

EXTENSION CONNECTION – Freezing Vegetables

By: Paulelda Gilbert, ISU Extension Nutrition & Health Specialist

How do I blanch vegetables?

To blanch vegetables in boiling water, start counting blanching time as soon as the vegetable is placed in boiling water.

Blanch no more than 1 pound of vegetables per gallon of boiling water at a time.

Immerse wire basket or mesh bag with vegetables in boiling water.

Cover and blanch for required time.

Cool immediately in ice water for the same time as for blanching.

Drain thoroughly.

What is the best method for freezing beans?

Wash green beans, snip off tips, and sort for size.

Cut or break into suitable pieces or freeze small beans whole.

Blanch 3 minutes.

Chill in ice water.

Pack tightly in freezer bags or rigid containers.

Squeeze as much air as possible from bags before sealing.

Leave 1/2 inch headspace for expansion in containers.

What is the best method for freezing edible pod peas (sugar, Chinese, snow peas or sugar snap)?

Wash peas.

Remove stems, blossom ends, and any string.

Leave whole.

Blanch 1 1/2 to 3 minutes.

Chill in ice water.

Pack tightly in freezer bags or rigid containers.

Squeeze as much air as possible from bags before sealing.

Leave 1/2 inch headspace for expansion in containers.

What is the best method for freezing sweet corn that is off the cob?

Husk, remove silks, and trim ends of sweet corn.

Use a large kettle.

Blanch whole kernel corn to be cut from the cob 4 1/2 minutes.

Chill in ice water.

Cut from cob after cooling.

To freeze cream style corn, follow the same steps but cut only the kernel tips from the cob.

Then scrape the cobs with the back of a knife to form juice and remove the heart of the kernel.

Pack tightly in freezer bags or rigid containers.

Squeeze as much air as possible from bags before sealing.

Leave 1/2 inch headspace for expansion in containers.

What is the best method for freezing sweet corn that is on the cob?

Husk, remove silks, and trim ends of corn.

Use a large kettle for blanching.

Blanch

small ears	(1 1/4-inch diameter)	7 minutes;
medium ears	(1 1/4- to 1 1/2- inch),	9 minutes;
large ears	(over 1 1/2-inch diameter),	11 minutes.

Chill in ice water until cool.

Corn that is not thoroughly cooled may become mushy.

Cooling corn-on-the-cob will take longer than the blanching time.

Pack tightly in freezer bags or rigid containers.

Squeeze as much air as possible from bags before sealing.

Leave 1/2 inch headspace for expansion in containers.

What is the best method for freezing potatoes?

Cut Potatoes into 1/2- to 1/2-inch cubes.

Blanch 5 minutes.

Cool.

For hash browns, cook unpeeled until almost done; peel and grate; form in desired shapes; freeze.

For french fries, peel and cut into thin strips; fry in deep fat until very light golden brown; drain and cool; complete browning before serving.

Pack tightly in freezer bags or rigid containers.

Squeeze as much air as possible from bags before sealing.

Leave 1/2 inch headspace for expansion in containers.

What is the best method for freezing sweet, green, or red peppers?

Wash peppers, cut out stem, and remove seeds.

Halve.

Blanch halved peppers 3 minutes.

Chill in ice water.

Chopped peppers can be frozen without blanching.

Pack tightly in freezer bags or rigid containers.

Squeeze as much air as possible from bags before sealing.

Leave 1/2 inch headspace for expansion in containers.

Resource for this information is the ISU Answerline.

Call Paulelda Gilbert at the Webster County Extension Office, 576-2119 or e-mail pgilbert@iastate.edu, with your nutrition and health questions. You may also call our toll-free ISU Answerline at 1-800-262-3804.