Garden Freezer Meals
UPMC Health Coach Health Plan Class

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Sweet Memories Attached to Sweet Foods
Different Ways of Preserving Garden Produce

- Canning
- Pickling
- Freezing
- Drying
- Jams & Jellies

Check out the Phipps Culinary Arts page for cooking classes on pickling, preserving garden produce, and more!
Does it Freeze Well?

Cucumber and lettuce become waterlogged and soggy when frozen
Does it Freeze Well?

Raw potatoes become mushy, browned and grainy after defrosting. Only freeze blanched or mashed potatoes with fat source for the best texture.
Does it Freeze Well?

Summer squash, like crookneck and zucchini, freeze well if blanched or shredded. They will be mushy when defrosted so plan on incorporating these veggies into dishes like casseroles or breads!
Does it Freeze Well?

Peaches and apples freeze well but should be soaked in a lemon juice bath first to prevent browning.
Freezing Fruits

1. Wash and peel, pit, cut or slice fruits within **24 hours of harvest**
2. Peaches, apples, pears and apricots darken quickly when exposed to air and during freezing. Treat with **lemon juice** or **ascorbic acid** before freezing
3. Syrup, sugar or dry packing
Freezing Veggies

1. Wash and chop/trim vegetables to freeze within **24 hours of harvest**
2. Blanch vegetables to prevent flavor and color changes

**Vegetable blanching times (water blanching)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vegetable</th>
<th>Blanching in boiling water (minutes)</th>
<th>Blanching in steam (minutes)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Asparagus, small stalk</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asparagus, medium stalk</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asparagus, large stalk</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beans - snap, green or wax</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beans - lima, butter or pinto, small</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beans - lima, butter or pinto, medium</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beans - lima, butter or pinto, large</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broccoli - flowerets, 1 1/2 inches across</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broccoli, small heads</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Foods that Don’t Freeze Well

**Produce:** cabbage, celery, endive, radishes, lettuce, potatoes

**Grains:** cooked pasta (spaghetti especially) amaranth, teff

**Proteins:** Cooked egg whites

**Dairy:** Milk/cream sauces, soft cheeses, sour cream

**Other:** Mayonnaise, fried foods
Foods that Do Freeze Well

**Produce:** berries, broccoli, cauliflower, beans, kale, collards, squash, eggplant, corn, brussels sprouts, tomatoes, and more!

**Grains:** barley, buckwheat, millet, quinoa, rye, bulgur wheat, farro, breads, rice, dough

**Proteins:** scrambled eggs, meat (fish, poultry, red meat), tofu, beans, tempeh

**Dairy:** Hard cheeses, butter

**Other:** Nuts, herbs, pasta sauce

Soups, stews, curries, chilis, and stir-fries are all excellent freezer meal options.
Food Safety and Storage Tips

**Safe Containers:** Gallon-sized freezer safe bags, mason jars, glass meal prep containers, reusable silicone bags, muffin tins

**Label Freezer Foods:** Recipe name, date, any added instructions

**Leftovers:** Freeze leftovers within 3-4 days. Do not refreeze any foods left outside the refrigerator longer than 2 hours; 1 hour in temperatures above 90 °F.
Food Safety and Storage Tips

Proper Cooling of Food

- Food must cool from 135ºF to 70ºF in two hours
- Food must finish cooling to 41ºF within a total of six hours
- Shallow pan method, size reduction, and ice bath are all safe ways to cool food

Proper Thawing of Food:

- Do not thaw food at room temperature
- Refrigerator, cold water, and microwave thawing are all safe options
Food Demo: Garden Eggplant and Tomato Stew

Garden Fresh Eggplant and Tomato Stew

Prep time: 10 minutes  Cooking time: 50 minutes  Servings: 4

Ingredients:
- 1 large eggplant, 1 inch cubes
- 1 large yellow onion
- 4 cups roma tomatoes, chopped
- 5 cloves garlic
- 1 15 oz can chickpeas, drained
- 1 Tbsp smoked paprika
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 1 Tbsp maple syrup
- 1 Tbsp cumin
- 2 Tbsp olive oil
- 1/4 cup vegetable broth
- 1 TBSP sriracha (or more)
- Cilantro and lemon for topping (optional)

Nutrition Facts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nutrition Facts</th>
<th>Servings: 4</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Amount per serving</td>
<td>Calories: 293</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Daily Value*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Fat 11.7g</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saturated Fat 1.9g</td>
<td>11%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cholesterol 0mg</td>
<td>0%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sodium 44mg</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Carbohydrate 43.5g</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dietary Fiber 11.6g</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Sugars 4.1g</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protein 1.0g</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vitamin A 8%</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calcium 51%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Iron 14%</td>
<td>3%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Potassium 11%</td>
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*The % Daily Value (%DV) tells you how much a nutrient in a serving of food contributes to a daily diet. 2,000 calories a day is used for general nutrition advice.

Directions:
1. Preheat oven to 425 F and grease baking sheet.
2. Add diced eggplant, drizzle with olive oil and sprinkle with salt. Toss and roast for 30 minutes. For even cooking, flip eggplant at 15 minute mark.
3. While eggplant is roasting, heat large rimmed pot over medium. Add oil and onions. Sauté for 5 minutes, or until soft and slightly brown.
4. Add garlic, cumin, and smoked paprika. Cook for 1 minute.
5. Add chopped tomatoes and veggie broth. Cover and simmer over medium for 5 minutes.
6. Add chickpeas, maple syrup, harissa paste and stir. Remove eggplant from oven and add to pot. Cover and cook for 10 more minutes.
7. Serve with brown rice, farro, or grain of choice! Top with cilantro and a fresh squeeze of lemon.
8. Freezes well for 3 months. Check out this list of freezer friendly storage containers.