



Preserving Sweet Corn Successfully

Nothing says summer like sweet corn! Enjoy corn year round by canning, freezing or drying this summertime vegetable.

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Corn can be preserved with equally good results by freezing or canning. Corn may also be dried. For best results, can or freeze corn within six hours of harvest. Select tender ears of corn with milky kernels. After husking and removing the silk, trim off the ends of the ears to remove small fibrous kernels. Wash corn before blanching.

Canning Corn:

[Let's Preserve Sweet Corn](#) , by Penn State Extension has complete instructions for pressure canning whole kernel corn and cream style corn.

A few things to keep in mind when pressure canning corn:

- Corn is a low acid food and must be processed in a pressure canner for safety.
- The high starch content in corn causes it to expand during processing. For this reason, pack corn loosely in the jar and allow one-inch headspace.
- Pack cream style corn in only half-pint or pint jars.
- Corn may turn brown during processing because the very high temperature in the pressure canner may cause the sugar in the corn to caramelize. This happens

more often with super sweet varieties and when kernels are immature. Processing at pressure higher than necessary increases browning. Browning does not affect the safety of the product.

Freezing Corn:

Whole kernel and cream style:

- Blanch corn 4 minutes; cool ears and cut kernels from the cob as for canning.
- Another way to prepare cream style corn is to cut and scrape the corn from the cob without blanching. Then heat the cut corn in a double boiler, stirring constantly for about 10 minutes or until it thickens. Allow it to cool by placing the pan in ice water before packing and freezing.
- Freeze in moisture-vapor resistant bags or containers.

Corn on the cob:

- Blanch 7 minutes for small ears, 9 minutes for medium ears, and 11 minutes for large ears.
- Chill immediately in ice water making sure that cobs are completely cold. If cobs are not cooled completely, they develop a “cobby” taste.
- Freeze in moisture-vapor resistant bags or containers.
- Partially thaw ears of corn before cooking.

Do you have to blanch corn to freeze it? Blanching stops enzyme reactions so that the corn does not continue the ripening process. If you have one of the super sweet varieties and use the unblanched corn within a month after freezing, you may not notice a difference. The longer the corn is in the freezer, the greater the difference in quality. For long-term storage, it is still best to blanch corn.

Drying Corn:

1. Select tender, mature ears. Blanch the ears for 4 to 5 minutes in boiling water or 5 to 6 minutes in steam.
2. Cool ears in cold water only long enough to stop the cooking action. Drain well.
3. Cut the kernels from the cob to $\frac{3}{4}$ of their depth. Do not scrap.
4. Place in a single layer on mesh-covered dehydrator trays. The heat left in the corn from blanching will cause the drying process to start more quickly. Corn kernels

become very small when dried and will fall through regular trays.

5. Dry at 150°F for 1 to 2 hours and then reduce temperature to 130°F. It will take 6 to 10 hours to dry.
6. The corn dries more quickly near the end of the drying time. Check closely at the end of the drying time to avoid scorching. Corn is sufficiently dry when it is crunchy and crisp.
7. Store in an airtight container or jar in a dark, cool place.

Dried corn can be reconstituted and served as a vegetable. A popular Pennsylvania Dutch casserole is baked corn made with dried corn baked in a custard. The crunchy kernels of dried corn can be tossed into a salad of greens as well.