

Quick Fresh-Pack Dill Pickles

8 pounds of 3- to 5-inch pickling cucumbers

2 gallons water

1¼ cups canning or pickling salt (divided)

1½ quarts vinegar (5 percent)

¼ cup sugar

2 quarts water

2 tablespoons whole mixed pickling spice

3 tablespoons whole mustard seed

About 14 heads of fresh dill OR 5 tablespoons dill seed

Yield: 7 to 9 pints

Wash cucumbers. Cut 1/16-inch slices off blossom ends and discard, but leave 1/4 inch of stem attached.

Dissolve 3/4 cup salt in 2 gallons water. Pour over cucumbers and let stand 12 hours. Drain.

Combine vinegar, 1/2 cup salt, sugar and 2 quarts water. Add mixed pickling spices tied in a clean, white cloth.

Heat to boiling. Fill jars with cucumbers. Add 1 teaspoon mustard seed and 1 1/2 heads fresh dill (or 1 1/2 teaspoons dill seed) per pint jar.

Cover with boiling pickling solution, leaving 1/2-inch headspace. Remove air bubbles. Wipe jar rims. Adjust lids and process pints for 10 minutes or quarts for 15 minutes in a boiling water bath.