



Preserving Foods:

Corn

SP 50-443, Revised May 2009

When preserving corn, select ears that have plump, fully developed kernels and milky juice. The ears should be free from worms and decay. Corn is best if it is preserved within a few hours after picking. Corn loses its sweet flavor rapidly once harvested.

It takes about 3-6 pounds of corn to fill a quart jar. A bushel yields 6-10 quarts.

Corn may be frozen, canned, dried, or pickled.

Freezing Whole Kernel Corn

Husk ears. Remove silk and wash well. Blanch in boiling water for 4-5 minutes. (Allow 1 gallon of water for each pound of vegetables). Cool promptly in ice water. Drain.

Cut the outer third of the kernels from the cob. (For cream-style, cut kernels half-way to the cob and scrape the cobs with the back of a knife to remove juice and the remaining kernels.)

Pack into moisture/vapor-resistant freezing containers, leaving ½ inch headspace. Seal and freeze at 0°F. or below for best quality.

Freezing Corn on the Cob

Sort husked and washed ears by size. Blanch in boiling water: 7 minutes for small ears; 9 minutes for medium ears; 11 minutes for large ears. Cool promptly in ice water. Drain.

Wrap ears in freezer paper. Store at 0°F. or below. For best quality use corn on the cob within 3-6 months.

Canning Corn

Do not can corn with a high sugar content (such as super sweet varieties or immature corn). The sugar caramelizes during processing and causes browning. To check color and flavor, can a small amount of corn as a trial run.

Corn must be processed in a pressure canner at 240°F. (10 pounds pressure with a weighted gauge; 11 pounds with a dial gauge). Ask your county Extension office for pressure adjustments if you live above 1,000 feet.

Whole Kernel Corn

Husk ears. Remove silk and wash well. Cut the outer third of kernels from the cob.

Use either the hot or raw pack method:

Raw Pack - Pack corn loosely into jars, leaving 1 inch headspace. (Do not shake or press down.) Add salt, if desired ($\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon per pint; 1 teaspoon per quart). Fill the jar with boiling water, leaving 1 inch headspace.

Remove air bubbles by running a plastic spatula or blunt knife between the jar and the food. Wipe rims, adjust lids and process in a pressure canner, following manufacturer's directions for venting and operation.

Process at 240°F: pints for 55 minutes; quarts for 85 minutes.

Hot Pack - Heat kernels to boiling, using 1 cup water per quart of corn. Simmer 5 minutes. Pack corn and liquid into jars, leaving 1 inch headspace. Add salt, if desired. Remove air bubbles. Wipe rims, adjust lids, and process in a pressure canner.

Process pints at 240°F: for 55 minutes; quarts for 85 minutes.

Canning Cream-Style Corn

Husk ears. Remove silk and wash well. Blanch ears 4 minutes in boiling water. Cut the kernels half-way to the cob, then scrape.

Hot Pack - For each pint of corn and scrapings, add 1 cup of boiling water and heat to boiling in a saucepan. Fill pint jars with hot corn mixture, leaving 1 inch headspace. Add $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon salt per jar, if desired. Wipe rims, adjust lids and process for 85 minutes at 240°F.

Raw Pack - Fill pint jars with raw corn, leaving 1 inch headspace. Do not shake or press down. Add $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon salt per jar, if desired. Add boiling water to jars, leaving 1 inch headspace. Wipe rims, adjust lids, and process for 95 minutes at 240°F.

For an added margin of safety, boil all home-canned vegetables for at least 10 minutes before tasting.

Drying

Husk ears. Remove silk and wash well. Steam-blanch ears for 3-5 minutes or water blanch for 4 minutes. Cool promptly in ice water. Drain and cut kernels off the cob.

Spread in thin layer on fine mesh drying racks. Dry to brittle stage in the sun or in an oven or dehydrator at 140°F.

Another method is to dry the whole blanched cob (see freezing instructions). Remove the kernels after drying by "wringing" the cob. Wear canvas gloves to protect hands.

Dried corn can be added to soup mixes, chowders, or fritters. Or grind it into cornmeal. Reconstituted corn can be used as vegetable dish.

Pickling

Pickled Corn Relish

10 cups fresh whole kernel corn (16-20 medium size ears or six 10 oz. packages of frozen corn)
2½ cups sweet red pepper, diced
2½ cups sweet green pepper, diced
2½ cups celery, chopped
1¼ cups onion, diced
1¾ cups sugar
5 cups vinegar
2½ Tablespoons canning or pickling salt
2½ teaspoons celery seed
2½ teaspoons dry mustard
1¼ teaspoons turmeric

Procedure - Boil ears of corn 5 minutes. Dip in cold water. Cut whole kernels from cob or use 6-10 oz. packages of frozen corn. Combine peppers, celery, onions, sugar, vinegar, salt, and celery seed in a saucepan. Bring to a boil and simmer 5 minutes, stirring occasionally. Mix mustard and turmeric in ½ cup of the simmered mixture. Add this mixture and corn to the hot mixture. Simmer another 5 minutes. If desired, thicken mixture with flour paste (¼ cup flour blended in ¼ cup water) and stir frequently. Fill half pint or pint jars with the mixture, leaving ½ inch headspace. Adjust lids and process for 15 minutes in a boiling water canner. Adjust processing times for altitudes above 1,000 feet.

For additional information on preserving corn, contact your local county Extension office.

Source: Extension Family Food Education Program