

# Food Saver

## SAVING FOOD

Roughly 15% of all household waste comes from food spoilage. This amounts to 90 *billion* pounds of edible food thrown away each year at the cost of roughly \$370 per person. Storing and preserving food helps individuals and households save food, money & natural resources and combat climate change.

## PREVENTING FOOD SPOILAGE

Foods naturally decline over time. To keep foods fresh, flavorful, nutritious and edible for as long as possible, use the mnemonic device “FAT TOM” to remember the ways to prevent food spoilage.

- F – **Food Source** is the fruit or vegetable; the skin or rind protects the food source
- A – **Acidity** below 4.6pH prevents microbes (e.g. bacteria, fungi, yeast, mold) from growing
- T – **Temperatures** below 40° F and above 140° F slow or stop bacteria activity
- T – **Time** in ideal conditions is needed for microbes to multiply
- O – **Oxygen** causes oxidation, which causes loss of flavor & nutrients
- M – **Moisture**, or water is needed for most microbes to consume the Food Source

## PRESERVATION METHODS

Fresh fruits & vegetables can be stored and preserved in many ways to extend their shelf life. Fresh storage retains the most flavor, nutrition and texture after harvest but the nutrition declines quickly once picked. Preservation methods vary in complexity but are able to retain the flavor and nutritional benefits for up to a year for most products. Use ONLY CERTIFIED recipes to preserve foods.

	Complexity	Flavor <sup>1</sup>	Texture <sup>1</sup>	Nutrition <sup>1</sup>
<b>Fresh Storage</b>	Easy	✓	✓	
<b>Freezing</b>	Easy	✓		✓
<b>Dehydrating</b>	Moderate	✓		✓
<b>Canning (Water Bath)</b>	Moderate	✓		✓
<b>Canning (Pressure)</b>	Complex	✓		✓
<b>Jam, Jelly &amp; Preserves</b>	Moderate	✓		
<b>Pickling</b>	Moderate			✓
<b>Fermenting</b>	Complex			✓

<sup>1</sup> Compared to Harvest Quality

## LEARN MORE WITH THESE RESOURCES

PRO-TIP: Google “site:edu **Food Preservation**” (or site:gov) for research-based advice

- ❖ University of MN Extension <https://extension.umn.edu/food-health-and-nutrition>
- ❖ National Center for Home Food Preservation  
[https://nchfp.uga.edu/publications/publications\\_usda.html](https://nchfp.uga.edu/publications/publications_usda.html)
- ❖ Extension AnswerLine <https://www.extension.iastate.edu/humansciences/answerline>
- ❖ Ball & Kerr Mason Jars & Canning <https://www.freshpreserving.com/>

## **CLASS NOTES**

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### **APPLYING THE KNOWLEDGE**

Which foods do I regularly purchase that spoil quickly? How can I use FATTOM to make the foods last longer?

Which preservation method(s) will work best for me and my family?

What types of foods do I want to preserve, and which methods should I consider?