

Dandelion Jelly

(If you've never made jelly or jam before, you might want to read up on the general approach in a cookbook or online.)

Ingredients:

- 4 cups tightly packed dandelion blossoms (yellow parts only)
- 2 quarts of water
- 4 ½ - 5 ½ cups of sugar (depending how sweet you like things)
- 2 tablespoons lemon juice
- One 1 ¾-ounce package of powdered fruit pectin



Photo by Michael Kirwan

Optional:

- A few drops of yellow food coloring

Get lots and lots of big blossoms, making sure they haven't been sprayed with weed killer or other yard chemicals. (You can freeze some while you collect the rest, if necessary.) Rinse with cold water and cut or pull the yellow blossoms apart from the green parts. Avoid the green parts as much as possible; they taste bitter.

Bring the water to a boil and drop in the dandelion blossom shreds. Simmer over very gentle heat about 10 minutes. Pour the water and blossoms through a fine strainer, cheesecloth, or a coffee filter, keeping the liquid. Press the blossoms as dry as possible to extract all the water you can.

Measure out three cups of the strained water. Add lemon juice, sugar, and pectin to the water. Bring to roiling boil and stir until sugar is dissolved. Boil hard for two minutes. Skim any foam. Stir in food coloring if desired. Pour into hot, sterilized jars, seal, and process for five minutes in a boiling water bath. Makes about five 1-cup jars.