

# Wild Roses

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When in bloom, the fragrance and beauty of roses catch our attention. The wild rose grows in thickets and on rocky slopes in many parts of Alaska. Various parts of the plant are edible in different seasons.

In spring, the shoot may be peeled and nibbled.

In early summer, the petals of the rose flower add a touch of color and flavor to salads, sandwich spreads and omelets. Petals may be steeped for tea or used to make jelly. In late summer, the bright red fruit of the wild rose bush, called hips or haws, may be eaten as a quick snack. Rose hips may be used for tea, in baked products and in jelly. Rose hip puree may be used to make jams, marmalades and catsup. Dried rose hips may be added to cereal, cooked with fruit sauce or pulverized and added to baked products. Candied rose hips may be used as a snack or in cookies, puddings and cakes.

Pick petals and hips that are in an area free from pesticides, herbicides, automobile exhaust fumes and other contaminants. Wash them before use to remove dust, insect or animal debris.



*Rose petal uses:* raw, jelly, tea, candied

*Rose hip uses:* raw, cooked, dried, candied, jelly, jam, sauce, juice, cake, tea

## About Rose Petals

Rose petals are the rosy pink part of the wild rose flower. Wild rose flowers are solitary or may grow in small clusters. Wild roses usually have five petals.

Rose flowers are available in June and early July and the petals can be made into a delicately flavored and scented pale pink jelly. Rose water and rose syrup, made from rose petals, are used in numerous Middle Eastern and Indian pastries and confections. Choose flowers at the peak of bloom, and pick early in the day. To pick, grasp the flower by the stem and pull off the petals all at once. Pinch off the white ends of the petals, as this part is bitter.

## To Clean and Store

Wash flower petals with warm water in a colander to remove dust and bugs. Lay on paper towels to drain, or pat dry with a towel. Handle gently so they don't bruise.

## To Extract Juice

Pack rose petals tightly into measuring cup. Measure 1½ cups tightly packed petals. Place in a large saucepan and crush with a potato masher or glass. Add 2¼ cups water and bring quickly to a boil. Simmer the petals until they have a washed-out color. Strain the liquid through a jelly bag or several layers of cheesecloth. Freeze for long-term storage.

*Yield:* 2 cups

### Rose Petal Jelly

1¾ cups rose petal juice  
2 tablespoons lemon juice  
3½ cups sugar  
3 ounces liquid pectin

Sterilize pint or half-pint canning jars and prepare lids. Open the liquid pectin pouch and stand it upright in a cup or glass so it is ready when it is time to add it in the recipe. In a large saucepan, combine rose petal juice with lemon juice. The juice will turn a beautiful pink color. Add sugar and mix well. Place on high heat; stir constantly and bring to a full rolling boil. Add liquid pectin and heat again to a full rolling boil. Boil hard for 1 minute, stirring constantly. Remove from heat and quickly skim off foam. Immediately pour jelly into hot canning jars, leaving ¼ inch headspace. Wipe jar rims and add prepared two-piece lids. Process 5 minutes in a boiling water bath. Use within six months as color will fade.

*Yield:* 3–4 cups

### Crystalized Rose Petals

1 tablespoon powdered egg white  
1 tablespoon lukewarm water (or rose water)  
Superfine sugar  
Rose petals

Pick petals at the peak of bloom. Handle gently. In a small bowl, whisk together powdered egg white and water until smooth. With a small, clean, soft-bristle paint brush, paint both sides of each petal with a thin coat of the mixture. Sprinkle both sides of the petals lightly with superfine sugar. Set on a metal rack to dry. When completely dry, store in an airtight container. Use within three months.

- **To sterilize canning jars**, boil in water for 5 minutes.
- **To prepare two-piece lids** (rings and tops), wash, rinse and keep in hot water until ready to use.
- **If less sugar is desired** in recipes calling for pectin, be sure to use no-sugar-needed pectin and follow the instructions on the box.
- **To use a boiling water canner**, see instructions on page 4.

### Rose Petal Tisane

15 flower petals  
1 cup boiling water

Put clean flower petals into a mug. Fill with boiling water. Infuse for about four minutes, then remove the petals. Drink either warm or chilled. Add lemon or honey for sweetness if desired.

### About Rose Hips

Rose hips — the bright red fruit of the wild rose bush — are smooth and somewhat round. Rose hips may be collected anytime from August through winter in most places, when they are firm but red and ripe. Collecting them after the first frost is often recommended. The hips should be soft and ripe. The riper they are, the sweeter they will be. The stem, blossom end and seeds of the rose hip should be removed before they are consumed. The seeds have two prongs that might lodge in the intestines and cause considerable problems. Remove them before using the hip, or strain through a fine strainer.

Wild roses, such as *Rosa acicularis* or *R. nutkana* varieties in Alaska, produce a small oblong hip. Hearty *Rosa rugosa* varieties, such as the Sitka Rose, grow well in many areas of Alaska and produce a round hip. You will find this rose growing in locations similar to where wild roses grow, as well as in home gardens.

### Nutrition

Rose hips are very high in vitamin C. They are also high in the vitamins A, B, E and K, and in the minerals calcium, iron and phosphorus.

### To Clean and Store Rose Hips

Rose hips should be cleaned soon after collection. Remove the stem and blossom ends, wash the hips with cold water and set out to dry. They may be stored covered in the refrigerator for one week.

### To Freeze Rose Hips

Arrange fresh rose hips in one layer on a cookie sheet. Place the sheet in the freezer. When frozen, transfer the hips to freezer bags or containers. Properly frozen rose hips will last up to two years.

### To Dry Rose Hips

Slit the fresh rose hips down the side and remove the seeds with the point of a sharp knife. This is easiest with slightly underripe hips. If the hips are too “green” they will be hard to pierce and not yield any pulp. If overripe, the pulp will be mushy and difficult to separate from the seeds. (If the hips are overripe, make a puree according to the following instructions. Spread this puree to dry as for fruit leather and then break into chips or powder.)

When seeds have been removed from the hips, spread the hips on a tray in a well-ventilated room for a few days or in a 140°F oven for a few hours, until they are crisp and brittle. To dry rose hips in a dehydrator, spread the pitted hips on an open screen and dry as for other fruits, following directions for the dehydrator. The dried hips can be powdered or grated and stored in a clean, dry, sealed container.

### To Extract Juice

Wash and remove the stem and blossom ends of the hips. Combine 6 cups rose hips and 3 cups water in a saucepan; bring quickly to a boil, then reduce heat and cook slowly for about 15 minutes. Place in a jelly bag or cheesecloth in colander. Let the juice drip into a bowl. For clear juice, do not twist or press the jelly bag or cheesecloth. Discard the pulp. For long-term storage, the juice should be frozen or canned. Rose hip juice mixes well with other juices.

*Yield: 2 cups.*

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#### *Hot pack for juice*

Sterilize canning jars. Heat juice, stirring occasionally, until it begins to boil. Pour into hot jars, leaving ¼ inch headspace. Wipe jar rims. Adjust lids. Process in a boiling water canner.

<i>Pints or quarts</i>	5 minutes
<i>Half gallons</i>	10 minutes

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### To Prepare Puree

Combine 4 cups cleaned, soft, ripe rose hips with 2 cups water. Bring to a boil and simmer for 15 minutes. Press through a sieve to remove the seeds

and skins. What does not go through the sieve can be simmered again. Repeat this process until most of the fruit has gone through the sieve. Discard the seeds and skins. For long-term storage, the juice should be frozen. Canning is not a safe method of preserving puree. *Yield: 3 cups*

### Rose Hip Tea

Use dried hips; crush as fine as possible with a mortar and pestle or a blender. Place approximately 1 tablespoon of rose hip powder or pieces into a teapot. Fill teapot with boiling water and allow it to steep for 5 minutes.

### Rose Hip Drink

Combine rose hip juice with a small quantity of honey and a few drops of lemon.

### Rose Hip Jelly

4 cups rose hip juice  
1 package powdered pectin (1¾ ounces)  
6 cups sugar

Sterilize pint or half-pint canning jars and prepare lids. Measure sugar and set aside. Measure the juice into a large saucepan. Add pectin and stir until dissolved. Bring to a full rolling boil that cannot be stirred down. Boil hard for 1 minute, stirring constantly. Remove from heat. Skim off foam, immediately pour hot jelly into hot canning jars, leaving ¼ inch headspace. Wipe jar rims and add prepared two-piece lids. Process the filled jars for 5 minutes in a boiling water bath. Rose hip jelly may take up to one week to set. *Yield: 10 cups.*

### Candied Rose Hips

1½ cups rose hips  
½ cup sugar  
¼ cup water

The rose hips should be ripe, but firm.\* Remove the seeds by using the point of a knife. Prepare syrup by combining sugar and water; heat until the sugar is dissolved. Add the pitted rose hips and boil for 10 minutes. Lift the fruit from the syrup with a slotted spoon and drain on waxed paper. Sprinkle with sugar and dry in the sun or in a dehydrator follow-

ing manufacturer's instructions. Store the candied hips between sheets of waxed paper in a tightly covered container until used. Yield: 1½ cups

\*If the hips are soft they will disintegrate in the syrup but will still make a pretty pink candied product that may be dried and separated into pieces but will not have the distinctive appearance of the "hip." The larger rugosa hips make a more defined candied hip.

## Resources

*Jams and Jellies – Lesson 5, Food Preservation Series, FNH-00562E*

*Canning Overview – Lesson 2, Food Preservation Series, FHN-00562B*

*Collecting and Using Alaska's Wild Berries and Other Wild Products (\$10), FNH-00120 Fruit Leather, FNH-00228*

*Canning Basics DVD (\$5), FNH-01280*

*Jams and Jellies DVD (\$5), FNH-01290*

### To process in a boiling water canner, follow these steps:

Fill the canner halfway with water. Preheat water to a low boil. Place filled jars, fitted with lids, into the canner on the rack. Add more boiling water, if needed, so the water level is at least 1 inch above jar tops. Turn heat to its highest position until water boils vigorously. When the water boils, set a timer for the recommended processing time indicated in the recipe. Cover with the canner lid and lower heat setting to maintain a gentle boil throughout the processing time. Add more boiling water, if needed, to keep the water level above the jars.

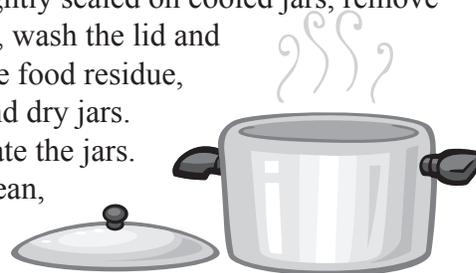
When the jars have been boiled for the recommended time, turn off the heat and remove the canner lid. Using a jar lifter, remove the jars and place them on a towel, leaving at least 1 inch of space between the jars during cooling.

After cooling jars for 12 to 24 hours, remove the screw bands and test seals. Press the middle of the lid with a finger. If the lid springs up when finger is released, the lid is unsealed. If a lid fails to seal on a jar, remove the lid and check the jar-sealing surface for tiny nicks. If necessary, change the jar, add a new, properly prepared lid and reprocess within 24 hours using the same processing time. Alternately, adjust headspace to 1½ inches and freeze, or store in the refrigerator and use within three days.

If lids are tightly sealed on cooled jars, remove screw bands, wash the lid and jar to remove food residue, then rinse and dry jars.

Label and date the jars.

Store in a clean, cool, dark, dry place.



*For more information, contact your local Cooperative Extension Service office or Julie Cascio, Extension Faculty, Health, Home and Family Development, at 907-745-3677 or [jmcascio@alaska.edu](mailto:jmcascio@alaska.edu). This publication was reviewed by Linda Tannehill, Leif Albertson and Kari van Delden, Extension Faculty, Health, Home and Family Development.*

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