prop the door open with a pot holder. To speed up the drying process, turn drops over halfway through the drying process.

* The amount of Clear-Jel will vary with the type of juice you use. If the mixture is too thick, add a small amount of juice; if too thin, mix a little more Clear-Jel with a small amount of cold juice or water and add to mixture and cook until mixture thickens.

Disclaimer: Mention of Clear-Jel does not represent an endorsement of this product by the U.S. Department of Agriculture.
Source: OSU Master Food Preserver Program