
















How to Freeze 20 Fruits and Vegetables

VEGETABLES	PREP	BLANCH
English peas 	Shell peas	Yes (1 to 1½ minutes)
Snap peas and snow peas 	Trim strings	Yes (1 to 1½ minutes)
Wax or green beans 	Trim stem ends	Yes (1 to 2 minutes)
Bell peppers 	Remove stem and seeds and cut into 4 pieces or into strips or dice	No
Asparagus 	Trim woody bottoms	Yes (1 to 2 minutes)
Spinach 	Wash and trim	Yes (1 to 1½ minutes)
Tomatoes 	Peel (you'll need to blanch them first), seed, and cut into chunks	Yes, to remove the peel (30 seconds)
Broccoli and cauliflower 	Remove stems and cut florets into 1½-inch pieces	Yes (2 to 3 minutes)
Corn 	Remove husks and leave the cob whole	Yes (3 to 5 minutes); cut kernels off after blanching, if needed
Rhubarb 	Cut into 2-inch chunks	Not necessary but can help retain the vivid color
FRUITS	PREP	BLANCH
Raspberries, blueberries, blackberries 	Leave whole, wash, and dry well	No
Strawberries 	Remove hull, wash, and dry well	No
Cherries 	Leave whole, wash, and dry well; remove the pit, if you like	No
Peaches and nectarines 	Peel (the peel hardens during freezing) and remove the pit; then cut into 1-inch wedges	No
Apricots 	Remove the pit and cut in half, or in quarters if large	No

to blanch

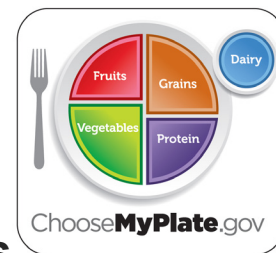
Most vegetables benefit from blanching before freezing. The process slows the loss of nutrients, and also brightens the vegetables' color. In general, fruits don't need blanching (unless it's to remove the peel).

1. Bring a large pot of water to a rolling boil (about 2 quarts per 2 to 3 cups of vegetables).
2. Working in small batches, add the vegetables. Allow the water to return to a boil and cook according to the times listed at left.
3. Using a large slotted spoon, scoop out the veggies and immediately immerse them in a large bowl of ice water to stop the cooking. Remove and dry thoroughly before freezing.

to freeze

1. Create a level area in your freezer to fit a rimmed baking sheet. If you're strapped for space, use something smaller—like a cake pan—and repeat the freezing steps below as needed.
2. Line the baking sheet with parchment, foil, or waxed paper. Prep the fruits or vegetables as directed at left. Arrange the prepared fruits or vegetables in a single layer, making sure they don't touch. Freeze until solid, 60 to 90 minutes, depending on size and freezer temperature.
3. Transfer to heavy-duty freezer bags. Press out as much air from the bag as possible (if you have a vacuum sealer, use it), seal, and store in the back of the freezer (the coldest part) until ready to use.

smart shopping for veggies and fruits



10 tips for affordable vegetables and fruits

It is possible to fit vegetables and fruits into any budget. Making nutritious choices does not have to hurt your wallet. Getting enough of these foods promotes health and can reduce your risk of certain diseases. There are many low-cost ways to meet your fruit and vegetable needs.

1 celebrate the season

Use fresh vegetables and fruits that are in season. They are easy to get, have more flavor, and are usually less expensive. Your local farmer's market is a great source of seasonal produce.



2 why pay full price?

Check the local newspaper, online, and at the store for sales, coupons, and specials that will cut food costs. Often, you can get more for less by visiting larger grocery stores (discount grocers if available).

3 stick to your list

Plan out your meals ahead of time and make a grocery list. You will save money by buying only what you need. Don't shop when you're hungry. Shopping after eating will make it easier to pass on the tempting snack foods. You'll have more of your food budget for vegetables and fruits.

4 try canned or frozen

Compare the price and the number of servings from fresh, canned, and frozen forms of the same veggie or fruit. Canned and frozen items may be less expensive than fresh. For canned items, choose fruit canned in 100% fruit juice and vegetables with "low sodium" or "no salt added" on the label.



5 buy small amounts frequently

Some fresh vegetables and fruits don't last long. Buy small amounts more often to ensure you can eat the foods without throwing any away.

6 buy in bulk when items are on sale

For fresh vegetables or fruits you use often, a large size bag is the better buy. Canned or frozen fruits or vegetables can be bought in large quantities when they are on sale, since they last much longer.

7 store brands = savings

Opt for store brands when possible. You will get the same or similar product for a cheaper price. If your grocery store has a membership card, sign up for even more savings.

8 keep it simple

Buy vegetables and fruits in their simplest form. Pre-cut, pre-washed, ready-to-eat, and processed foods are convenient, but often cost much more than when purchased in their basic forms.



9 plant your own

Start a garden—in the yard or a pot on the deck—for fresh, inexpensive, flavorful additions to meals. Herbs, cucumbers, peppers, or tomatoes are good options for beginners. Browse through a local library or online for more information on starting a garden.



10 plan and cook smart

Prepare and freeze vegetable soups, stews, or other dishes in advance. This saves time and money. Add leftover vegetables to casseroles or blend them to make soup. Overripe fruit is great for smoothies or baking.

Take your best ESTIMATE or use a provided sale flyer.

Price of 1 whole pineapple: \$ _____

Price of 1 whole honeydew melon: \$ _____

Price of 1 pound container of strawberries: \$ _____

Price of 1 whole watermelon: \$ _____

Price of 3 kiwis: \$ _____

Price of 1 pound of grapes: \$ _____

Total: \$ _____

How many people do you think this could serve (1 serving of fruit = 1 cup): _____

140 Oz. - Serves 20

Fresh Fruit Platter

Fresh pineapple, honeydew, cantaloupe, strawberries, seedless watermelon, kiwi and red & green grapes, with cream cheese dip.

SERVES 20

Additional nutrition information available upon request.

\$44⁹⁹



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Quantity:  each



MAINE PRODUCE SEASON AVAILABILITY

A publication of the Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry, Agricultural Resource Development Division, 28 State House Station, Augusta, ME 04333-0028, 207-287-7625, getrealmaine@maine.gov and www.getrealmaine.com

FRUIT JAN FEB MAR APR MAY JUN JUL AUG SEP OCT NOV DEC

	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
APPLES												
BLACKBERRIES												
BLUEBERRIES, HIGHBUSH												
BLUEBERRIES, WILD												
CANTALOUPES												
CRANBERRIES												
GRAPES												
PEACHES												
PEARS												
PLUMS												
RASPBERRIES												
RHUBARB												
STRAWBERRIES												
WATERMELON												
VEGETABLES												
ARUGULA												
ASPARAGUS												
BEANS (SNAP, WAX)												
BEANS (DRY)												
BEETS												
BEET GREENS												
BOK CHOY												
BROCCOLI												
BRUSSEL SPROUTS												
CABBAGE												
CHINESE CABBAGE												
CARROTS												
CAULIFLOWER												
CELERY												
CHARD												
CORN (SWEET)												
CUCUMBERS												
EGGPLANT												
FIDDLEHEADS												
GARLIC												
KALE/COLLARDS												
LEEKS												
LETTUCE/SPINACH/MIXED GREENS												
MORELS												
MUNG BEANS												
MUSHROOMS (CULTIVATED)												
ONIONS (BULB)												
PARSLEY												
PARSNIP												
PEAS (SHELL)												
PEAS (EDIBLE POD)												
PEPPERS												
POTATOES												
PUMPKINS												
RADISHES												
RUTABAGA												
SCALLIONS												
SHALLOTS												
SQUASH (SUMMER, ZUCCHINI)												
SQUASH (WINTER)												
SWEET POTATOES												
SWISS CHARD												
TOMATOES												
TURNIP												

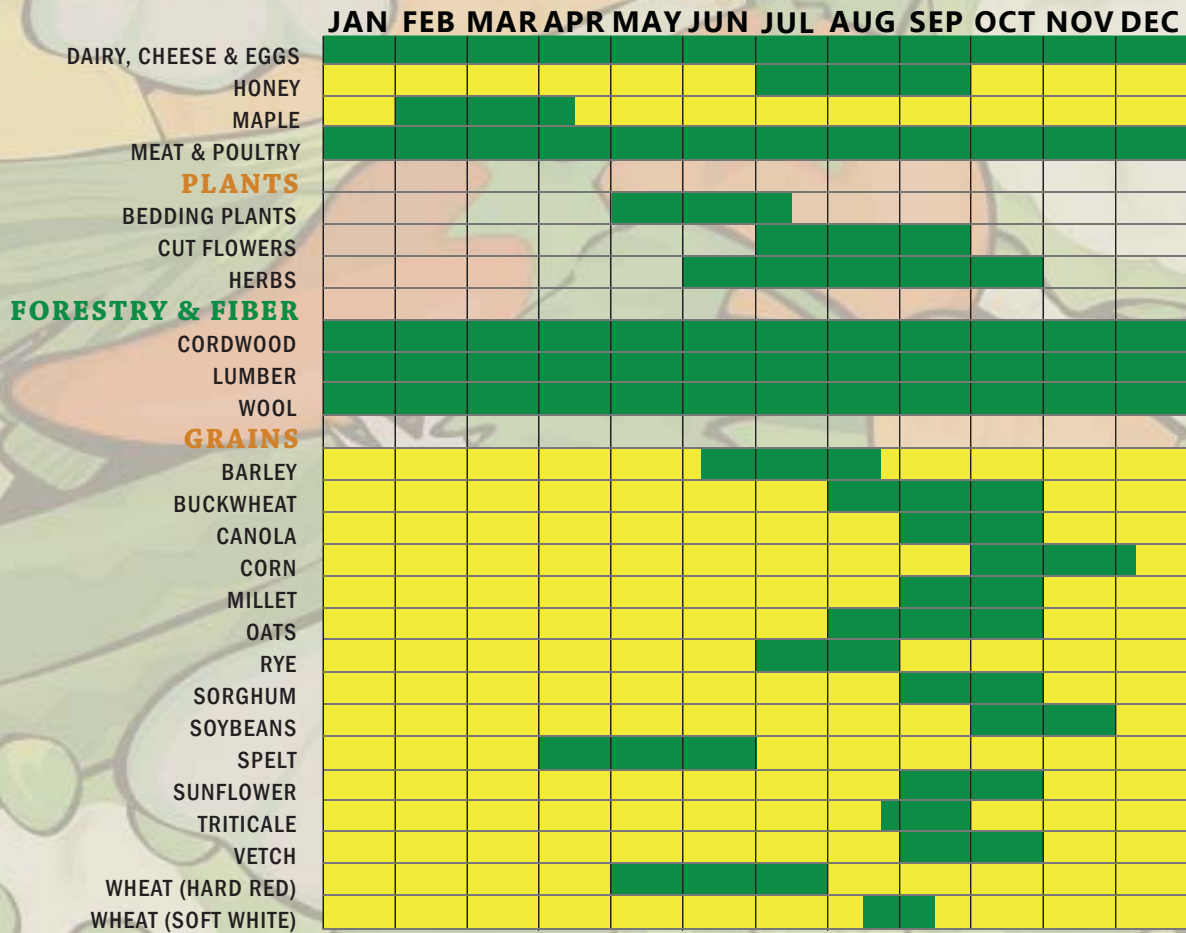
Key

- HARVEST SEASON
- EXTENDED SEASON OR FROM GREENHOUSE
- AVAILABLE FROM STORAGE



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Please note: the bars represent average dates for the state of Maine. Availability of products can vary widely based upon weather, locality, variety grown and other conditions such as pests or disease outbreak. This chart is meant to serve as a guideline for the purchase of fresh, wholesome Maine-grown products. Look for the *Get Real. Get Maine!* logo at your local grocery store, farmer's market or farm stand.

For more information on Maine produce, growing techniques and resources, please visit the following websites:

Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry: Division of Animal and Plant Health:
<http://www.maine.gov/dacf/php/index.shtml>

UMaine Cooperative Extension: Agriculture:
<http://umaine.edu/agriculture/programs/>

UMaine Cooperative Extension: Grains & Oilseeds:
<http://umaine.edu/grains-oilseeds/>

Johnny's Selected Seeds: Grower's Library:
<http://www.johnnyseeds.com/t-growers-library-index.aspx>

The Great American Seed Company: Vegetable Gardening Basics:
<http://www.greatamericalseed.com/vegetable-gardening-basics/>

