Guide to Good Food
Chapter 26: Preserving Foods—Terms and Definitions

**ascorbic acid.** A food additive that prevents color and flavor loss and adds nutritive value; another name for vitamin C.

**aseptic packaging.** A commercial method of packaging food in which a food and its packaging material are sterilized separately and then the food is packed in the container in a sterile chamber.

**botulism.** Foodborne illness caused by eating foods containing the spore-forming bacteria Clostridium botulinum.

**canning.** A food preservation process that involves sealing food in airtight containers.

**enzyme.** Complex protein produced by living cells that causes specific chemical reactions.

**freeze-drying.** A method of commercial food preservation in which water is removed from frozen food items.

**freezer burn.** Dry, tough areas that occur on food surfaces that have become dehydrated due to exposure to dry air in a freezer.

**headspace.** Space between the food and the closure of a food storage container.

**hot pack.** Process of packing vegetables or fruits that have been preheated in water or steam into canning jars and covering them with cooking liquid or boiling water.

**irradiation.** A commercial food preservation method that exposes food to low-level doses of gamma rays, electron beams, or X rays.

**mold.** Growth produced on damp or decaying organic matter or on living organisms.

**pectin.** Carbohydrate found naturally in fruits that makes fruit juices jell.

**processing time.** The amount of time canned goods remain under heat (or under heat and pressure) in a canner.

**quick-freezing.** Process of subjecting foods to extremely low temperatures for a short time and then maintaining them at a normal freezing temperature.

**raw pack.** Process of packing cold, raw vegetables in canning jars and covering them with boiling water or syrup.

**retort packaging.** A commercial method of packaging food in which food is sealed in a foil pouch and then sterilized in a steam-pressure vessel known as a retort.

**shelf life.** The amount of time a food can be stored and remain wholesome.

**sulfuring.** Antidarkening treatment used on some fruits before they are dried.

**yeast.** Microscopic fungus that can cause fermentation in preserved foods resulting in spoilage.