



LET'S PRESERVE

LEAFY GREENS

WP 109-99

These processing recommendations are for West Virginia conditions (maximum altitude, 4,000 feet). For canning directions in other locations, consult your county Extension office.

Recommended varieties

Spinach: Bloomsdale, Melody, and Viking are good varieties when grown in early spring or late fall.

Quantity

A bushel weighs 18 pounds and makes 3 to 9 quarts. An average of 28 pounds makes a 7-quart canner load; 18 pounds makes 9 pints. An average of 1 $\frac{1}{4}$ pounds makes 1 pint of frozen greens.

Quality

Preserve only freshly harvested greens. Leaves should be mature, attractive in color, and tender. Discard wilted, discolored, diseased, or insect-damaged leaves.

Preparation

Wash only small amounts of greens at one time. Drain and continue rinsing until water is clear and free of grit. Don't soak greens. Cut out tough stems and midribs. Place 1 pound of greens at a time in a cheesecloth bag or blancher basket and steam 3 to 5 minutes, or until well wilted. Or place 6 cups of raw greens at a time in 1 gallon of boiling water and blanch for 2 to 3 minutes after the water returns to a boil. Cool greens in several changes of cold water and drain.

Freezing procedure

Don't freeze more than 2 pounds of food per cubic foot of freezer capacity per day. Fill pint- or quart-size freezer bags to a level of 3 to 4 inches from their tops and squeeze out air. Leave 1-inch headspace, seal, label, and freeze. Before freezing, bags may be inserted into reusable rigid plastic freezer containers for added protection against punctures and freezer burn.

Canning procedure

Wash jars. Prepare lids according to manufacturer's instructions. If desired, add $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon of canning or pickling salt per quart. Fill jars loosely with drained, not blanched greens, leaving 1-inch headspace. Wipe jar sealing edge with a clean, damp paper towel. Add lids, tighten screw bands, and process jars in a pressure canner.

To process in a pressure canner, place jar rack, 2 inches of water, and sealed jars in canner. Fasten lids, and heat canner on high setting. After exhausting

Process times

steam 10 minutes, add weighted gauge or close petcock to pressurize the canner. Start timing the recommended process when the desired pressure is reached.

Recommended hot-pack process times in a pressure canner.

Dial gauge canner

Use 12 pounds pressure for 70 minutes for pints and 12 pounds pressure for 90 minutes for quarts.

Weighted gauge canner

Use 15 pounds pressure for 70 minutes for pints and 15 pounds pressure for 90 minutes for quarts.

Regulate heat to maintain a uniform pressure. When processing is complete, remove canner from heat. Air-cool canner until it is fully depressurized.

Then slowly remove weighted gauge or open petcock. Wait 2 more minutes and then unfasten and carefully remove canner lid.

After processing is completed, remove jars from canner with a jar lifter and place them on a towel or rack. Do not retighten screw bands. Air-cool jars 12 to 24 hours. Remove screw bands and check lid seals. If the center of the lid is indented, remove lid, wash, dry, label, and store jar in a clean, cool, dark place. If lid is unsealed, examine and replace jar if defective; use new lid and reprocess as before. Wash bands and store separately. Greens are best if consumed within a year and are safe as long as lids remain vacuum-sealed.

Nutrition information

	Raw		Cooked	
	Mustard Greens	Spinach	Mustard Greens	Spinach
Calories	21	16	19	11
Carbohydrate	4	2	3	2
Fats, g	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2
Protein, g	2	1.3	3	1.2
Sodium, mg	21	125	18	97
Vitamin A*	75	60	50	50
Vitamin C*	100	40	40	25

*Expressed as percentage of the U.S. Recommended Daily Allowances (US RDA). These greens are an insignificant source of other vitamins.

Adapted from *Let's Preserve Leafy Greens*, Pennsylvania State University College of Agricultural Sciences, Cooperative Extension, and reviewed by Rini Banerji, Graduate Assistant, and Guendoline Brown, Ph.D., Nutrition and Health Specialist, 1999.

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