



Home Food Preservation and the Amazing Apple

While fresh apples are available most of the year, preserving apples by canning, freezing or drying provides you with many ways to enjoy this delicious fruit.

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There are any number of uses for home preserved apples.

- Canned apple slices can be used in desserts or fruit cocktail.
- Canned apple pie filling can make a favorite dessert or even frozen apple pies.
- Spiced apple rings adorn salads and main dishes at holidays.
- Dried apples are a concentrated source of energy for a snack.

Since some apples oxidize quickly when cut surfaces

are exposed to air, it is important to take steps to prevent this for a good quality final product. Prevent browning by dipping cut apples in an ascorbic acid solution (1-teaspoon ascorbic acid or six finely crushed 500-milligram vitamin C tablets per gallon of water) or use a commercial ascorbic acid mixture. Leave the cut apples in

the solution while preparing the remaining fruit; drain before proceeding with canning, freezing, or drying.

[Let's Preserve Apples](#) provides detailed information on canning and freezing apples.

Apple Slices

If you decide to can or freeze apple slices follow the recommendations in [Let's Preserve Apples](#).

Remember these tips when freezing apple slices.

- Apple slices can be frozen with or without sugar or in syrup.
- Syrup pack is preferred for apples being used for uncooked desserts or fruit cocktail.
- A sugar or dry pack is good for freezing slices for pie making.
- Press fruit down into the container and add enough syrup to cover.
- Leave headspace for expansion so that the syrup does not overflow the container making a sticky mess in the freezer.
- A small piece of crumpled plastic wrap or plastic coated freezer paper placed on top of the fruit helps hold the fruit in the liquid.
- Note: The method of adding color protectors to frozen apples depends upon the method of adding the sugar. Dry pack apples with or without sugar are sprinkled with ascorbic acid dissolved in water; the ascorbic acid is added directly to the sugar syrup.
- Quick-freezing individual slices on a tray before packing them into bags is popular; remember to pretreat these slices with color protector.

Apple Pies

Canned Pie Filling

- Use research based recipes to make canned pie filling such as [Let's Preserve Fruit Pie Fillings](#).
- **Use only regular ClearJel® or Thermflo® to thicken canned pie filling.** These modified food starches do not solidify until they cool allowing for heat transfer to the center of the jar during processing. Cornstarch, flour, and tapioca interfere with heat transfer during processing.

- Use the amount of bottled lemon juice called for in the recipe to control acidity needed for water bath canning.
- Expect expansion of the pie filling during processing.

Frozen Apple Pies

Another pie option is to freeze apple pies or apple pie filling.

- Frozen pie fillings made with tapioca or a modified food starch such as Thermflo® or Instant ClearJel® are more stable to freezer temperatures than those thickened with flour or cornstarch.
- Do not use regular ClearJel® in frozen products because it will separate.
- Save space by freezing the filling in a foil lined pie pan; when frozen, fold the edges of the foil over the filling, remove from the pan, place in a plastic freezer bag and return to the freezer. The pie pan is then free for other uses.
- When ready to use the frozen filling, place the pan-shaped frozen filling into a pastry lined pan and bake as usual allowing extra time (about 20-25 minutes extra) for the fruit to heat through. This method also works for freezing pie filling in a casserole for use as a crisp or cobbler.
- Freeze pies either baked or unbaked. Pre-baked pies will keep longer than unbaked ones, but they will not have that fresh baked aroma or crispness.
- Freeze all products at 0°F. Freeze no more than 2 pounds of food per cubic foot of freezer space so that the food freezes quickly. Quick freezing keeps the ice crystals small within the food.