

Super EASY FOOD PRESERVING

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Quick
Techniques
for Fresh,
Fridge and
Freezer
Storage

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The Creative
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MY STORY

I Am the Lazy Food Preserver

When most people think about food preservation they imagine long hours toiling in the kitchen over a hot stove. That's not for me. I consider myself a lazy food preserver, if you believe in such a thing. I reluctantly can 1-2 batches of salsa each summer because it's difficult to imagine doing without it. But, besides that one day of salsa canning, the rest of my time is primarily focused on crops I can store quickly and easily. I like to put food away, but I don't want to spend my whole summer a slave to the task. I want to have time to enjoy the lazy, hazy days of summer in Madison - hiking, camping, barbecuing and festival-going.

I love to spend a lot of time with my garden, but I don't want to spend *all* of my time on gardening tasks.

So, over the years I have focused on what I call **super easy food preserving**. I am constantly on the hunt for ways to put food away with the **least amount of work possible**. I've had a lot of successes and failures and learned a lot about which methods are quick and easy. Sometimes things work out well and go on the keeper list (celery and kale), and some things get crossed off for the next year (frozen cauliflower – blech).

It's my pleasure to share what I've learned with you so that you, too, can become a lazy food preserver.

Happy Gardening,

Megan



WHAT THIS BOOK COVERS

Fresh, Fridge and Freezer Storage

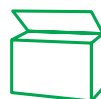
Preserving food as close as possible to its natural state retains the color, flavor and nutrients. In this book we'll focus on the three quickest and easiest ways to fill your pantry for winter eating – fresh, fridge and freezer storage.



= FRESH



= FRIDGE



= FREEZER



= DRIED

Fresh

Vegetables kept in their natural state in a cool, dry place in your house.

Favorite vegetables for fresh storage:

Garlic	Potatoes	Sweet Potatoes
Onions	Spinach	Winter Squash

A few herbs are best dried:

Marjoram	Oregano	Tarragon
Mint	Sage	Thyme

Fridge

Vegetables that can store for long periods of time with the aid of refrigeration.

Favorite vegetables for fridge storage:

Beets	Carrots	Leeks
Cabbage	Cucumber	

Freezer

Vegetables, fruits and herbs that are pre-processed and best kept in a chest freezer.

All fruits	Collards	Peas
Basil	Corn	Peppers
Beans	Eggplant	Summer Squash
Broccoli	Garlic Scapes	Tomatoes
Celery	Kale	Tomatillos
Chard	Leeks	
Cilantro	Parsley	

WHAT THIS BOOK DOESN'T COVER

I have determined what I think are the easiest ways to preserve food using fresh, fridge and freezer storage. In this book I don't cover canning, drying, fermenting, pickling, salting or root cellaring. Each vegetable listing has a section titled *Other Ideas for Preserving* in which I often link to other recipes and ways to preserve.

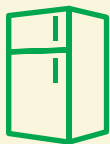
HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

This book was created to mimic the style of a cookbook. You don't need to read the whole thing cover to cover. Simply go right to the vegetable, fruit or herb you'd like to preserve and follow the instructions. Each food is on its own separate page in case you want to print it out, hang it on the fridge or store it in a favorite recipe binder.



Veggies

Carrots



A late crop of carrots is perfect for storing in the fridge for the off season. Carrots are wonderful eaten fresh or for use in your favorite winter recipes.

Favorite Varieties for Storage:

Bolero, Yellow Sun, Purple Haze – I plant a mixture of all three colors in my garden.

When to Harvest: You can usually see the top of the carrot poking out of the ground if you dig around gently with your finger. If you think they might be ready, harvest 1 or 2 to see how big they are. You don't have to harvest the whole bed at once. I usually harvest the bigger ones and let the small ones stay in there to continue to grow for a little while.

Fall harvest: You can leave your carrots in the ground throughout the fall and harvest as you need them. But, you must get the carrots out of the ground before it freezes or they will turn to mush in storage.

Prep Materials Needed: Garden clippers.

Best Storage Containers: Plastic handle bags with a few holes punched through them to let some of the moisture out of the bag. I usually

double bag mine and put them in the back of the fridge.

EASY STORAGE DIRECTIONS:

1. Check for carrots that have nicks or bruising. Put them aside to use right away.
2. Cut off tops.
3. **Leave the soil on the carrots.**
4. Make sure they are relatively dry. If they are wet leave them out to dry for a few hours.
5. Pack into plastic bags and store them in your fridge.
6. Do not wash until you are ready to use them.

How Long It Will Last in Storage: 6-8 months, sometimes more!

Other Ideas for Preserving:

[Add to sauerkraut](#)

[Add to kimchi](#)

Additional Thoughts: Don't forget to keep the soil on the carrots when storing. This will help them keep longer. I will often wash a bunch at once for use over the following few

weeks. Carrots can store in the fridge until the next spring with no problem!

Favorite Recipes:

We eat a lot of our carrots fresh for snacks and with hummus.

[Red Lentil and Carrot Soup with Coconut](#), *125 Best Vegetarian Slow Cooker Recipes*. I just cook this on the stove, not in a crock pot. One of my all-time favorite recipes!

Vegetable Upside Down Cake,
Enchanted Broccoli Forest, Mollie Katzen

[Beet burgers with Aioli](#), *Asparagus to Zucchini*, 1st edition.

Basic Aioli Recipe: ¼ light mayo (I use Nuyonaise), ½ t fresh lemon juice, 1 clove garlic minced.

[Megan's Root Bake](#)

[Baked Carrot Oven Fries](#),
101cookbooks.com.





Garlic is planted in October in most areas and harvested the next July. It's a low maintenance crop that stores for a long, long time.

Favorite Varieties for Storage: Any porcelain garlic is best for long term storage.

When to Harvest: When half to three quarters of the leaves have turned brown.

Prep Materials Needed: Hand clippers, twine, place to hang or spread garlic to cure, waxed boxes or crates.

Best Storage Containers: Waxed boxes or crates.

EASY STORAGE DIRECTIONS:

1. Garlic needs to be cured before being put into storage so that the paper around each clove dries out and can protect it.
2. Tie it in bundles of 10 and hang in a dry, dark place for 4-6 weeks. (Garage, barn, shed.)
3. After it cures, cut off the roots and stalks, leaving about 1 ½ of stalk above the bulb.
4. Store in boxes or crates in a cool, dark place. (I keep mine in the basement.)

How Long It Will Last in Storage:

Porcelain garlic can last up to one year in storage.

Other Ideas for Preserving:

When garlic starts to sprout in storage in winter you can prolong its life by chopping it and storing it in jars in the freezer. Read more about it [here](#).

Additional Thoughts: Garlic is perfect for the Year Round Veggie Challenge. It's definitely possible to grow all the garlic you'll need for the whole year. I plant around 220 in my garden. I save some for seed and eat the rest.

Favorite Recipes:

Use some of your stash to make basil pesto to freeze.

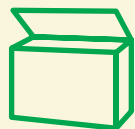
Roast whole heads to smear on bread with butter.

Use with your frozen tomatoes to make sauce.

See next page for garlic scapes.

Herbs





Basil doesn't have much taste when dried. Your best bet is to freeze it fresh or in pesto. With one or two quick sessions you can make all of the pesto you'll need for a whole year.

Favorite Varieties for Storage:

Genovese.

When to Harvest: Harvest basil before it goes to flower. Use clippers to cut the stalks from the top down. The plant likes to be cut back periodically and will regrow.

Prep Materials Needed: Garden clippers, pesto recipe with ingredients, food processor.

Best Storage Containers: Glass jam jars.

EASY STORAGE DIRECTIONS:

Basil Ice Cubes

1. Chop or julienne basil.
2. Spoon into ice cube trays.
3. Pour water over and freeze.
4. Transfer into containers when they are frozen.

Basil Pesto

1. Use your favorite pesto recipe to make a batch of pesto. I like [this one](#).

2. I use walnuts instead of pine nuts.
3. Transfer pesto into containers and freeze. I use glass jam jars.

How Long It Will Last in Storage: Up to 1 year.

Other Ideas for Preserving:

Frozen cubes or pesto are the two best ways to preserve basil.

Additional Thoughts: Mix together several herbs into one [pesto](#).

Favorite Recipes:

Minestrone Genoa Soup, Moosewood Restaurant Low Fat Favorites, Moosewood Collective - great way to use up some pesto

[Heather's Quinoa](#)

[Megan's Easy Pizza](#)

Use pesto in soups, stews, egg dishes, as a spread for crackers or bread.

Use basil ice cubes in soups, stews, tomato sauce.

Fruits & Berries





As an urban girl growing up in one of the largest cities in the U.S. I never touched a vegetable plant until the summer I turned 26. That's when I moved from my city life in San Francisco to a rural farm town of 100 people in Northeastern Missouri. After I got over the shock to my system I fell in love with gardening and the rest, as they say, is history!

I have spent the last 12 years of my life teaching hundreds of people of all ages how to get their hands dirty growing food in Madison, WI. I developed one of the early kids' gardening programs in Madison and a half acre youth farm. I have started my own home garden from a

sad scrap of dirt and created an urban gardening class series that often has waiting lists. Now, through my business I design, install and maintain organic gardens of all sizes and shapes for gardeners of all levels. My passion is teaching others how to fall in love with gardening like I did.

KEEP IN TOUCH

Have a favorite recipe you want to share? Want to tell me about your successes with super easy food preserving? Have an even easier idea for a vegetable featured in this book?

I'd love to hear from you!

You can find me in these places. Use the hashtag #SuperEasyFoodPreserving to get my attention!

[Facebook](#) | [Twitter](#) | [Pinterest](#) | megan@creativevegetablegardener.com

Happy Gardening,

Megan