



Jams, Jellies, Apple Butter & Applesauce Competition

GUIDELINES

The Jams & Jellies, Applesauce and Apple Butter competition is for amateurs to showcase their skills. (*Professionals are not eligible; a professional is anyone grossing more than \$4,000 per year from the sale of preserves or teaching classes about preserves on a regular and structured class schedule.*)

Entry Guidelines:

1. Each competitor may enter **up to two entries** per class.
2. Each entry shall include **2 jars**: 1 jar for display and 1 jar for judges to taste. Please provide screw-top lids on all jars (no rings). Only standard, clear (no colored glass) jelly, quart or pint canning jars, sealed by the proper water bath or pressure canner method will be accepted.
3. All entries must have been processed in 2026 and may be made with any commercial pectin.
4. What to include on the label:
 - a. **Name of the contents.** Examples: "Blackberry Jam," "Apple Jelly," "Cinnamon Applesauce"
 - b. **Month/year of processing.** Example: "May 2026"

Please DO NOT PUT YOUR NAME on the Jars. When we receive your entries, your jars will be labeled with a number cross-referenced to your name, to allow for fair judging.

Due date: Entries are due to the NW Natural Horsemanship Center in Fall City, mailed or delivered in person, **by Thursday, September 17**. **Address:** 32925 SE 46th St Bldg. A, Fall City, WA 98024.

Food Safety: All entries must be processed in a water bath. The inversion method is NOT acceptable. The USDA head space standard is $\frac{1}{4}$ inch for jams and jellies, $\frac{1}{2}$ inch for applesauce. A minimum of five-minute processing is the current USDA standard for all sweetened spreads.

COMPETITION CLASSES

Apple Jelly and Jam. Apples must be the primary fruit ingredient. The Asian pear (*Pyrus pyrifolia*), also called the "apple pear," may be used as a complimentary fruit.

Apple Butter. Apples must be the primary fruit ingredient. The Asian pear (*Pyrus pyrifolia*), also called the "apple pear," may be used as a complimentary fruit.

Applesauce. Apples must be the single fruit ingredient.

Berry Jams & Jellies. One type of berry in each entry; any berry may be used (such as blackberry, blueberry, strawberry, raspberry, etc.)

PRIZES & JUDGING CRITERIA

A ribbon will be awarded to the **first and second place winners** in each class. **Judging Criteria:**

JAMS

- **Flavor:** The jam must taste intensely of the specific fruit used, and the natural tartness of the fruit must come through. No off flavors (scorching, mustiness, bitterness, overcooking, caramelization, or fermentation).
- **Appearance:** Translucent and vibrant, even though it contains fruit pieces. It must not look muddy or show scorching discoloration.

- **Consistency/texture:** A uniform, soft, shapeless mass when spooned out. Fruit pieces are distributed evenly throughout the jar without separating into distinct fruit and liquid layers. Thick, tender, and easily spreadable, not stiff, syrupy, or sticky.

JELLIES

- **Flavor:** Fresh and true-to-flavor of the parent fruit, balanced sweet and tart. No off-flavors (scorchin, mustiness, bitterness, etc.).
- **Clarity:** Sparkly, clear, and bright. It must be translucent and entirely free of pulp, cloudiness, sediment, or sugar crystals.
- **Texture & "Quiver":** The jelly must hold its shape when sliced, showing clean, sharp edges. It should be tender enough to "quiver" or jiggle, but not be runny, syrupy, gummy, or rubbery.

APPLESAUCE

- **Flavor:** True-to-fruit apple flavor and striking a pleasant balance between natural apple sweetness and acidity. A balanced batch will cause a slight, pleasant salivation due to its bright acidity rather than tasting like flat sugar water. Spices should remain as background notes. No off flavors (scorching, mustiness, bitterness).
- **Color:** Natural, uniform light-golden color. Deducts for dark spots, bruising, or browning caused by trapped air from raw packing. Free of seeds, core remnants, and peel fragments.
- **Texture & Flow:** Thick but capable of flowing freely, with little or no water separation. Uniform texture and chunky texture are both allowed (chunks less than ½-inch in any dimension).

APPLEBUTTER

- **Flavor:** The apple butter must taste intensely of apples, and the natural tartness of the fruit must come through. Spices should remain as background notes. No off flavors (scorching, mustiness, bitterness, overcooking, caramelization, or fermentation).
- **Appearance:** Deep caramelized brown color.
- **Consistency/texture:** The apple butter should be a firm, soft, mass when spooned out. Thick, tender, and easily spreadable, not stiff, syrupy, or sticky.