



Delicious Frozen Corn Year Round

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Would you like to enjoy tender sweet corn all year round? A delicious winter meal can be prepared from frozen corn, and other fruits and vegetables, **harvested at peak quality and promptly frozen**. If you can not freeze corn within a few hours of harvest, store it in the refrigerator to preserve freshness until it can be frozen. Sweet corn loses flavor rapidly because natural sugars turn to starch after harvest, so rapid cooling and cold storage is especially important. Be sure to carefully follow each step in the freezing process.

All fruits and vegetables contain **enzymes** that can destroy nutrients and change the color, flavor, and texture of food during frozen storage. Vegetables such as corn require a brief heat treatment, **blanching in boiling water or steam**, to stop enzyme action before freezing. Blanching times generally vary from one to 10 minutes, depending on the vegetable. Times recommended are just long enough to stop the action of heat-resistant enzymes.

After vegetables are blanched, cool them quickly to prevent overcooking. Plunge baskets of hot-blanched vegetables into a large quantity of ice-cold water. Cool, and drain thoroughly before packing into an appropriate freezer container. A good **rule of thumb**: Cool for the same amount of time as the blanch step. For instance, if you blanch sweet corn for 4 minutes, then cool in ice water for 4 minutes.

There are several types of frozen corn that are easy to prepare. Choose from one of the following recipes to prepare a delicious treat for your family.

Frozen corn-on-the-cob

Husk corn, remove silks and trim ends. Blanch cobs 6 to 8 minutes. Chill thoroughly or kernels may become mushy. Pat ears dry. Package whole ears individually, then into a second package. If steam forms in wrap, ears have not completely chilled and must be cooled before freezing. Label and date packages and store for 3 to 6 months at 0°F or below.

Frozen whole kernel or cream-style corn

Husk corn, remove silks and trim ends. Do not delay after harvest. Blanch cobs for 4 minutes. Chill in ice water. Cut corn off cob from 2/3 depth of kernel for whole kernel corn, and from center of kernel for cream-style. Collect kernels. If preparing cream style corn, scrape cobs to remove juice. Collect cut kernels, and juice if cream style, package, label and freeze at 0°F or below for 3 to 6 months.

Most vegetables should be **kept frozen until cooked**. But corn-on-the-cob is an exception. Partially thaw corn-on-the-cob so the cob is heated through by the time the corn is cooked. Cook frozen vegetables in a small amount of boiling water only until tender. A microwave oven can be used successfully to cook frozen vegetables. Follow the manufacturer's recommendations for times and power level.

Resources:

Freezing Fruits and Vegetables, by Barbara H. Ingham. B3278, University of Wisconsin-Extension. 2000.

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