

## Safety of Canned Food that Freezes

More than pipes can freeze during icy weather. Frozen canned foods stored in unheated storage areas may also prompt calls from concerned consumers. If canned foods have frozen, they may still be safe to eat. Safety will depend on the condition of the can or jar. To evaluate safety, consider the following:

### TIN CANS

- If the **seams are still intact**, the food is safe to use. Thaw gradually and store at room temperature.
- If the **seam has broken** and the **food has thawed to room temperature**, it should be discarded.
- If the **seam has broken** and the **food is still cold** (refrigerator temperature, 40° F or below), it may be safely salvaged. Transfer it to a container and either store it in the refrigerator or refreeze for future use.
- All food that has frozen in tin cans should be examined carefully for spoilage before use. For an extra margin of safety, boil low acid foods (meats, fish, vegetables, poultry) for 10 minutes before using.

### GLASS JARS

- If **jars have cracked or broken** during freezing, the food should not be used.
- If the **seal is still intact**, the food is safe to use. Thaw gradually and store at room temperature.
- If the **seal has broken** and the **food has thawed to room temperature**, it should be discarded.
- If the **seal has broken** and the **food is still cold** (refrigerator temperature, 40° F or below), it may be safely salvaged. Store in the refrigerator or re-freeze for future use. All food that has frozen in glass jars should be examined carefully for spoilage before use. For an extra margin of safety, boil low acid foods (meats, fish, vegetables, poultry) for 10 minutes before using.

To prevent freezing of canned foods, the storage area should be above 34°F. Wrapping jars or cans in paper or blankets will provide some protection against freezing.

Source: OSU Master Food Preserver Program

