



Preserving Foods: *Summer Squash*

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Squash is abundant during the summer months. Varieties of summer squash include green and yellow zucchini, yellow crookneck, straight neck, scallop, and patty pan.

For best quality, select young, tender squash. When over mature, the rind becomes hard and the seeds toughen. These do not preserve well and do not have a good flavor.

Summer squash can be frozen, dried and pickled.

NOTE: Canning summer squash, including zucchini, is no longer recommended. There is uncertainty related to the determination of research based processing times. These products also have very poor quality when canned. Zucchini can be canned with tomatoes. A safety tested recipe is included in this publication.

Freezing

Wash, trim and slice or dice squash. Blanch in boiling water: 3 minutes for 1¼ inch slices or ½ inch diced pieces; 6 minutes for 1½ inch slices. (Allow 1 gallon of water per pound of vegetables.) Cool immediately in ice water. When cool, drain.

Pack into moisture/vapor-resistant freezer containers. Seal and store at 0°F. or below for best quality.

Grated zucchini squash can be frozen for use in breads. Blanching is not necessary because spices will mask flavor changes.

Drying

Wash, trim, and cut into ¼ inch slices. Spread in a thin layer on drying trays. Dry to a brittle stage in the sun or in an oven or dehydrator at 140°F.

If desired, slices can be sprinkled with seasoned salt or dipped in barbecue sauce before drying to make “zucchini chips.” Serve them as a snack or with dips.

Dried squash can be used in soups or casseroles. Dried squash can be ground and used as a seasoning.

Pickling

Bread & Butter Zucchini Pickles

16 cups fresh zucchini, sliced	2 cups sugar
4 cups onions, thinly sliced	2 tsp. ground turmeric
½ cup pickling or canning salt	2 Tbsp. celery seed
4 cups white vinegar (5%)	4 Tbsp. mustard seed

Cover zucchini and onion slices with 1 inch of water and salt. Let stand 2 hours, then drain thoroughly. Combine vinegar, sugar, and spices. Bring brine to a boil. Add zucchini and onions, and simmer 5 minutes. Fill jars with mixture and pickling solution, leaving ½ inch headspace. Adjust lids and process in boiling water bath 10 minutes for pints and quarts. After processing, take canner off heat. Remove lid. Wait 5 minutes before removing jars.

Yield 8-9 pints

Zucchini Relish

10 cups grated zucchini	2¼ cups vinegar (5%)
4 cups grated onions	4 cups sugar
5 Tbsp. salt	1 tsp. nutmeg
1 red pepper, chopped	1 tsp. dry mustard
1 green pepper, chopped	2 Tbsp. celery seed

Add salt to ground zucchini and onions and let stand in the refrigerator for 24 hours. Drain in a colander. Add chopped peppers. Mix remaining ingredients together and bring to a boil. Add zucchini/onion/pepper mixture. Bring to a boil; reduce heat and simmer for 20 minutes, stirring frequently to prevent sticking. Ladle hot relish into jars, adjust lids and process 10 minutes in a boiling water canner. After processing, take canner off heat. Remove lid. Wait 5 minutes before removing jars.

Canning

Tomatoes with Zucchini

Quantity - An average of 12 pounds of tomatoes and 4 pounds of zucchini is needed per canner load of 7 quarts. An average of 7 pounds of tomatoes and 2½ pounds of zucchini is needed per canner load of 9 pints.

Procedure - Wash tomatoes and zucchini. Dip tomatoes in boiling water 30 to 60 seconds or until skins split. Then dip in cold water, slip off skins and remove cores and quarter. Slice or cube zucchini. Bring tomatoes to a boil and simmer 10 minutes. Add zucchini and boil gently 5 minutes. Fill jars with mixture, leaving 1 inch headspace. Add 1 teaspoon of salt per quart, if desired. Adjust lids and process in a pressure canner at 240°F: 30 minutes for pints, 35 minutes for quarts (10 pounds pressure with a weighted gauge canner, 11 pounds with a dial gauge canner). Adjust pressure for altitude as shown. After processing, take canner off heat. Remove lid. Wait 5 minutes before removing jars.

Zucchini Pineapple

Caution: Home-canned zucchini-pineapple mixtures has been a popular way to use abundant zucchini squash. Because squash is a low acid food, it is critical to add enough acid (pineapple juice and/or lemon juice) for safe processing in a boiling water bath.

The following recipe has been tested and will be *safe if followed exactly*.

1 gallon zucchini squash
3 cups sugar
46 oz. can pineapple juice
1½ cups lemon juice

Peel zucchini and either cut into ½ inch cubes or shred. Combine all ingredients in a large kettle. Bring to a boil and simmer 20 minutes. Fill jars with hot mixture and cooking liquid, leaving ½ inch headspace. Adjust lids and process half-pints or pints 15 minutes in boiling water bath. After processing, take canner off heat. Remove lid. Wait 5 minutes before removing jars.

Caution: There are recipes for zucchini jam circulating. Their high proportion of sugar will prevent botulism. *The sugar should not be reduced in these recipes.*

For questions on preserving summer squash, contact your local county Extension office.

Source: OSU Master Food Preserver Program