Name: _____ Date: _____

Two Pickle Methods: Vinegar or Salty Water

Circle group

People have pickled food for a long time. Before refrigerators, pickling kept cucumbers and other vegetables from spoiling. There are two main ways to do it.

The first way uses vinegar. A cook pours vinegar, water, and salt over vegetables in a jar. Vinegar is sour. The sour taste makes it hard for germs to grow. These pickles are ready in a day or two. They taste sharp and crunchy.

The second way uses salty water, called brine. The cucumbers sit in the brine for days or weeks. Salt keeps most germs away. But one helpful kind of bacteria likes the salt. It grows and makes the pickles sour. This is called fermenting. The taste is deeper.

Both kinds are tasty. Vinegar pickles are a good fast snack. Fermented pickles have a slow, bubbly flavor.

Questions

1. Why did families pickle vegetables long ago?

_____

_____

2. What does a cook pour over vegetables in the first method?

_____

_____

3. How does vinegar help keep food from spoiling?

_____

_____

4. What is brine?

_____

_____

5. How do fermented pickles get sour?

_____

_____

6. Which pickle is better for someone in a hurry?

_____

_____

Words to know

pickled: kept in vinegar or salty water so it lasts longer
spoiling: going bad so that food is no longer safe to eat
brine: water with a lot of salt in it
fermenting: changing slowly as tiny living things grow in it

Talk together (every group has these)

1. Find one fact that every group read. How did your sheet say it?
2. What did your sheet tell you that you think another group's did not? Ask them.
3. What is one question about this topic that none of the sheets answered?

Name: _____ Date: _____

Two Pickle Methods: Vinegar or Salty Water

Triangle group

People have pickled food for a very long time. Before refrigerators, pickling helped families keep cucumbers and other vegetables from spoiling. There are two main ways to do it, and they work in different ways.

The first way uses vinegar. A cook pours a mix of vinegar, water, and salt over the vegetables in a jar. Vinegar is sour, and the sourness makes it hard for the germs that spoil food to grow. These pickles are ready quickly, sometimes in just a day or two. They taste sharp and crunchy.

The second way uses only salty water, called brine. The cucumbers sit in the brine for days or weeks. Salt keeps most spoiling germs away, but one helpful kind of bacteria likes the salt. As the bacteria grow, they make the pickles sour on their own. This is called fermenting. The flavor is deeper and more complicated.

Both kinds of pickles can be tasty. If you like a fast snack, vinegar pickles are a good choice. If you like a slow, bubbly flavor, you might prefer fermented ones.

Questions

1. Why did families pickle vegetables long ago?

_____

_____

2. What is poured over vegetables in the first pickle method?

_____

_____

3. How does vinegar help keep food from spoiling?

_____

_____

4. What is brine?

_____

_____

5. How do fermented pickles get their sour taste?

_____

_____

6. Which kind of pickle would be better for someone in a hurry?

_____

_____

Words to know

pickled: kept in vinegar or salty water so it lasts longer
spoiling: going bad so that food is no longer safe to eat
brine: water with a lot of salt in it
fermenting: changing slowly as tiny living things grow in it

Talk together (every group has these)

1. Find one fact that every group read. How did your sheet say it?
2. What did your sheet tell you that you think another group's did not? Ask them.
3. What is one question about this topic that none of the sheets answered?

Name: _____ Date: _____

Two Pickle Methods: Vinegar or Salty Water

Square group

People have been pickling food for a very long time. Before the invention of refrigerators, pickling helped families preserve cucumbers and other vegetables so that they would not spoil. There are two principal methods, and each one works in a different way.

The first method relies on vinegar. A cook pours a mixture of vinegar, water, and salt over the vegetables packed in a jar. Vinegar is sour, and that sourness makes it difficult for the germs that spoil food to multiply. Pickles made this way are ready quickly, sometimes within a day or two, and they taste sharp and crunchy.

The second method uses nothing but salty water, which is called brine. The cucumbers sit in the brine for days or even weeks. Salt keeps most spoiling germs away, but one helpful kind of bacteria actually thrives in the salt. As these bacteria grow, they turn the pickles sour all by themselves, a process known as fermenting. The resulting flavor is deeper and more complicated.

Both kinds of pickles can be delicious. Anyone who wants a fast snack might choose vinegar pickles, while someone who enjoys a slow, bubbly flavor may prefer fermented ones.

Questions

1. Why did families pickle vegetables before refrigerators existed?

_____

_____

2. What does a cook pour over the vegetables in the first method?

_____

_____

3. How does vinegar help prevent spoiling?

_____

_____

4. What is brine?

_____

_____

5. How do fermented pickles become sour?

_____

_____

6. Which kind of pickle suits someone who needs a snack in a hurry, and why?

_____

_____

Words to know

spoiling: going bad so that food is no longer safe to eat
brine: water with a lot of salt in it
fermenting: changing slowly as tiny living things grow in it

Talk together (every group has these)

1. Find one fact that every group read. How did your sheet say it?
2. What did your sheet tell you that you think another group's did not? Ask them.
3. What is one question about this topic that none of the sheets answered?

For the teacher: Two Pickle Methods: Vinegar or Salty Water

Each student sheet carries a shape, not a level. The same topic and facts, written three ways.

Circle: Two Pickle Methods: Vinegar or Salty Water

Easier · 135 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 3.7

1. It kept the vegetables from spoiling before there were refrigerators.
2. Vinegar, water, and salt.
3. Its sour taste makes it hard for germs to grow.
4. Salty water.
5. Helpful bacteria grow in the brine and make them sour.
6. Vinegar pickles, because they are ready in a day or two.

Triangle: Two Pickle Methods: Vinegar or Salty Water

This passage · 178 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 5.1

1. To keep the vegetables from spoiling before there were refrigerators.
2. A mix of vinegar, water, and salt.
3. Its sourness makes it hard for spoiling germs to grow.
4. Salty water.
5. Helpful bacteria grow in the brine and make the pickles sour.
6. Vinegar pickles, because they are ready in a day or two while fermented ones take days or weeks.

Square: Two Pickle Methods: Vinegar or Salty Water

Harder · 195 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 7.8

1. Pickling preserved the vegetables so they would not spoil.
2. A mixture of vinegar, water, and salt.
3. Its sourness makes it difficult for spoiling germs to multiply.
4. Water with a lot of salt in it.
5. Helpful bacteria grow in the brine and turn the pickles sour.
6. Vinegar pickles, because they are ready within a day or two while fermented ones take days or weeks.