

## Abundant item: Hearty greens (kale, chard, beet greens, etc.)

### Preservation method: Blanching and Freezing

- Fill a stockpot  $\frac{3}{4}$  full with water. There is no exact amount of water you need, since it depends on how many greens you want to blanch at a time. The water in the pot needs to cover the greens completely. Boil the water on the stove.
- Add ice and water to a separate bowl. The ice bath is what you use to rapidly cool the kale. You will need a bowl large enough to submerge each batch of kale you boil. Fill the bowl halfway full with cold water, then add at least a dozen ice cubes to chill it.
- Lay out a large towel on a flat surface.
- Drop handfuls of leaves into the boiling water. Stir the leaves into the water before covering the pot.
  - Don't discard the stems! See tips below on how to use them up!
- Boil the greens for 2 minutes.
- Take the kale out of the boiling water right at 2 minutes. Drop the kale into the icy water, submerging it. The cold water shocks the kale, preventing it from breaking down.
- Chill the kale in an ice bath for 2 minutes.
- Lay the kale on the towel in an even layer. Roll the towel to squeeze excess water out of the kale.
- Place blanched leaves in an airtight container and freeze.

### USE IT UP/REVIVAL:

- Soak wilted greens in a bowl of ice water for 5 to 10 minutes to revive crispness.
- Kale stems can be blanched and made into a pesto. They can also be prepared right along with the leaves.
- Chard stems make a great substitute for celery, particularly in cooked preparations.

## Abundant item: Herbs

**Preservation method: Freezing, Drying**

*Freezing:*

- Pack various herbs into ice-cube trays, filling them two-thirds full.
- Top off the tray with olive oil or melted butter and freeze. Once frozen, transfer the cubes to an airtight container.
- Herbs may blacken in the freezer, but are flavorful and safe for eating.

To freeze without oil:

- wash, drain, and pat dry with a cloth.
- Wrap a few sprigs or leaves in freezer wrap and put in an airtight container.
- Place in freezer.
  - The flavor of many herbs is well preserved by freezing (more so than by drying for many), but they may become discolored and limp.

*Drying:*

- Remove stems or herbs, place herbs between two paper towels, and microwave on High (full power) for 1 minute.
- If not completely dry, continue to cook and check in 20-second intervals. Stop early if you smell burning.
- Chop up and store in a spice jar, or store in any airtight container whole.

### **USE IT UP/REVIVAL:**

- Place fresh herbs in a jar of olive oil and store in the refrigerator for a flavored oil (bring to room temperature before using within 4 days).
- Strong rosemary stems can be used as skewers for kebabs.

## Abundant item: Summer squash—including Zucchini

### Preservation method: Freezing or Water Bath Canning

#### *Freezing:*

Blanch and freeze squash chunks

- Fill a stockpot  $\frac{3}{4}$  full with water. There is no exact amount of water you need, since it depends on how many squash you want to blanch at a time. The water in the pot needs to cover the squash completely. Boil the water on the stove.
- Add ice and water to a separate bowl. The ice bath is what you use to rapidly cool the squash. You will need a bowl large enough to submerge each batch of squash you boil. Fill the bowl halfway full with cold water, then add at least a dozen ice cubes to chill it.
- Lay out a large towel on a flat surface.
- Drop handfuls of squash into the boiling water. Stir the squash into the water before covering the pot.
- Boil the squash for 2 minutes.
- Take the squash out of the boiling water right at 2 minutes. Drop the squash into the icy water, submerging it. The cold water shocks the squash, preventing it from breaking down.
- Chill the squash in an ice bath for 2 minutes.
- Lay the squash on a towel and pat dry.
- Place blanched squash in an airtight container and freeze.

#### *Water Bath Canning*

Zucchini relish pickling recipe, makes about 5 (16 oz) pints

#### **You will need:**

- 12 cups finely chopped zucchini (about 12 medium)
- 4 cups chopped onions (about 3 medium)
- 2 red bell peppers, seeded and chopped
- 1 green bell pepper, seeded and chopped
- $\frac{1}{3}$  cup Pickling Salt
- 2- $\frac{1}{2}$  cups sugar
- 2- $\frac{1}{2}$  cups white vinegar
- 1 Tbsp ground nutmeg
- 1 Tbsp ground turmeric
- 4 Tbsp prepared horseradish
- 1 chili pepper; including seeds, chopped
- 5 pint jars with lids and rings

#### **Directions:**

- Combine zucchini, onions, red and green peppers and salt in a large glass or stainless steel bowl. Cover and let stand in a cool place (70 to 75°F) for 12 hours or overnight.

- Transfer to a colander placed over a sink and drain. Rinse with cool water and drain thoroughly. Using your hands, squeeze out excess liquid.
- Combine zucchini mixture, sugar, vinegar, nutmeg, turmeric, horseradish and chili pepper in a large stainless steel saucepan. Bring to a boil over medium-high heat, stirring occasionally. Reduce heat and boil gently, stirring frequently, until liquid is reduced and mixture is the consistency of a thick commercial relish, about 45 minutes.
- Prepare boiling water canner. Heat jars in simmering water until ready for use. Do not boil. Wash lids in warm soapy water and set bands aside.
- Ladle hot relish into hot jars leaving 1/2 inch headspace. Remove air bubbles and adjust headspace, if necessary, by adding hot relish. Wipe rim. Center lid on jar. Apply band until fit is fingertip tight. Place jar in boiling water canner. Repeat until all jars are filled.
- Process jars for 15 minutes, adjusting for altitude. Turn off heat; remove lid and let jars stand 5 minutes. Remove jars and cool. Check lids for seal after 24 hours. Lid should not flex up and down when center is pressed.

#### USE IT UP/REVIVAL:

- Peel or cut away any damaged flesh, and serve as usual.
- Slightly overripe squash are best served cooked. Grate overgrown squash or squash that has started to go soft for use in baked goods such as muffins and breads. Note that the grated squash can be frozen.

## Abundant item: Cucumber

**Preservation method: Water Bath Canning or Fermenting**

*Water Bath Canning:*

- Follow your favorite pickling recipe!
- Try using herbs that you already have on hand in your garden to season.

*Fermenting:*

Makes about 1 Quart

**You will need:**

- 3-4 small to medium pickling cucumbers, quartered, halved or whole, per quart-sized jar
- One bunch dill
- 1 TBSP canning salt
- 1-2 cloves garlic
- 1-2 TBSP pickling spices
- 2-4 raspberry leaves, optional (to help with crunch!)
- Water: if using tap water, leave it out overnight to let all the chlorine evaporate

**Directions:**

- Place one clump dill and 1-2 leaves, if using, at bottom of jar.
- Pack cucumbers tightly in jar. Quartered and halved ones will fit easier than whole ones.
- Add garlic, pickling spices, another leaf or two and another clump of dill and push gently in spaces between the cucumbers.
- Add salt, cover with filtered water and mix well. Leave an inch between the top of the jar and the top of the water.
- Cover lightly with lid and leave in a cool, dark place in your home.
- Transfer to fridge after 2 - 7 days.

**USE IT UP/REVIVAL:**

- Peel or cut away any damaged flesh, and serve as usual.
- Slightly overripe cucumbers can be bitter, but scooping out the seeds with a spoon before using helps minimize that bitterness.
- Many times the skin of the cucumber is undesirable, but the inside flesh is perfectly fine. In this case, simply peel the cucumber.

## Abundant item: Tomatoes

### Preservation method: Freezing or Water Bath Canning

#### Freezing:

- Freeze raw or cooked in zip-top freezer bags.
  - Frozen whole tomatoes won't have a great texture once you defrost them, but you can easily turn them into sauce or salsa or soup, where they are mashed up anyway. You can leave the skin on whole tomatoes, because it will come off under cold running water during defrosting.
- You can also freeze tomato juice, stewed tomatoes, tomato paste, and any tomato products, such as salsa.

#### Water Bath Canning:

Tomato Bruschetta Topping, makes about 7 (8 oz) half pints

#### You will need:

- 5 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 cup dry white wine
- 1 cup white wine vinegar
- 1/2 cup water
- 2 Tbsp sugar
- 2 Tbsp dried basil
- 2 Tbsp dried oregano
- 2 Tbsp balsamic vinegar
- 9 cups chopped cored plum tomatoes (about 4 lb or 12 medium)
- 7 8oz jars with lids and rings

#### Directions:

- Prepare boiling water canner. Heat jars in simmering water until ready for use. Do not boil. Wash lids in warm soapy water and set bands aside.
- Combine garlic, wine, wine vinegar, water, sugar, basil, oregano and balsamic vinegar. Bring to a full rolling boil over high heat, stirring occasionally. Reduce heat, cover and simmer 5 minutes or until garlic is heated through. Remove from heat.
- Pack tomatoes into hot jars leaving 1/2 inch headspace. Ladle hot vinegar mixture over tomatoes leaving 1/2 inch headspace. Remove air bubbles. Wipe rim. Center hot lid on jar. Apply band and adjust until fit is fingertip tight.
- Process filled jars in a boiling water canner for 20 minutes, adjusting for altitude. Remove jars and cool. Check lids for seal after 24 hours. Lid should not flex up and down when center is pressed.

## Abundant item: Berries

### Preservation method: Freezing

Blueberries— Rinse, dry, and pack loosely into rigid airtight containers.

Raspberries and blackberries— Rinse, dry, place separated on a baking sheet, and freeze, then transfer to airtight containers.

Strawberries— Rinse, dry, remove stems, place uncovered with cut side down on a baking sheet lined with wax paper, and freeze, then transfer to an airtight container.

- Hold onto those strawberry stems! See below.

### USE IT UP/REVIVAL:

- If a small amount of berries in a container show mold, do not discard the entire container. Pick through the container and throw away those that are obviously bad. Do this as soon as possible to prevent mold from spreading.
- To bring out the flavor of lackluster berries, put them in a bowl (hull and slice strawberries first), sprinkle with a little sugar, and let sit for 15 minutes. The sugar will draw the moisture from the berries to make a sweet natural syrup.
- Use strawberry stems to infuse water, vinegar, kombucha, or toss them in smoothies. They're packed with vitamin C and have a citrus, strawberry flavor.