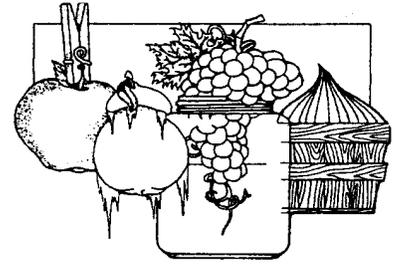


Quality for Keeps



Information for those who produce and preserve food

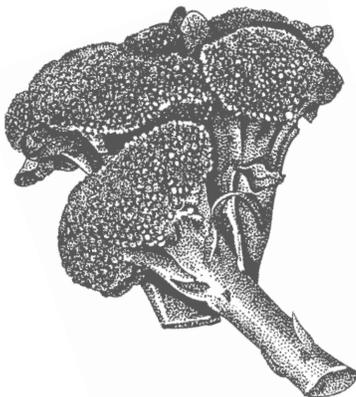
Preserve broccoli and cauliflower spring or fall

Broccoli and cauliflower belong to a Cruciferae or mustard family of vegetables referred to as "Cole" crops, which include: brussels sprouts, cabbage, cauliflower, collards, kale, kohlrabi, mustard, broccoli, turnips and watercress.

Cole crops grow best at a monthly average temperature of 60^o to 70^oF. Spring broccoli and cauliflower are ready, or will be ready to harvest soon.

Plant broccoli and cauliflower again in early to mid-August for fall harvest, since they are not sensitive to frost.

Broccoli and cauliflower are both high in Vitamin C, fiber, and many other nutrients. Both are popular raw, but they can be preserved for use later by freezing.



Cauliflower is also popular as a pickled vegetable, or can be dehydrated for use in cooked dishes.

Freezing. Choose broccoli with firm heads and tender stalks. Remove all leaves and woody portions. Separate the heads into small sections less than 1½ inches and put into a brine solution for 30 minutes. After brining, blanch broccoli in water for 3 minutes, or steam blanch for 5 minutes; cool, drain, package in an air tight container leaving no headspace. Seal and freeze.

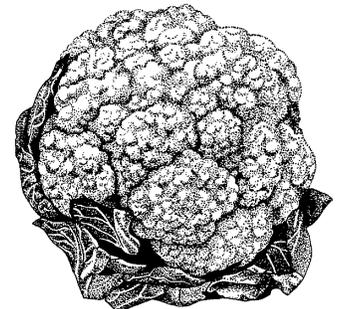
Prepare a brine solution by combining 4 teaspoons of salt in one gallon of water.

Select cauliflower with a compact head and remove all the leaves. Cut the cauliflower into one inch pieces. Soaking the cauliflower in a brine solution for 30 minutes will remove any insects that might be present. Drain the cauliflower, then blanch it for 3 minutes in water that contains 4 teaspoons of salt per gallon of water. Cool immediately; drain, package in an airtight container, leaving no headspace. Seal and freeze.

Drying. Cauliflower can also be dehydrated, but most of the vitamin C is destroyed during blanching and drying, and the quality will be poor. Wash cauliflower and cut into uniform size pieces. Small pieces dry quicker, thus preserving the quality. Cauliflower requires 4 to 5 minutes of steam blanching, or 3 to 4 minutes of water blanching. It will take between 12 to 15 hours to dry. Cauliflower will be tough to brittle when dry.

Package dried foods in tightly sealed containers and store in a cool, dark, dry place. Broccoli is not recommended for drying.

Source: <http://www.uga.edu/nchfp/how/freeze.html>
or http://www.uga.edu/nchfp/how/dry/csu_dry_vegetables.pdf



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Helpful tips on selecting a dehydrator

As the growing season starts in Missouri, it is time to think about what to do with any excess produce.

Many times the type of preservation method chosen depends on the storage space available. Consider dehydrating some summer produce if quantities are plentiful. Dehydrated vegetables are best used in soups, or other cooked combination dishes due to their texture and unique flavor. In many situations, dehydrated fruits and fruit leathers can be used without rehydrating.

Recipes for using dried foods are available from the University of Missouri Extension guide GH1564, *How to Use Dried Foods*, <http://extension.missouri.edu/explorepdf/hesguide/foodnut/gh1564.pdf>

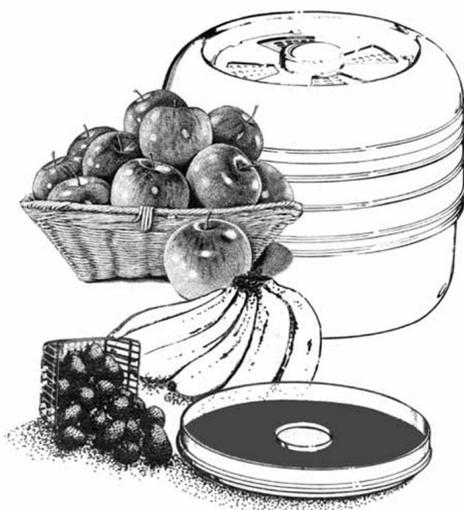
Removing the water from foods prevents the bacteria, mold, and yeast from growing on food and causing spoilage. Blanch vegetables before drying, since drying slows down enzyme activity, but drying does not inactivate the enzymes. Some fruits are treated with ascorbic acid or lemon juice to prevent enzyme browning; others are blanched.

Drying. To dry food, the moisture must be absorbed by the surrounding air. Sun drying is impossible in Missouri, since the temperature needs to be at least 85° F, with breezy conditions, and humidity below 60 % for several days. Even humidity in the area of the oven or dehydrator will affect the drying time.

An oven may be used for drying foods. However, it takes twice as long to dry food in a conventional

oven, since it does not have a fan to circulate the air. Some ovens cannot be set low enough to achieve the 140°F temperature needed for drying. To dry foods on a regular basis, it may be wise to invest in a food dehydrator.

Food dehydrators are designed to dry foods quickly at 140°F indoors. These small appliances use an electric element to supply the heat, and a fan and vents to circulate the air.



Dehydrators are available at discount department stores, large outdoor supply stores, department stores, catalogs, natural food stores, some garden or seed catalogs, and the internet. Capacity and features will determine the cost; some models have the ability to expand to meet future needs. Prices may vary from about \$40 for a simple model, to \$300 for a deluxe model.

Dehydrators have horizontal or vertical air flow. With horizontal air flow the fan and heating unit are on the side of the appliance instead of the bottom. Horizontal air flow has some advantages: flavors mix

less when different foods are being dried at the same time, all trays are heated equally, and juices and liquids do not drip onto the heating element.

National Center for Home Food Preservation suggests consumers look for the following dehydrator features:

- Double wall construction of metal or high grade plastic. Wood is not recommended, because it is a fire hazard and difficult to clean.
- Enclosed heating elements.
- Counter top design.
- An enclosed thermostat from 85°F to 160°F.
- Fan or blower.
- Four to 10 open mesh trays made of sturdy, lightweight plastic for easy washing.
- UL seal of approval.
- A one-year guarantee.
- Convenient service.
- A dial for regulating temperature.
- A timer. Often the completed drying time may occur during the night and a timer could turn the dehydrator off and prevent scorching.

Source: "So Easy to Preserve", 5th ed. 2006. Bulletin 989, Cooperative Extension Service, The University of Georgia, Athens. Revised by Elizabeth L. Andress, Ph.D. and Judy A. Harrison, Ph.D., Extension Foods Specialists.

Select fruits and vegetables that dry well

First check to see if garden, or available produce, will provide a quality product when dehydrated.

Dehydrators can be used to make jerky, and dry seeds and herbs, but some fruits and vegetables do not do well in a dehydrator.

Vegetables that dry well: Carrots, sweet corn, garlic, horse radish, mushrooms, onions, parsley, parsnips, peppers, popcorn, and potatoes.

Vegetable that produce a fair product: artichokes, green beans, beets, cabbage, kohlrabi, okra, peas,

pumpkins, rutabagas, tomatoes, turnips, and yams.

Fruits that provide an excellent product: apples, apricots, cherries, citrus peel, coconuts, dates, figs, grapes, nectarines, peaches, pears, pineapples, and prune plums.

Fruits will give a good product: bananas, currants, papayas, plums and rhubarb.

Fruits that yield a fair product when dehydrated: blueberries, persimmons, and strawberries.

Fruit leathers. Fruits that make excellent leathers are: apples, apricots, berries with seeds,

cherries, nectarines, peaches, pears, pineapple, prune plums, and strawberries.

Fair to good leathers include: bananas, plums, and rhubarb.

Fruits that work best when combined with other fruits to make a quality fruit leather include: blueberries, citrus fruits, citrus peel, coconut, crabapples, cranberries, dates, figs, guavas, and papayas.

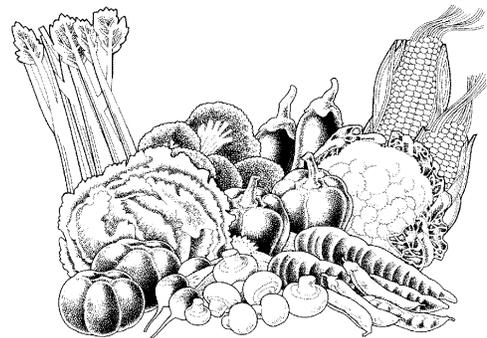


Reasons for Visiting a Farmers' Market

It's farmers' market time again in Missouri. Here are just a few good reasons to visit a farmer's market:

- Find foods not available in a grocery store.
- Support the local economy.
- Enjoy really fresh fruits and vegetables.
- Have fun with family and friends!
- Farmer's markets are full of surprises

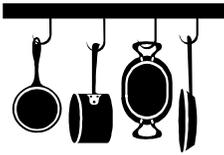
Discover new garden delights !



The **2010 "Market to Market" Directory** is now available, which includes contact information, types of produce grown, hours of operation, and directions to farmers' markets and pick-your-own farms in the St. Louis Metro area. To download or view a copy go to: <http://extension.missouri.edu/cregion/market/>

For information on Farmers' Markets throughout Missouri: <http://agrimissouri.com/farmersmarket.htm> or <http://agebb.missouri.edu/fmktdir/view.htm>

THE RECIPE BOX



Pickled Cauliflower

- 12 cups of 1 to 2 inch cauliflower flowerets
- 4 cups white vinegar (5%)
- 2 cups sugar
- 2 cups thinly sliced onions
- 1 cup diced sweet red peppers
- 2 tbsp mustard seed
- 1 tbsp celery seed
- 1 tsp turmeric
- 1 tsp hot red pepper flakes



Yield: About 9 half pints

Procedure: Wash cauliflower flowerets (remove stems and blemished outer leaves), boil in salt water for 3 minutes (4 tsp canning salt per gallon of water), drain and cool.

Combine vinegar, sugar, onion, diced red pepper and spices in large saucepan; bring to a boil and simmer 5 minutes. Distribute onion and diced pepper among jars. Fill jars with pieces and pickling solution; leave 1/2-inch headspace.

Adjust lids. Process half pints or pints for 10 minutes in a boiling water canner. For altitudes 1,001 to 6,000 feet process 15 minutes, and altitudes above 6,000 feet process for 20 minutes.

Source: Adapted from the "Complete Guide to Home Canning", Agriculture Information Bulletin No. 539, USDA, revised 2009.

Quality for Keeps, published monthly, April through October, is made available to residents of East Central and Southeast Missouri by their Extension Councils. Contact your county Extension office to subscribe or visit our website <http://missouri.extension.edu/franklin>. Questions may be directed to:

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