

Freezing Fruits



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EIGHT POINTS FOR QUALITY

1. Use a variety best suited for freezing.
2. Select fully ripe, perfect fruit. Prepare as you would for table use.
3. Speed from harvest to freezer.
4. Use containers that hold liquid and are moisture-vapor proof. (Cylindrical, rectangular or tub-shaped cartons, tins and glass jars are best).
5. Leave at least 1 inch head space in containers to allow for expansion during freezing. In glass or tin leave 1-1/2 inch head space.
6. For best results use sugar, sugar sirup, or corn sirup or preserve color and texture.
7. Freeze below zero and store at zero temperature.
8. If fruit must be held over before freezing, keep refrigerated.

PROPORTIONS OF SUGAR OR SIRUP TO USE

SUGAR PACK: Use 1 part of sugar to 4 or 5 parts of fruit by weight. Fruit and sugar should be well mixed to dissolve sugar before packing fruit. If necessary press fruit down in package until sirup covers the fruit.

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SIRUP PACK: Sugar sirup is made by cooking a given amount of sugar and water together for 10 minutes. Chill well before using it. A 40 percent sirup is recommended for most fruits.

PROPORTIONS FOR SIRUPS

| Percent | Cups - Sugar | Cups - Water |
|---------|--------------|--------------|
| For 20 | Use 1 | to 4 |
| 30 | 2 | to 4 |
| 40 | 3 | to 4 |
| 50 | 5 | to 4 |
| 60 | 7 | to 4 |

Honey or corn sirup may be substituted for 1/4 of the sugar in making a sugar sirup. Special prepared extra sweet corn sirup may be used in place of a sugar sirup. Use 1-1/4 quarts of water to a 5 pound jar of this sirup to make a 50 percent solution. Sirup must cover fruit during freezing.

WHEN TO USE SUGAR OR SIRUP

Use sirup on whole fruits and fruits which have comparatively little juice. Use sugar on fruits which have plenty of their own juice which can be drawn from the fruit to form a natural sirup.

Fruits may be frozen without sugar or sirup in order to save them but an inferior product will result.

HOW TO PREVENT FRUIT FROM BROWNING

Some fruits discolor very rapidly. To prevent this treat fruit with ascorbic acid (another name for vitamin C) or citric acid. Lemon juice may be used in place of citric acid. Use 2 teaspoons lemon juice or 1/2 teaspoons lemon juice of 1/2 teaspoon citric acid to each 1 quart of prepared sirup. Citric acid is not as effective as pure ascorbic acid. The pure ascorbic acid may be purchased in powdered or tablet form from a druggist. The tablet is considerably higher in cost. A 25-gram bottle of powdered ascorbic acid will pack 6 to 7 16-pound crates of peaches.

Apples

Jonathans, Prairie Spy, Northwestern and Patten are excellent for freezing. Northern Spy, Roman Beauty, Winesap, McIntosh and Greenings are also good. Peel apples and cut into pie slices. Place slices in a solution of sodium bisulfite (USP grade) (using 1-1/2 teaspoonsful of sodium bisulfite to 1 gallon cold water) for 5 minutes. Mix solution in an earthenware or enamel container. Drain slices and pack with sugar, using 1 pound of sugar to 4 pounds of fruit. Fill cartons, allow headspace and seal. Quick freeze

Note: 2 ounces of sodium bisulfite will treat about 5 bushels of apples at a cost of about 5 to 10 cents per bushel.

Apples may be prepared for freezing by scalding the slices in steam for 2 or 3 minutes and cooling in water instead of dipping in sodium bisulfite solution. Steaming softens the fruit but apples are satisfactory for pies.

Apricots

All varieties are suitable for freezing. Wash, cut in halves, remove pit. Pack into container, allow head space, cover with 60 percent sirup (cold) to which ascorbic acid has been added. Use 1/2 teaspoon ascorbic acid to each quart of water used in sirup. Seal container and quick freeze.

Blueberries - Boysenberries

Most any blueberry or boysenberry freezes well. Wash in cold water, pick out stems and leaves.

FOR DRY PACK: For cultivated berries, fill containers or cartons full. Use no sugar or sirup, seal container, freeze, store. For wild blueberries, it is best to scald them in steam for 1 minute to prevent toughening of skins, before packing.

SUGAR PACK: After washing, mix berries with sugar -- 1 pound sugar to 5 pounds berries. Stir to draw out juice and pack. Leave headspace, seal, freeze. Store at 0° F.

Cherries

SWEET CHERRIES best for freezing include Lamberts, Bings, Republicans, Windsor and Napoleon. Wash cherries, stem and pit or break skins. Pack in containers leaving headspace, cover with 30 percent sirup (2 cups sugar, plus 1 quart water) to which 1/2 teaspoon ascorbic acid and 1 teaspoon citric acid or 4 teaspoons lemon juice was added. Seal container, freeze and store at 0° F.

SOUR CHERRIES: Any variety freezes well. Wash, pit and add dry sugar, using 1 pound sugar to 4 pounds cherries and then pack and freeze.

Cranberries

All varieties freeze well.

DRY PACK: Sort and discard off-colored berries. Wash, pack dry into containers, seal and freeze. (Cranberry relish may be frozen successfully and stored for about one month).

Muskmelons

Any firm-fleshed variety will freeze. Select firm, ripe, fine textured muskmelons of top quality. Immature melons do not freeze well.

Wash, halve, remove seeds and cut in small cubes or balls. Pack in 30 percent sirup, freeze, store at 0° F. Serve partially frozen.

Peaches

Some of the best varieties for freezing include Elberta and Hale. Clingstone varieties are not recommended. Remove skins. (To do this: (1) scald peaches in boiling water 15 to 30 seconds, then place in cold water and rub off skins; or (2) Hand peel. Remove bruised portions, cut in halves or slices, pack in container leaving headspace and cover with 40 or 50 percent sirup to which ascorbic acid is added (1/2 teaspoon ascorbic acid to each 1 quart of water used for sirup). Seal, freeze, store at 0° F.

Note: To prevent peaches from discoloring during quantity preparation, dip sections into a cold solution of 1/4 teaspoon citric acid or 1 teaspoon lemon juice to a quart of water.

Pears

Same as peaches. Kieffer and Bartlett pears are best for freezing. It is better to can pears than to freeze them.

Raspberries

Latham and Chief varieties freeze well. Use same method as for blueberries. For sirup pack, use 40 percent sirup. A 24 pint crate will give about 24 pints of frozen berries.

Rhubarb

Ruby, McDonald Crimson and Vistoria freeze well, but all varieties yield a good product. Cut off leaves, wash and cut into 1-inch lengths. Select stalks in spring for best results. Pack, seal and freeze.

Note: A sugar pack of 1 cup sugar to 4 cups rhubarb may be used or the rhubarb may be packed and covered with a 40 percent sirup or left in lengths and wrapped in locker paper and frozen.

Strawberries

Most all varieties freeze well. Wash, cap and sort. Leave berries whole or slice or crush. Cover with sugar using 1 cup sugar to 8 cups of hulled berries or 1 pound sugar to 4 or 5 pounds fruit. Mix when juice is extracted and covers berries, pack into containers leaving headspace. Seal and freeze.

Note: See that juice covers berries before freezing them. A 40 to 50 percent sirup pack may be used for whole berries. A 24 quart crate of berries will give about 38 pints of frozen berries.

REFERENCES:

"Freezing Foods for Home Use" by J.D. Winter - U. of Minn.

"Into the Freezer and Out" by Tressler - Evers - Long

"Zero Storage in Your Home" by Boyden - Sparkes