

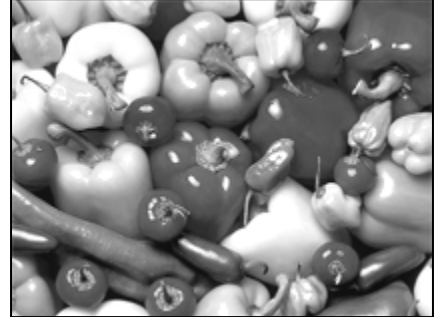
Freezing Sweet or Bell and Hot Peppers

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Peppers are one of those foods you can quickly freeze raw without blanching them first. Thawed, raw peppers still retain some crispness and can be used in cooked dishes or raw in uncooked dishes.



Bell or Sweet Peppers (Green, Red, Yellow, Orange, Purple)

1. Select crisp, tender peppers.
 - a. Wash.
 - b. Cut out stems and cut peppers in half.
 - c. Remove seeds and membrane — save time by using a melon baller or the tip of a spoon to scrape out seeds and membrane.
 - d. Cut peppers into strips, dice or slice, depending on how you plan to use them.
2. Freeze peppers in a single layer on a cookie sheet with sides, about an hour or longer until frozen. This method is often referred to as “tray freezing.”
3. Transfer to a “freezer” bag when frozen, excluding as much air as possible from the bag. The peppers will remain separated for ease of use in measuring out for recipes.
4. Pour out the amount of frozen peppers needed, reseal the bag and return to the freezer.

Hot Peppers (includes Jalapeno Peppers)

Wash and stem hot peppers. Package, leaving no headspace. Seal and freeze. It is not necessary to cut or chop hot peppers before freezing.

Caution: The National Center for Home Food Preservation warns, “Wear plastic or rubber gloves and do not touch your face while handling or cutting hot peppers. If you do not wear gloves, wash hands thoroughly with soap and water before touching your face or eyes.” (www.uga.edu/nchfp)

HOT TIP: If your mouth is burning from eating hot peppers, help put out the fire with milk and other dairy products.

Storage Time

To extend the time frozen foods maintain good quality, package foods in material intended for freezing and keep the temperature of the freezer at 0 degrees F or below. It is generally recommended frozen vegetables be eaten within about 8 months for best quality.

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