



The Big Freeze and Freeze Tag

Food Safety When the Freezer Goes Off:

- Keep the freezer closed. A fully loaded, closed freezer can keep food frozen 1 to 2 days.
- Move food to another freezer if possible.
- Add dry ice -- 2½ pounds per cubic foot of freezer space. Handle with gloves. Put heavy cardboard over food packages first. Cover with blankets. Keep closed.
- Refreeze partially thawed fruits and vegetables if they contain ice crystals or have not warmed above 40 degrees Fahrenheit. Otherwise, throw thawed food out.

Sources:

Canned Food Alliance
www.mealtime.org
ChooseMyplate.gov

Shopping and Storing Frozen Foods

A wide variety of frozen fruits and vegetables are found in stores today. When purchasing produce from the freezers, consider the following tips:

- choose plain vegetables or those made with low-fat sauces
- check the label for unsweetened frozen fruits
- choose frozen fruit bars made with real fruit juice
- buy loose-pack bags, use what you need and freeze the rest

Frozen fruits and vegetables can be kept for up to one year in the original package. Prolonged freezing reduces food quality through drying, called freezer burn. Freezer burn does not make food unsafe, but can make it look dull and taste dry and bland.

Nutrition Benefits of Frozen Fruits & Vegetables

Fresh fruits and vegetables from a garden, a farmer's market, or a grocery store help you enjoy half a plate of fruits and vegetables. Frozen fruits and vegetables are a nutritious option for variety year round. Frozen produce is processed right after harvesting resulting in little nutrient loss.

When cooking, steam or microwave veggies for short periods to retain nutrients. Use lower temperatures and small amounts of water when cooking on the stove top. Frozen fruits can be used in smoothies or served partially thawed to keep their shape.

Fruits and vegetables are low in calories and high in fiber, vitamins and minerals, and contain phytochemicals which may reduce the risk for many chronic diseases. They help you feel full and can help in maintaining a healthy weight.

Activity – Fruit and Vegetable Freeze Tag

The game of tag is played worldwide. One or more players chase other players trying to tag them. Tag can be played anywhere and does not require special equipment.

For Freeze Tag, once tagged, the person is frozen in place. To be freed and able to move again, an unfrozen person has to tag them. For this variation on the game, the frozen player must also shout out a fruit or vegetable that can be frozen. Once named, that particular food cannot be used again in the game.



Comments on Freezing Fruits and Vegetables

Fruits

1. Select ripe fruit, but do not use overripe or under ripe fruit.
2. Wash and sort according to size.
3. Pare and remove pits, seeds, and blemishes. Leave berries whole, cut larger fruits into slices or chunks.
4. For fruits that brown, use anti-darkening agents following package directions.
5. Spread small, whole fruits like berries on a single layer on a tray and freeze until nearly solid. Transfer to freezer bags or containers. Pieces of fruit can be bagged and frozen.
6. Label, freeze, and use within 8 to 12 months.

Vegetables

1. Choose young, tender veggies, freezing as soon as possible.
2. Work with small amounts.
3. Blanch in boiling water or steam on the stove top or in the microwave. For exact times, check a reliable source such as www.extension.org.
4. Cool quickly in cold water.
5. For dry pack, place vegetables in freezer bags or containers tightly packed. Squeeze out air and seal. Leave 1/2 - 3/4-inch headspace.
6. For tray pack, layer drained vegetables on a tray or pan. Freeze until firm. Transfer to freezer bags or containers.
7. Label, freeze, and use within 8 to 12 months.

For more information call:

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program 800-457-3659

Wyoming Department of Education Nutrition Programs 307-777-6263

University of Wyoming Cent\$ible Nutrition Program 877-219-4646

Wyoming Department of Health Women, Infant, and Children (WIC) 800-994-4769