



University of California  
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## Tomatoes and Zucchini

Tomatoes and zucchini are abundant in many home gardens during the summer months. People who grow these wonderful vegetables have many stories about how prolific the plants can be. Sometimes, there is no way one can eat all that is grown without preserving some for the future.

Once you've tasted home grown and canned tomatoes, it's hard to go back to the store brands. If you are canning your home grown tomatoes, remember to add lemon juice or vinegar. Present recommendations are for the addition of one tablespoon of bottled lemon juice or three tablespoons vinegar, processing in a gently boiling water bath for 45 minutes for raw pack and 30 minutes for hot pack tomatoes. The time is the same for pints and quarts.

Canning isn't the only way you can preserve tomatoes for later use. If you don't have the equipment or feel canning is too much work, try freezing tomatoes. The quality isn't the same--however if you use them in cooked products they work just fine. My favorite way to freeze tomatoes is to peel, chop and cook them with onions and bell peppers. Cook the mix until the onions and peppers are soft (about 5 minutes), cool, and place it in freezer containers or bags. Tomatoes frozen this way are great for soups, stews, casseroles and homemade spaghetti sauce.

Now lets talk about zucchini. What do you do with all that zucchini after you have steamed, baked, stir fried and sautéed all that you can eat? You can freeze zucchini by washing thoroughly and cutting in half-inch slices. Blanch for three minutes, cool under cold running water four minutes, drain and pack in freezer containers.

If you are freezing zucchini or other vegetables, remember the following tips: choose young barely mature vegetables of a recommended variety. Older ones don't freeze well. Wash thoroughly in cold water, cut and sort according to size. Freeze as soon after harvesting as possible.

If you are one of those people who do not like frozen zucchini and don't mind canning the following recipe is great:



Tomato and Zucchini Mix  
(Makes 3 pints)

1	quart chopped tomatoes	½ c.	vinegar or lemon juice
1	quart chopped zucchini or eggplant	1 or 2	cloves garlic
½	cup chopped onion	2 tsp.	of salt
			Oregano or basil to taste

1. Combine all ingredients in saucepan. Cook until zucchini is tender and tomatoes have made a sauce.
2. With a slotted spoon, fill clean, hot jars to ½ inch of rim.
3. Add cooking liquid to cover, leaving ½ inch headspace.
4. Wipe rim of jar with clean cloth. Adjust lids and rings. Seal.
5. Process for 25 minutes in simmering (170 to 190) hot water bath. Use a thermometer to make sure you are not processing at too high of a heat.

Sources:

Home Freezing of Vegetables, Leaflet 2724, University of California

Safe Methods for Preparing Pickles, Relishes and Chutneys, Leaflet 4080, University of California

Home Canning Tomatoes in California, University of California Cooperative Extension