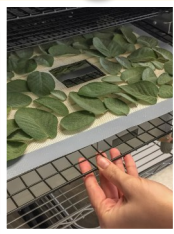


So You Want to Preserve



Strawberries & Rhubarb

June 2021

Strawberry Season

Preparation: Select fully ripe, firm berries with a deep red color. Discard immature and defective fruit. Wash and remove caps.



Strawberries can be frozen with or without sugar. They can be whole, sliced or crushed.

Freezing

Freezing without sugar - whole or sliced strawberries.

Spread berries in a single layer on a rimmed baking sheet and freeze until solid (prevents berries from sticking together). Transfer them to plastic freezer bags, pressing out as much air as possible. Label and place back in freezer.

Freezing with sugar - whole, sliced or crushed strawberries.

- **Sugar Pack:** Add $\frac{3}{4}$ cup sugar to 1 quart ($1\frac{1}{2}$ pounds) strawberries and mix thoroughly. Stir until most of the sugar is dissolved or let stand for 15 minutes.
- **Sugar Syrup Pack:** Dissolve an equal amount of sugar in warm water until clear to make a 50% sugar syrup, chill. Use just enough cold syrup to cover fruit.

Put into containers, leaving space for expansion as it freezes. Seal, label with product and date, then freeze.

Drying

Cut into uniform $\frac{1}{2}$ " slices.

Dry cut-side up at 130 to 140 degrees F. Use a dehydrator or dry in an oven if you are able to set the oven temperature low enough.

Drying time depends on the size of the pieces, exposure to air, temperature, and air circulation. Drying time: 7 to 15 hours for slices. 24 to 36 hours for whole berries.

Dried strawberries should be pliable and leathery with no bits of moisture.

After drying, cool fruit for 30 minutes.

Store in an air-tight or vacuum-sealed container. For longer storage, freeze.



Strawberry Fun Facts

- Americans eat about 3.4 pounds of strawberries per year.
- There are 200 seeds on the average strawberry. They are the only fruit to wear their seeds on the outside.
- The seeds can grow into a new plant, but most strawberries reproduce through runners.
- Considered a perennial, strawberry plants will grow back year after year.
- Don't wash strawberries until you are ready to eat them. It speeds up spoiling.
- Strawberries contain antioxidants, fiber, folic acid and more vitamin C than any other berry.

Rhubarb

✓ Rhubarb has Vitamin C, which helps heal cuts and wounds. It also has calcium which helps build bones.

FREEZING

Preparation: Choose firm, tender, well-colored stalks with few fibers. Wash, trim and cut into lengths to fit the your container.

Optional: Heat rhubarb in boiling water for 1 minute and cool promptly in cold water. This helps retain color and flavor.

Freezing without sugar: Pack raw or preheated rhubarb tightly into freezer bags or containers, leaving space for expansion as it freezes. Seal, label with product and date, then freeze.

Freezing with sugar:

Syrup Pack: Pack raw or preheated rhubarb tightly into freezer containers, cover with cold 40 percent syrup (2 3/4 cup sugar + 4 cups water, heat to dissolve the sugar, cool). Leave space for expansion as it freezes. Seal, label with product and date, then freeze. In general, up to one-fourth of the sugar may be replaced by corn syrup or mild-flavored honey. Always chill syrup before using. Use just enough cold syrup to cover the prepared fruit after it has been placed in the container (about 1/2 to 2/3 cup of syrup per pint).

To keep fruit under the syrup, place a small piece of crumbled wax paper or plastic wrap on top, and press fruit down into the syrup before sealing the container.



Rhubarb-Strawberry Jam With Liquid Pectin

1 cup cooked red-stalked rhubarb (about 1 pound rhubarb and 1/4 cup water)
2 1/2 cups crushed strawberries (about 1 1/2 quart boxes)
6 1/2 cups sugar
1 pouch liquid pectin

Sterilize canning jars and prepare two-piece canning lids according to manufacturer's directions.

Wash rhubarb and slice thin or chop; do not peel. Add water, cover, and simmer until rhubarb is tender (about 1 minute). Measure prepared rhubarb. Sort and wash fully ripe strawberries; remove stems and caps. Crush berries and measure.

Place rhubarb and strawberries into a sauce pan. Add sugar and stir well. Place on high heat, stirring constantly, bring quickly to a full boil with bubbles over the entire surface. Boil hard for 1 minute, stirring constantly. Remove from heat and stir in pectin. Skim foam off top.

If processing less than 10 minutes jars need to be sterilized before filling. Immediately fill hot jars with hot jam, leaving 1/4 inch headspace. Wipe jar rims with a dampened clean paper towel; adjust two-piece metal canning lids.

Process in a Boiling Water Canner in half-pints or pint jars. Process time is determined by elevation: 0-1,000 feet for 5 minutes, 1,001-6,000 feet for 10 minutes, over 6,001 for 15 minutes.

Wait 5 minutes before removing from canner. Place jars on rack or towel and let sit undisturbed for 24 hours.

Yield: About 7 or 8 half-pint jars

Recipe Source: National Center for Home Food Preservation

Store Fresh Cut Rhubarb

Remove leaves from the stalk.
Place unwashed stalks in a plastic bag in the refrigerator and store for up to two weeks.

Reliable Resources:

National Home Food Preservation
<https://nchfp.uga.edu>



Nebraska Extension
www.food.unl.edu

For more information:
<http://go.unl.edu/foodpreservation>