

Home Preservation of Vegetables – Recommendations for Selection	
Vegetables	Recommendations
Artichoke Hearts	<p>Canning: While one can use regular artichokes, Carciofini, baby artichokes, are easier to work with and yield hearts of a more manageable size. When selecting them be certain they are fresh (they should not give when squeezed), because with chokes this small you don't want fuzz.</p> <p>Freezing: Select those with uniformly green color, compact globes and tightly adhering leaves. Remove all leaves and choke or fuzzy portion. The portion that is left at the base is the heart. Cut away the stem just below the heart and trim any woody portions. Wash hearts in cold water and drain.</p> <p>Drying: Fair quality when dried. Rehydrated artichokes are good marinated or dipped in batter and fried until golden and crisp. Dry only the tender hearts of fresh young artichokes with few bruises.</p>
Asparagus	<p>Canning: Use tender, tight-tipped spears, 4 to 6 inches long.</p> <p>Freezing: Select young tender spears.</p> <p>Drying: Poor to fair quality when dried. Dried asparagus may be rehydrated and used in a cream sauce. Dry only the fresh, tender, young green stalks.</p>
Beans or Peas – Shelled and dried	<p>Canning: Select mature, dry seeds. Sort out and discard discolored seeds.</p>
Beans – Green	<p>Canning: Select filled but tender, crisp pods. Remove and discard diseased and rusty pods. You can use any type of green bean you prefer. Make sure that those you are canning are mature and crisp. Make sure that they're the freshest green beans you can find.</p> <p>Freezing: Select young tender pods when the seed is first formed. Wash in cold water, snip and cut into 2 to 4-inch lengths.</p> <p>Drying: Fair to good quality when dried. Best varieties for drying are Tendergreen and Blue Lake. Use only fresh beans and process them quickly. They should have thick walls and small seeds and be free from strings.</p>
Beets	<p>Canning: Beets with a diameter of 1 to 2 inches are preferred for whole packs. Beets larger than 3 inches in diameter are often fibrous.</p> <p>Freezing: Select deep, uniformly-red, tender, young beets.</p> <p>Drying: Fair to good quality when dried. Best varieties include Detroit Dark Red, Morse Detroit, Ohio Canner. Dry only fresh young beets, 2 1/3 to 3 inches in diameter with fresh green tops. Beets should not be woody or tough.</p>
Broccoli	<p>Canning: Not recommended for canning because the processing</p>

	<p>intensifies strong flavors and discolors the vegetable. Broccoli is much better frozen or pickled.</p> <p>Freezing: Select firm, young, tender stalks with compact heads.</p> <p>Drying: Poor to fair quality when dried. Dry only fresh tender, young stalks. Reconstituted broccoli can be served in a sauce.</p>
Cabbage	<p>Frozen cabbage or Chinese cabbage are suitable for use only as a cooked vegetable. Select freshly picked, solid heads.</p> <p>Drying: Fair quality when dried. Readily absorbs moisture so it must be kept extremely dry. Use with ham in soups or reconstitute and use in sauces. Best varieties for drying include Danish, domestic, Savoy, Copenhagen. White varieties do not dry as well.</p>
Cauliflower	<p>Freezing: Choose compact white heads.</p> <p>Drying: Not recommended for drying</p>
Carrots	<p>Canning: Select small carrots, preferably 1 to 1-1/4 inches in diameter. Larger carrots are often too fibrous.</p> <p>Freezing: Select young, tender, coreless, medium length carrots.</p> <p>Drying: Good quality when dried. Best varieties include Emperor, Red Cored Chantenay. Choose smooth, well-formed, deep orange carrots that are slightly more mature than for table use and without woody fiber or a pithy core.</p>
Celery	<p>Freezing: Celery loses its crispness when frozen. The frozen product is suitable only for cooked dishes. Preparation – Select crisp, tender stalks, free from coarse strings.</p> <p>Drying: Fair quality when dried. Dried pieces are best in soups and stews. Best variety for drying is Pascal. Dry only tender, yet mature, crisp stalks.</p>
Corn	<p>Canning: Select ears containing slightly immature kernels or of ideal quality for eating fresh. Canning of some sweeter varieties or too immature kernels may cause browning. Can a small amount, check color and flavor before canning large quantities.</p> <p>Freezing: Select only tender, freshly-gathered corn in the milk stage. Husk and trim the ears, remove silks and wash.</p> <p>Drying: Good quality when dried. Rehydrate to use in fritters, chowders, soups and stews. Make cornmeal by grinding dry corn in a blender. All yellow varieties work well for drying. Choose tender, fresh, young sweet ears with plump kernels.</p>
Cucumbers	<p>Canning (Pickling): Select firm cucumbers of the appropriate size: about 1-1/2 inches for gherkins and 4 inches for dills. Use odd-shaped and more mature cucumbers for relishes and bread-and-butter style pickles.</p>

	<p>Drying: Very poor when rehydrated. Chop dried cucumbers in a blender and sprinkle dry on salads. Seasoned cucumbers may be used as chips.</p>
Eggplant	<p>Freezing: Harvest before seeds become mature and when color is uniformly dark.</p> <p>Drying: Not recommended</p>
Fresh Herbs	<p>Freezing: Wash, drain and pat dry with paper towels. Wrap a few sprigs or leaves in freezer wrap and place in a freezer bag. Seal and freeze. These can be chopped and used in cooked dishes. These usually are not suitable for garnish, as the frozen product becomes limp when it thaws.</p> <p>Drying: Excellent quality. Dried herbs and spices are usually 3-4 times stronger than their fresh counterparts because they have been concentrated. Strength of the herb will deteriorate over time depending on the type of herb, storage time, temperature and exposure to moisture or light.</p>
Mushrooms	<p>Canning: Select only brightly colored, small to medium-size domestic mushrooms with short stems, tight veils (unopened caps), and no discoloration. Caution: Do not can wild mushrooms.</p> <p>Drying: Good quality when dried. Best varieties include Boletus edulis (this is the best), Chantrelles, Morels, Lactarias, Agaricus, and Bisporus.</p>
Onions	<p>Freezing: Bulb onions store well in a cool, dry place. Freezing is usually not recommended.</p> <p>Drying: Good to excellent when dry. Best varieties for drying include Southport White Globe, Southport yellow globe, White Creole, Red Creole, Australian Brown, Ebenezer and White Portugal. The white varieties have the best dried flavor.</p>
Peas, Green or English - shelled	<p>Canning: Select filled pods containing young, tender, sweet seeds. Discard diseased pods.</p> <p>Freezing: Harvest when pods are filled with young, tender peas that have not become starchy.</p>
Peapods - Sugar, Chinese, Snow Peas or Sugar Snap Peas	<p>Freezing: Select bright green, flat, tender pods</p>
Peppers	<p>Canning: Select firm yellow, green, or red peppers. Do not use soft or diseased peppers.</p> <p>Freezing: Select crisp, tender, green or bright red pods</p> <p>Drying: Excellent quality when dried. There are hundreds of varieties, all of which dry well. Look for firm, brightly colored, shiny pods with no signs of bruising or rotting.</p>
Sweet Potatoes	<p>Canning: Choose small to medium-sized potatoes. They should be mature</p>

	<p>and not too fibrous. Can within 1 to 2 months after harvest.</p> <p>Freezing: Choose medium to large sweet potatoes that have been cured for at least one week.</p>
White potatoes	<p>Canning: Select small to medium-size mature potatoes of ideal quality for cooking. Tubers stored below 45°F may discolor when canned. Choose potatoes 1 to 2 inches in diameter if they are to be packed whole.</p> <p>Freezing: (New Irish Potatoes) Select smooth new potatoes directly from the garden.</p> <p>Drying: Because fresh potatoes are available all year at modest prices, it is usually not economical to dry them. If you choose to dry, select potatoes that are mature and heavy for their size with a low sugar content and free from bruises or decay.</p>
Summer Squash - Cocozelle, Crookneck, Pattypan, Straightneck, White Scallop, Zucchini	<p>Freezing: Choose young squash with tender skin.</p> <p>Drying: Poor to fair quality when dried. Use white, yellow, light or dark green varieties. Use within 1 month or store in freezer.</p>
Winter Squash Acorn, Banana, Buttercup, Butternut, Golden Delicious, Hubbard, Spaghetti	<p>Canning: Pumpkins and squash should have a hard rind and stringless, mature pulp of ideal quality for cooking fresh. Small size pumpkins (sugar or pie varieties) make better products.</p> <p>Freezing: Select firm, mature squash with a hard rind. For spaghetti squash, mashing the cooked pulp is not necessary.</p> <p>Drying: Dried pumpkin stored longer than 1-2 months at room temperature develops an undesirable flavor. Fair to good quality when dried. Choose mature deep orange pumpkins, heavy for their size with a fresh, glossy smooth skin. Rehydrated pumpkin can be used as a baby food or pumpkin pie.</p>
Spinach and Other greens	<p>Canning: Can only freshly harvested greens. Discard any wilted, discolored, diseased, or insect-damaged leaves. Leaves should be tender and attractive in color.</p>
Tomatoes	<p>Canning: Rutgers is an excellent suggestion but actually most any variety can be canned whole. We do over 100 quarts a year and have canned many different varieties including Stupice, Brandywines, Brandy Boy, Giant Belgim, Box Car Willie, etc. - often mixed together for an even better flavor - with excellent results.</p> <p>Romas are great for tomato sauce. They have fewer sides, thicker, meatier walls, and less water. And that means thicker sauce in less cooking time!</p> <p>Freezing: Select firm, ripe tomatoes with deep red color.</p>

	Drying: Good quality when dried. The best tomatoes for drying are plum or paste tomatoes because they have more flesh and less water. These include Red Pear, Roma VF, LaRoma, Del Oro, San Marzano, Hungarian Italian, Viva Italia and Super Italian past. Round varieties may be dried but they have less flavor and shrink more.
Turnips or Parsnips	Freezing: Select small to medium, firm turnips or parsnips that are tender and have a mild flavor. Drying: Fair to good quality. Choose smooth, round, firm turnips with fresh tops. They should be crisp and not woody.

See National Center for Home Food Preservation for more information:

<http://www.uga.edu/nchfp/index.html>

<http://www.pickyourown.org/index.htm>