

Canned Meat, Poultry and Fish Problems and Solutions

PROBLEM	CAUSE	PREVENTION	OTHER INFORMATION
Pin holes in flesh of fish	Fish held before canning. Fish worms.	Inspect fish carefully. Buy fish from reliable sources. Process fish immediately.	If sealed and properly processed, it will be safe, but of low quality.
Sulfide blackening in tuna, chicken, or turkey	Black deposits formed when no oxidizing agent was present and when there was no residual air. A chemical reaction of iron and sulfur compounds at temperatures greater than 150°F. Sometimes action of metal compounds in salt or cooking utensils.	Avoid iodized salt and iron containers for preparing meats, poultry, and fish for canning.	Not harmful, but unattractive.
Meat products have little broth	Not enough liquid used when hot-pack product was packed. Uneven temperature or pressure caused liquids to "siphon" out of the jar.	Pack according to directions for proper heat penetration in jar. Do not overfill. Keep pressure constant during processing in pressure canner. Let pressure decrease gradually to zero. Then open the petcock and the canner.	Not harmful, but meat may be dry. Note: Raw packed meat has no liquid added, so will have little broth.

Source: Food Safety Advisor Volunteer Handbook
Washington State University/University of Idaho, 2002