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Where you can find a pick-your-own farm near you!

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See www.pickyourown.org/allaboutcanning.htm for many other canning directions and recipes

How to Freeze Cauliflower!

If you like frozen cauliflower in the winter, just imagine how good it would taste if you had picked a head yourself and then quickly froze it at home! It is also one of the simplest ways to put up a vegetable for the winter. Here's how to do it, complete instructions in easy steps and completely illustrated. The cauliflower will taste *MUCH* better than anything you've ever had from a store.

Directions for Freezing Cauliflower

Ingredients

- fresh cauliflower - any quantity. I figure one handful per serving.

Equipment

- 1 Large pot of boiling water
- 2 large bowls, one filled with cold water and ice.
- 1 sharp knife
- Vacuum food sealer or "ziploc" type freezer bags (the freezer bag version is heavier and protects better against freezer burn).

Instructions

Step 1 - Get the cauliflower!

This is the most important step! You need cauliflower that is FRESH and crisp. Limp, old cauliflower will make nasty tasting frozen cauliflower.



Cauliflower are of the best quality when they are tight, before the florets start to open or turn yellow. Cauliflower are of the best quality when they are tight, before the florets start to open or turn yellow.

How much cauliflower and where to get it

You can grow your own, pick your own, or buy them at the grocery store. Start with fresh cauliflower - as fresh as you can get.

Step 2 - Wash the cauliflower!

I'm sure you can figure out how to rinse the cauliflower in plain cold water. Trim off leaves and cut head into pieces about 1 inch across.



Step 3 - Split the cauliflower

Select firm, young, heads. Split lengthwise so flowerets are no more than 1 1/2 inches across. Remove leaves.



Step 4 - Soak the florets in brine (salt water)

Soak the cauliflower in brine (4 teaspoons salt to 1 gallon ordinary tap water) for 30 minutes to remove insects. Then rinse under fast running water.



Step 5- Get the pots ready

Get the pot of boiling water ready (about 2/3 filled) and a LARGE bowl with ice and cold water.



Step 6 - Blanch the cauliflower.

All fruits and vegetables contain **enzymes and bacteria** that, over time, break down the destroy nutrients and change the color, flavor, and texture of food during frozen storage. cauliflower requires a brief heat treatment, called **blanching, in boiling water or steam**, to destroy the enzymes before freezing.

Blanching times for cauliflower is 3 minutes (or blanch with steam for 5 minutes) - the duration is just long enough to stop the action of the enzymes and kill the bacteria.



Begin counting the blanching time as soon as you place the cauliflower in the boiling water. Cover the kettle and boil at a high temperature for the required length of time. You may use the same blanching water several times (up to 5). Be sure to add more hot water from the tap from time to time to keep the water level at the required height.

Step 7 - Cool the cauliflower



Cool cauliflower immediately in ice water. Drain the cauliflower thoroughly (this shouldn't take more than a minute).

After vegetables are blanched, cool them quickly to prevent overcooking. Plunge the cauliflower into a large quantity of ice-cold water (I keep adding more ice to it). A good rule of thumb: Cool for the same amount of time as the blanch step. For instance, if you blanch sweet cauliflower for 3 minutes, then cool in ice water for at least 3 minutes.

Drain thoroughly.

Step 8 - Bag the cauliflower

I love the FoodSavers ([see this page for more information](#)) with their vacuum sealing! I am not paid by them, but these things really work. If you don't have one, ziploc bags work, too, but it is hard to get as much air out of the

<http://www.PickYourOwn.org/freezingcauliflower.htm>

bags. Remove the air to prevent drying and freezer burn. **If you don't have a foodsaver, see two more methods for removing air, below.**



Method 2

Or hold the open bag underwater (keeping the open edge ABOVE water). The water pressure will push most of the air out). Seal it while it is still in the water. This method gets out most of the air, but the foodsaver gets out twice as much air.



Method 3 - The least effective method is the straw:

If you don't own a vacuum food sealer to freeze foods, place food in a Ziploc bags, zip the top shut but leave enough space to insert the tip of a soda straw. When straw is in place, remove air by sucking the air out. To remove straw, press straw closed where inserted and finish pressing the bag closed as you remove straw.



Step 9 - Done!

Pop them into the freezer, on the quick freeze shelf, if you have one!

I love the FoodSavers ([see this page for more information](#)) with their vacuum sealing!

Here's an example of one model:



FoodSaver V2840 Advanced Design

Chrome finish

About \$102



Features

- Home vacuum-packaging system vacuums, seals, and shuts off automatically
- 2 vacuum speeds; CrushFree Instant Seal; extra-wide nonstick sealing strip
- Flip-up space-saving design; stainless-steel lid; dishwasher-safe antibacterial drip tray
- Bag material, accessory hose, and instructions included
- Measures 16-3/4 by 9-3/4 by 14-1/2 inches



Tips:

- Harvest early in the morning, especially if the weather is hot, to get peak flavor.
- Harvest the cauliflower at its peak maturity (firm, straight, no florets opening, bright white, not yellowing)
- Process promptly after harvesting, or keep cooled in the fridge or with ice until then.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. I've frozen cauliflower but it seem so limp and fell apart. Any idea why?

Generally, that means the cauliflower was overcooked. It only takes 90 seconds in steam or boiling water to heat/cook the cauliflower after removing it from the freezer

2. How long can they be frozen?

It depends upon how cold is your freezer and how you packed them. Colder (deep freezes) are better than frost free compartments, which actually cycle above freezing (that's how they melt the ice). Vacuum packing results in longer storage capability, too. Thicker bags also help prevent freezer burn.

In general, up to 9 months in a ziploc bag in an ordinary freezer, and 14 months in a deep freeze in a vacuum packed bag. After that, they cauliflower won't make you sick; they just won't taste as good.

Home Canning Kits

Features:

- * All the tools you need for hot waterbath canning - in one comprehensive set!
- * Complete with 21 1/2 qt. enameled waterbath canner
- * Also includes canning rack, funnel, jar lifter, jar wrench, bubble freer, tongs and lid lifter.
- * A Kitchen Krafts exclusive collection.



Don't forget the Ball Blue Book!

This is the same type of standard canner that my grandmother used to make everything from applesauce to jams and jellies to tomato and spaghetti sauce. This complete kit includes everything you need and lasts for years: the canner, jar rack, jar grabber tongs, lid lifting wand, a plastic funnel, labels, bubble freer. It's much cheaper than buying the items separately. You'll never need anything else except jars & lids (and the jars are reusable)! There is also a simple kit with just the canner and rack, and a pressure canner, if you want to do vegetables (other than tomatoes). To see [more canners, of different styles, makes and prices, click here!](#)

Other Equipment:

From left to right:

1. Jar lifting tongs - helpful to pick up hot jars
2. Lid lifter - to remove lids from the pot of hot water
3. Lid - disposable - you may only use them once
4. Ring - holds the lids on the jar until after the jars cool - then you don't need them
5. Canning jar funnel - to fill the jars

