APPLE BUTTER

Ingredients

4 lbs (1.8 kg) of good cooking apples (such as Granny Smith or Gravenstein)
1 cup (250 mL) apple cider vinegar
2 cups water
Sugar (about 2-3 cups (500 mL–750 mL), see cooking instructions)
Salt
2 teaspoons (10 mL) cinnamon
½ teaspoon (3 mL) ground cloves
½ teaspoon (3 mL) allspice
Grated rind and juice of 1 lemon
A chinois sieve and pestle or a food mill

Preparation

Cut apples into quarters removing damaged parts, without peeling or coring them. Put them in a large pot with water and vinegar, cover and bring to a boil then reduce heat and cook until apples are soft; about 20 minutes. Ladle apple mixture into a chinois sieve (or food mill) and using pestle, force pulp from the chinois sieve into a bowl below and measure resulting puree. Add ¾ cup of sugar for every cup of apple puree and stir to dissolve sugar. Add a dash of salt, cinnamon, ground cloves, allspice and lemon (rind & juice). Taste and adjust spices as necessary. Cook uncovered, in a large, wide, thick-bottomed pot on medium-low heat stirring frequently to prevent burning. Scrape the bottom while stirring to prevent crust from forming. Cook until thick and smooth; 1 to 2 hours, (i.e. when a small amount is spooned onto a cold plate it is thick and smooth). Pour into hot, sterilized jars leaving ½-inch head space (if half-pint jars) or ¼-inch head space (if pint jars) and seal (sterilize lids before applying them). Process filled and sealed jars in a hot water bath for 15 minutes (if half-pint jars) or 20 minutes (if pint jars) to ensure a proper seal.

Note: As an alternative to stovetop cooking, the puree can be cooked uncovered in a microwave, on medium heat to simmer, for around 30 minutes.

Yield: A little more than 3 pint jars