

How to Blanch and Freeze Vegetables



Freezing vegetables is an excellent way to preserve food and reduce waste. This resource provides information on how to freeze various types of vegetables.

Blanching

“Blanching” is recommended when preparing almost all types of vegetables for freezer storage. Vegetables are placed in boiling water to partially cook them and then immediately transferred to cold water to stop the cooking process. Peppers, onions, leeks and rutabaga do not need to be blanched.

Blanching helps:

- preserve vitamins, minerals, flavour, colour and texture
- remove dirt and bacteria from vegetables

Tools and ingredients

- large pot
- stove or hotplate
- vegetables
- large bowl
- timer or watch
- strainer
- water and ice
- freezer bags or food storage containers

Steps

1. Wash and prepare vegetables.
2. Fill half of the pot with water. Bring water to a boil, keep heat on high.
3. Place vegetables into pot. When water returns to boil, begin timing according to the vegetable blanching chart (see next page).
4. When the blanching time is done, drain boiling water from the pot.
5. Place vegetables in a bowl of cold water and ice to cool down. Cool vegetables for the same amount of time they were boiled.
6. Drain vegetables again and pat dry using a clean tea towel or paper towel.
7. Package vegetables in freezer bags or tight seal containers to prevent exposure to air and moisture loss.
8. Label packages with name of vegetable and date frozen. Use within six months for best flavour.



Vegetable blanching chart

Vegetables	How to prepare vegetables for the freezer	Blanching time*
Asparagus	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Wash asparagus 2. Remove rough ends and sandy scales 3. Leave pieces whole or cut into smaller pieces 4. Blanch 	3 minutes (medium) 4 minutes (large)
Beans (green or yellow)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Wash beans 2. Trim ends 3. Leave whole or cut into smaller piece 4. Blanch 	3 minutes (cut) 4 minutes (whole)
Broccoli or cauliflower	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Wash broccoli or cauliflower 2. Remove woody stems and trim 3. Cut heads into pieces approximately 3 cm across 4. Blanch 	3 minutes
Cabbage	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Wash cabbage 2. Remove outer leaves and core 3. Cut into thin wedges, shred or separate leaves 4. Blanch 	2 minutes
Carrots	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Wash carrots 2. Remove tops. Peel if desired 3. Leave small carrots whole or cut larger carrots into smaller pieces 4. Blanch 	3 minutes
Corn	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Remove corn husks and silk 2. Wash 3. Blanch whole cobs 4. After blanching, cut niblets from cobs 	4 minutes
Greens (kale, beet, spinach, chard)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Wash greens 2. Separate leafy parts from stalks 3. Cut into bite-sized pieces 4. Blanch 	2 minutes
Peas	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Wash peas 2. Remove peas from pods (if preparing peas with edible pods, leave pods intact) 3. Blanch 	2 minutes

*Follow blanching times exactly to preserve food safely without compromising texture and flavour.

For more blanching tips, visit Foodland Ontario's website:
www.ontario.ca/foodland.

This document is available in accessible formats upon request.

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