

facilitated by transferring the cooked syrup to large shallow pans. Refrigeration units or troughs with circulating cold water in which the pans are placed can be used. For best results, the syrup should be cooled to 50 degrees F or below. It is considered sufficiently cooled when the surface of the cooked syrup is firm to the touch.

Potassium sorbate is added after the boiling stage and just prior to cooling stage. Potassium sorbate is available at most wine kit producing locations. Add potassium sorbate to the concentrated cooled product at the rate of 500 parts per million based on volume. If the cooled product is a result of one gallon of syrup prior to cooking add 0.3 teaspoons of potassium sorbate to the surface of the concentrated syrup.

Following cooling, the chilled syrup is stirred under room-temperature conditions. Stirring can be done by hand or by mechanical stirring machines. Several different types are available commercially or they can be fabricated. While being stirred, the cooled syrup first tends to become more fluid (less stiff), following which it begins to stiffen and show a tendency to "setup". At this point it loses its shiny appearance and develops a dull flat look. When this occurs, the crystallization process is considered complete and the spread can be transferred to appropriate containers. If stirring is stopped too soon, the final product may become somewhat grainy due to the formation of larger crystals. Likewise, if the cooking process did not reach the correct temperature, some separation (presence of liquid syrup on top of the crystallized cream) may occur while in storage.

To hasten the crystallization process, a small amount of "seed" (previously made spread) can be added to the glass-like chilled syrup just before stirring. The addition of 1 teaspoon of seed for each gallon of cooked syrup will provide small particles to serve as nuclei so crystals will form more rapidly. The entire stirring process may require from 1 to 2 hours, depending on the size of the batch, but the use of seed will often shorten the time by half."