



HCSF Newsletter

August 2009

It's August and all the hard work you put into your garden is paying off. **What to do with all those veggies?** Read on for recipes that take advantage of all your garden's goodies. We've also given you lots of tips on how to store your produce for use now, and freezing tips so you can enjoy it later too! Don't forget to grab the kids and get out and enjoy the summer weather – swimming, Frisbee golf, after dinner bike rides all fit the bill!

At right: Ali Pamonicutt, Vance Richmond, Layla Wescott, Sonny Pamonicutt, Shayleece Miller, Dot Wescott and Carol Barnes (in background) enjoy a game of Frisbee golf at the course on the Pow Wow grounds in Keshena.



Jean Cox and Layla Wescott share their knowledge of the Menominee language after a nature walk.

Soup in summer? You bet!
Cool, refreshing, and a great way to use up those garden fresh veggies!

Salsa Soup

Ingredients:

1 large container low fat plain yogurt
1 jar of your favorite salsa or picante sauce (go mild to start)

OR

2 tomatoes chopped, 1 boppin bell pepper (green) chopped, 1 small onion, finely chopped

Garlic powder (or other spices you like)

Add all ingredients to blender. Whir to combine. Refrigerate until serving. Whisk or shake well to combine just before serving.



Cool Cucumber Soup

1 large container low fat plain yogurt
Cucumbers, peeled and seeded*, chopped
1-2 Tablespoons fresh dill or chives (optional)
Salt and pepper



*(After you peel the cucumber, cut it in half lengthwise. Take a spoon and scoop out the seeds.)

Place yogurt, cucumbers and dill or chives (if using) in blender. Whir to combine. Season with salt and pepper to taste. Refrigerate until serving. Whisk or shake well to combine just before serving.

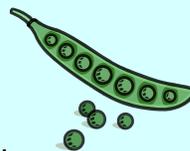
This soup is great with some chopped tomato as a garnish!

All About Blanching!

In order to freeze vegetables, most of them should be blanched first. What do we mean by that? Blanching is boiling vegetables for a very brief amount of time, which preserves the color, texture, and nutrients that would otherwise be lost when frozen.

How to blanch vegetables:

1. Cut vegetables into uniform sized pieces
2. Bring pot of water to a boil.
3. Fill another pot or bowl with COLD water and ice cubes.
4. Fully immerse vegetables into boiling water. Immediately cover and start the timer.
5. Boil for the time directed. Immediately drain vegetables and place them in cold water for the same amount of time as the vegetables were boiled.
6. Dry vegetables thoroughly. Pack them in freezer bags or rigid freezer containers and write the date on the containers.



Freezing Tips!



- Wrap foods well in airtight freezer-designed packages to prevent freezer burn
- Keep careful track of what is in your freezer- everything should have the date it was frozen, and what it is.
- Freeze meat, veggies and left-overs in small portions. These will take less time to defrost. **Try freezing veggies in 1-2 cup portion sizes.**
- Avoid freezing foods with high water content such as cucumber or watermelon.
- Stack similar foods together, designate one shelf for meat, one for baked goods and one for vegetables.
- Review the contents of your freezer periodically. Reorganize so that the oldest items are always in front and are therefore used first.

Food	How Long Will This Last?	How to Store for use NOW:	How to Freeze for use LATER:
Tomatoes 	1 week	Stem Down at room temperature. NEVER refrigerate tomatoes – they will get mealy and lose their taste!	Wash, remove stems, cut into halves or quarters or leave whole. Dry and pack into freezer bags. Remove air, label and seal. OR dip into boiling water 1 minute. Remove and peel. Place on a tray and freeze for 30 minutes. Place in plastic bags; remove air, seal and label. Keeps up to 6 months.
Cherries 	5 days	Store in a plastic container in the coldest part of your refrigerator	Rinse in ice-cold water and pit the cherries. Place cherries on a baking sheet, freeze, then transfer to freezer bag or container.
Berries 	5-8 days	Store in the refrigerator in a vented bag. Only wash right before eating to prevent mold growth while berries are in the fridge!	Place berries on a baking sheet, freeze, and then transfer to freezer bag or container.
Peas 	4-6 days	Refrigerate in an open container or bowl.	Peas can be blanched and frozen in the pods, blanching time: 2-3 minutes.
Corn 	4-7 days	Refrigerate. Leave in husks until ready to eat or freeze. The husk helps retain freshness!	Blanch on the cob, then cut off kernels, blanching time: 4 minutes.
Bell Peppers 	1 week	Refrigerate and keep in the vegetable drawer or crisper.	Wash, remove seeds and cut into slices or leave whole. Place on a tray in a single layer. Freeze for 30 minutes. Pack in freezer bags; remove air, label and seal. Freeze up to 6 months. Peppers can be frozen without blanching.
Summer Squash/ Zucchini 	1 week	Refrigerate in a plastic bag. Do not wash until ready to use.	Slice into 1 inch pieces without peeling. Blanching time: 3 minutes. Freeze up to 3 months.

To use frozen vegetables:

Bring ½ cup of lightly salted water to a boil for every 2 cups of frozen vegetables. Do not thaw the vegetables first. Add frozen vegetables and bring the water back to a boil. Cover and cook on low heat until fork tender.

Beans: boil for 5-8 min
 Corn: boil for 3-4 min



Peas: 5-10 min
 Zucchini/Summer Squash: boil 8-10 min

Frozen vegetables can also be cooked by microwaving, stir frying, baking, or adding to soups, stews and chili.