

PEPPER BASICS

Factsheet | HGIC 3535 | Updated: Mar 15, 2005

Purchasing & Preparing Peppers

- Sweet peppers should be fresh-looking, firm, thick-fleshed and a bright green or red color, depending on the stage of maturity.
- Avoid peppers that are soft and dull-looking.
- At home, keep sweet peppers cool and humid and use them within a few days for maximum freshness.
- To prepare peppers to stuff or bake, cut off tops and remove seeds and membrane from inside. Cook peppers in a small amount of boiling water for 5 minutes, then drain, stuff and bake as your recipe directs.
- When working with hot peppers, always wear plastic gloves or coat hands with fat to avoid burns.

Pepper Tidbits

- For a spicy side dish, sauté sliced peppers with minced fresh garlic in olive oil.
- Cut fresh green or red sweet peppers in quarters, remove seeds and membrane, and stuff each quarter with seasoned cream cheese for a colorful hors d'oeuvre.
- Add ¼ cup finely chopped green pepper to 1 pound of ground beef for extra pep in hamburger or meatloaf.
- Sauté sliced peppers with fresh mushrooms and onions to top steak sandwiches, hamburgers and hot dogs, subs, or any favorite sandwich.
- Raw pepper rings are delicious on sandwiches.
- Wrap crisp pepper strips in plastic to preserve fresh taste and crisp texture and pack into lunch bags for a healthful and delicious snack.
- Chop fresh sweet peppers into tuna or egg salad for bright color and terrific taste.
- Stir-fry sweet peppers with beef or chicken for quick and easy cooking.

Pickled Peppers (Hungarian, Banana, Other Varieties)

Makes about 8 pint jars

Wash 4 quarts long red, green or yellow peppers and drain. Cut 2 small slits in each pepper. Dissolve 1½ cups salt in 1 gallon water. Pour over peppers and let stand 12 to 18 hours in refrigerator. Drain peppers, rinse again and drain thoroughly.

Combine 2 tablespoons horseradish, 2 cloves garlic, 10 cups vinegar, 2 cups water and ¼ cup sugar; simmer 15 minutes. Remove garlic. Pack peppers into hot jars, leaving ½-inch headspace. Bring liquid to

a boil. Fill jar to ½ inch from top with boiling liquid. Remove air bubbles, wipe jar rims and adjust lids. Process 10 minutes in a boiling water bath at altitudes up to 1,000 feet. At altitudes between 1,001 and 6,000 feet, process for 15 minutes.

For more information on peppers, request **HGIC 3440, Pickled Peppers**, or **HGIC 3300, Preserving Vegetables**.

If this document didn't answer your questions, please contact HGIC at hgic@clemson.edu or 1-888-656-9988.

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