



Helping Mississippians live happier, healthier lives!

FREEZER TIPS

SELECTION AND STORAGE

► Fruits and Vegetables

- Freeze from fresh:
 - » When buying in bulk.
 - » When growing your own.
- When buying frozen:
 - » Choose vegetables without sauces or seasonings.
 - » Choose fruits without added sugar or syrup.

► Meats, Poultry, and Seafood

- Freeze from fresh:
 - » When buying in bulk.
 - » When processing your own.
- When buying frozen:
 - » Choose lean.
 - » Avoid sauces or seasonings.

► Leftover Dishes

- Cook once, then freeze for multiple meals.
- Divide into small portions.
- Store in shallow containers or plastic bags with air removed.
- Label and date.



SAFETY

► Temperature

- Keep freezer temperature at 0°F or below.

► Tips

- Keep the freezer door open only as long or often as necessary.
- Return food items that need to remain frozen to the freezer as quickly as possible.
- Do not overcrowd your freezer. Open space and circulating cold air are needed for food to properly freeze.
- Place foods you plan to freeze in small containers so they will freeze faster.

► Thaw Food Safely

- Refrigerator
 - » Slow method.
 - » Move from freezer to refrigerator to thaw.
- Cold water
 - » Faster method.
 - » Place in a leak-proof bag and immerse in cold water.
 - » Change water every 30 minutes until done thawing.
 - » Cook immediately once thawed.
- Microwave
 - » Quick method.
 - » Cook immediately once thawed.



STORAGE TIMES

Food Item	Months
Bacon and sausage	1-2
Butter	12
Casseroles	2-3
Cheese	2-3
Egg white or egg substitute	12
Fish, cooked	1
Fish, fresh	3-6
Frozen dinners and entrees	3-4
Fruits	2-3
Gravy, meat, or poultry	2-3
Ham, hotdogs, and lunch meats	1-2
Ice cream	2-3
Meat, uncooked roasts	4-12
Meat, uncooked steaks or chops	4-12
Meat, uncooked ground	3-4
Meat, cooked	2-3
Poultry, uncooked whole	12
Poultry, uncooked parts	9
Poultry, uncooked giblets	3-4
Poultry, cooked	4
Soups and stews	2-3
Vegetables	8-12
Wild game, uncooked	8-12



DO NOT FREEZE

Freezing can cause changes in flavor, texture, and appearance. Some foods do not freeze well at all.

Do not freeze these:

- ▶ Lettuce or salad greens
- ▶ Mayonnaise
- ▶ Cream sauces
- ▶ Cottage cheese
- ▶ Cream cheese
- ▶ Sour cream
- ▶ Hard cooked or raw eggs in the shell



For More Information

[Freezing and Food Safety, USDA Food and Inspection Service](#)

[Home Food Storage, Nebraska Extension](#)



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