



# Preserve it Fresh, Preserve it Safe

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## Corn and Pepper Cups

- 5 green peppers, cut in half lengthwise
- ½ small onion, chopped
- 1½ garlic cloves, chopped
- 3 cups rice, cooked
- 1 can (10 ½ ounces) diced tomatoes with chilies, undrained
- 1 cup canned whole kernel corn, drained
- Cooking spray
- ½ cup cheddar cheese, shredded

### Directions:

1. Wash hands and surfaces.
2. Remove seeds from peppers.
3. Cook in boiling water 2-3 minutes. Drain, and set aside.
4. Cook onion and garlic in oil in medium skillet over medium-high heat for 3 minutes.
5. Combine rice, tomatoes, corn and onion mixture. Mix well.
6. Spoon rice mixture into pepper halves. Place on baking sheets coated with cooking spray.
7. Bake at 350 degrees F for 10 minutes, or until hot. Sprinkle with cheese. Continue baking at 350 degrees F for about 5 minutes more, or until the internal product temperature measures 160 degrees F when measured with a food thermometer.

Source: Seasonal and Simple. n.d. Corn and pepper cups. <http://seasonalandsimple.info/recipe/details.aspx?RecipeID=793>



## Preserving Sweet Corn

Summer is a great time to enjoy fresh sweet corn, but it can also be easily preserved to enjoy year-round. Sweet corn can be preserved by freezing, pressure canning or dehydration.

### Freezing sweet corn

Sweet corn can be frozen on the cob, as whole kernel corn or as cream-style corn. For all methods, the corn must be husked and trimmed, and its silks removed and washed.

For *corn on the cob*, water [blanch](#) small ears (1¼ inches or less in diameter) for 7 minutes, medium ears (1¼—1½ inches in diameter) for 9 minutes and large ears (over 1½ inches) for 11 minutes. Cool promptly and completely. Drain and package. Seal and freeze.

For *whole kernel corn*, water [blanch](#) 4 minutes. Cool promptly, drain and cut corn from the cob at about two-thirds the depth of the kernels. Package, leaving ½ inch of headspace. Seal and freeze.

For *cream-style corn*, water [blanch](#) 4 minutes. Cool promptly and drain. Cut kernel tips and scrape the cobs with the back of a knife to remove the juice and the heart of the kernel. Package, leaving ½ inch of headspace. Seal and freeze.

### Pressure canning sweet corn

Select corn of ideal quality and maturity for eating fresh. Husk corn, remove silk and wash ears.

For *whole kernel corn*, blanch 3 minutes in boiling water. Cut corn from cob at about three-fourths the depth of kernel. Caution: Do not scrape the cob. An average of 31½ pounds (in husks) of sweet corn will make a canner load of 7 quarts.

Hot pack—Add 1 cup of hot water to each clean quart of kernels in a saucepan. Heat to boiling and simmer 5 minutes. Add 1 teaspoon of salt per quart to the jar, if desired. Fill jars with corn and cooking liquid, leaving 1 inch of headspace.

Raw pack—Fill jar with raw kernels, leaving 1 inch of headspace. Do not shake or press down. Add 1 teaspoon of salt per quart to the jar, if desired. Add fresh boiling water, leaving 1 inch of headspace.

Adjust lids and process jars in a dial-gauge pressure canner at 11 pounds pressure at altitudes of 0 to 2,000 feet, or at 12 pounds pressure at altitudes of 2,001 to 4,000 feet. Process jars in a weighted

## Preserving Sweet Corn (continued)

gauge pressure canner at 10 pounds pressure at altitudes of zero to 1,000 feet, or at 15 pounds pressure at altitudes above 1,000 feet. Process pints for 55 minutes and quarts for 85 minutes.

For *cream-style corn*, blanch ears 4 minutes in boiling water. Cut corn from cob at about the center of kernel. Scrape remaining corn from cobs with a table knife. An average of 20 pounds (in husks) of sweet corn will make a canner load of 9 pints.

Hot pack—Add 1 cup of water to each 2 cups of corn, and heat to a boil. Add ½ teaspoon salt to each pint jar, if desired. Fill pint jar with hot corn mixture, leaving 1 inch of headspace. Remove air bubbles and adjust headspace if needed. Wipe jar rims.

Adjust lids and process jars at the same pounds of pressure and times as for whole kernel corn, described above. Note that quart jars are not recommended for cream-style corn.

### Dehydrating sweet corn

To dry sweet corn, husk and trim cobs before washing them. Blanch the cobs for 2-2½ minutes with steam, or 1½ minutes in water. Cut the kernels from the cob after blanching. Preheat the dehydrator and arrange kernels on drying trays, leaving small spaces between them for good air circulation. Stir or rotate pieces to ensure even drying. After 6-8 hours of drying, check to see if the kernels are dry and brittle. Completely cool before packaging in small amounts.

Source: National Center for Home Food Preservation. n.d. Freezing. <http://nchfp.uga.edu/how/freeze/corn.html>

## Try Tangy Tomatillos!

When used in a salsa or relish, tomatillos add a tangy citrus flavor that perks up your meal and serves as a good source of vitamin C.

The edible portion of the tomatillo is surrounded by a dry outer husk that must be removed. Select dry, hard tomatillos with tight-fitting dry husks that are free of mold. Store them in a refrigerator produce drawer for two to three weeks.

Tomatillos do not need to be peeled or seeded for canning. Tomatillos can be used in canning recipes that call for green tomatoes, such as a green salsa. For instructions to safely can tomatillos, go to [http://nchfp.uga.edu/tips/summer/preserving\\_tomatillos.html](http://nchfp.uga.edu/tips/summer/preserving_tomatillos.html) or <http://learningstore.uwex.edu/assets/pdfs/b3570.pdf>.

For tips on tomatillo nutrition, selection and storage, see [www.fruitsandveggiesmorematters.org/tomatillo](http://www.fruitsandveggiesmorematters.org/tomatillo).

## Why We Blanch Vegetables Before Freezing

Blanching is a process in which vegetables are lowered into boiling water for a specific time. The vegetables are subsequently dropped into ice water to quickly cool, then dried and placed in freezer containers. Freezing slows down enzyme processes, but it doesn't stop them. Blanching is recommended to assure your vegetables will taste as fresh as possible after they have been frozen.

That's because blanching stops enzyme activity.

Enzymes in produce help it ripen, and continue to do their work even after the produce has been picked. By stopping the enzyme action, blanching prevents the produce from becoming overripe.

Blanching also helps retain color, flavor, texture and nutrients. Blanching also helps remove dirt and small organisms from the produce.



It is important to look up the specific amount of time each vegetable needs to be blanched and follow those guidelines. If vegetables are under-blanched, it can actually speed up the enzyme processes. If they are over-blanched, the nutritional value, flavor, color and texture can be negatively affected.

Additional information from "Quality for Keeps: Freezing Vegetables" is available at <http://extension.missouri.edu/p/GH1503> and [www.rrc.k-state.edu/preservation/freezing.html](http://www.rrc.k-state.edu/preservation/freezing.html).

## Local Contact Information:

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