

Life Cycle of a Pea*

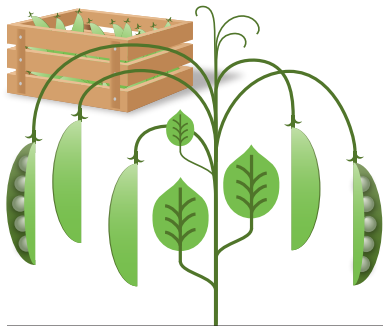
**and other canned fruits and vegetables*

**Cans Get You
COOKING**

Canned foods are a nutritious option because canning technology keeps food fresh and flavorful without a lot of preservatives and additives. Consumers can rely on cans for consistency and taste because the food that comes out is just as good as the day it went in. Here's a basic overview of the canning process for fruits and vegetables (including beans), using the popular pea as an example.

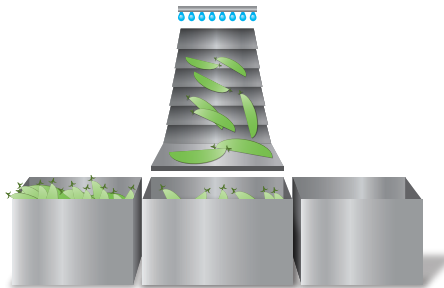
Step 1: Harvest

The pea is harvested at the peak of freshness and sent to a cannery.



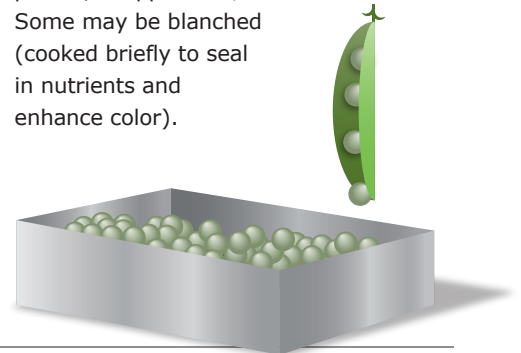
Step 2: Washing, Sorting, Grading

The peas are washed, sorted and graded according to quality standards.



Step 3: Prepare for Canning

Depending on the type of food or end use, this is when the fruit or vegetable is cored, peeled, chopped and/or sliced. Some may be blanched (cooked briefly to seal in nutrients and enhance color).



Step 4: Filling

The peas are placed in cans, and water or other liquids are added.



Step 5: Sealing and Sterilization

Sterilization destroys any existing microbes, and proper sealing prevents any new bacteria from getting in.



Step 6: Cooling

After heat sterilization, cans are cooled in a water bath.



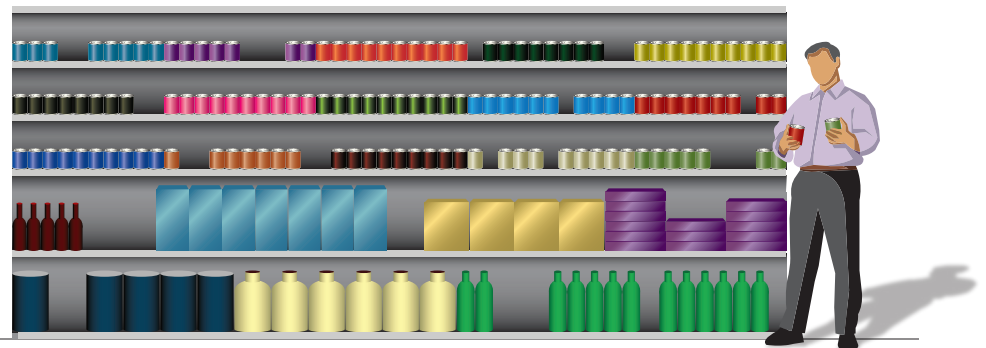
Step 7: Labeling and Shipping

Manufacturers' labels are added to the canned products before shipping to retailers and placed on store shelves.



Step 8: Ready for Use

Delicious, nutritious canned foods are waiting for you!



*Adapted from The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, AP 42, Fifth Edition, Volume I; Chapter 9: Food and Agricultural Industries, canned fruits and vegetables, Supplement A, August 1995. <http://www.epa.gov/ttn/chief/ap42/ch09/final/c9s08-1.pdf>