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Partnerships Produce a National Center for Home Food Preservation Research and Education

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The National Center for Home Food Processing and Preservation is a multi-institutional collaboration funded by CSREES-USDA with The University of Georgia as the primary institution. Scientists from Alabama A&M University and the University of California-Davis are partners. Experts in home food preservation from eight U.S. universities and industry comprise an advisory committee.

Interest in home food preservation and processing remains high in the U.S., and the Cooperative Extension System is an important resource for knowledge in this arena. It is critical to provide educators and consumers with access to current, science-based information concerning safety and quality issues regarding home processing of food, and to encourage adoption of new practices. Therefore, the Center is creating, gathering, evaluating, and disseminating science-based recommendations and conducting research as needed in support of those recommendations.

Multiple strategies for making safe food preservation recommendations available are being used: critical literature reviews and publishing of results; updating of existing USDA and Extension consumer publications; and establishing channels for dissemination of guidelines, including a new website. The Center's website (www.homefoodpreservation.com) is the place to find information about the Center's projects, USDA home food preservation publications, Center publications, links to other Cooperative Extension System publications, multimedia resources for educators (graphics, slides, animations, and video), and how-to guides. Other programs in development through collaborations of the Center include a model volunteer-based Master Food Preserver Program, an instructional video series, and an original web-based curriculum on home food preservation.