
UNH Cooperative Extension Info Line Question of the Week

Preserving your Harvest



Q. We've planted a much bigger vegetable garden this year and will need some advice on the safest, most efficient ways to preserve some of our harvest

A. We've noticed more backyards sprouting tomatoes, beans, zucchini, corn, and winter squash this year. Even a small garden can produce an overabundance of vegetables at the peak of their harvest season. Preserving the overflow can help you store high-quality food for later use.

Canning, freezing, drying, and common storage are the four main methods of preserving homegrown food. The method(s) you choose will depend on whether you whether you have the equipment and space needed to process and store what you want to preserve, how much it will cost, and whether you and your family actually like the preserved products.

If you have questions about preserving food safely, call our toll-free Into Line (1-877-398-4769), or check the National Center for Home Food Preservation website: <http://www.uga.edu/nchfp>.

If you plan to can any vegetable but tomatoes, pressure canning is the only safe method. Pressure canners that have a dial gauge should be checked for accuracy yearly, and most have a rubber gasket that needs periodic replacement. You can have your dial gauge checked at our Education Center in Manchester or at most county Extension offices.