

Grandma Lorraine Pepple's Watermelon Pickles

Jackie Dohn Maas, Plymouth, Minnesota, e-mail message to Michael Miller

I did a bit of research and found out some of my ancestral villages. On my maternal side, the Joachim (my mother's [Irene Bader Dohn] mother was Dorothea Joachim Bader) family came to the U.S. from Friedenstal, Bessarabia. My paternal grandfather Christ Dohn was from Johannestal, South Russia.

8 cups water

3 cups sugar

2 cups white vinegar

1/2 cup salt

1-3/4 oz. pickling spice (use 1/2 and tie in cheese cloth)

Boil mixture.

Cut up watermelon. In sterilized jars, put in dill, one hot dried red pepper, and one garlic clove. Then add watermelon chunks, a strip of green pepper and another layer of dill. (I like them hot so I add another pepper and garlic clove.) Pour the hot brine into the jars. Seal the jars and put them in a hot water bath, boiling them for five minutes. Remove the jars from the bath and let them to cool undisturbed for several hours or until you hear the lids pop and seal.

Grandma notes that this recipe makes about 8 quarts and you can save the extra brine and use it in another batch. The green peppers will discolor when cooked. If the pickling spice is not tied up in cheese cloth when boiled, the brine should be strained before putting it into the jars. Grandma recommends Sweet Princess and Black Beauty watermelons; one of which will produce about 14 quarts.