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*Recipe from **The Joy of Jams, Jellies, and Other Sweet Preserves** by Linda Ziedrich through permission of Harvard Common Press, Boston, MA. Copyright 2009. All rights reserved.*

### **Apple Butter**

(Makes 3-1/2 to 4 pints)

As far as I've been able to determine, this dark, spicy old-fashioned preserve is uniquely American, and it never seems to lose popularity in this country. Apple butter is a comfort food associated with warm bread, a warm fire, and rain or snow on the windowpanes. The butter is simple to make, and it's a fine use for wormy or otherwise damaged apples. Try it layered with cheddar cheese on crackers.

6 pounds cored and quartered apples (unpeeled)  
About 4 cups light brown sugar  
1 tablespoon ground cinnamon  
1/2 teaspoon ground mace or ground nutmeg  
1/2 teaspoon ground allspice

1. In a preserving pan, cook the apples over low heat, covered, until they are soft, about 20 minutes. If they are dense, you may need to add a little water or cider at the start to keep them from scorching.
2. Using the coarse screen of a food mill, puree the apples. Measure the volume of the puree, and add half as much light brown sugar. Add the cinnamon, mace or nutmeg, and allspice, and cook the mixture over low heat (or in an oven heated to 250°F), uncovered, until it is thick. This will probably take about 1-1/2 hours. You'll need to stir occasionally at first and more frequently as the apple butter thickens.
3. Ladle the apple butter into pint or half-pint mason jars. Add lids and rings, and process the jars in a boiling-water bath for 10 minutes.