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Strawberries – Food Preservation Series
Michigan State University Extension Service
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STRAWBERRIES

AVAILABILITY

June and July

TRIM LOSS

Good quality—approximately 6 percent from stemming and capping. Fair quality—14 percent from sorting, stemming and capping.

YIELD

1 quart (1 ½ lbs.)	4 cups
8-quart crate (12 lbs.)	12 pints frozen
24-quart crate (36 lbs.)	36 pints frozen
⅔ quart fresh	1 pint frozen

RECOMMENDED VARIETIES

Guardian, Surecrop, Midway, Red Chief, Sparkle, Gilbert and Ozark Beauty are excellent for freezing. Red Chief and Guardian are excellent varieties for preserves. Raritan, Delite, Holiday, Earliglow and Scarlet varieties are additional varieties that grow well in Michigan.

FREEZING

Whole: Choose firm, ripe, red berries, preferably with a slightly tart flavor. Large berries are better sliced or crushed. Sort berries, wash them in cold water (do not soak), cap and drain well. Sugar and syrup packs make better quality frozen strawberries than berries packed without sweetening.

Syrup pack: Put berries into containers and cover with cold 50 percent syrup (1 part water to 1 part sugar), leaving ½ inch headspace. Seal, label and freeze.

Sugar pack: Add 1 part sugar to 6 parts strawberries and mix thoroughly. Put into containers, leaving ½ inch headspace. Seal, label and freeze.

Unsweetened pack: Pack into containers, leaving ½ inch headspace. For better color, cover with water containing 1 teaspoon

ascorbic acid to each quart of water. Seal, label and freeze.

Pectin pack: This alternative uses pectin and less sugar than syrup pack and retains the fresh berry flavor, color and texture. Combine 1 box powdered pectin (1¾ ounces) with 1 cup of water in a saucepan, stir and boil 1 minute. Stir in ½ cup sugar and dissolve. Remove the pan from heat, add cold water to make 2 cups of syrup. Chill. Put cleaned and prepared fruit in a 4- to 6-quart bowl; add enough pectin syrup to glaze the fruit with a thin film. Gently fold fruit to coat each piece with syrup. Pack into freezer bags or containers, leaving ½ inch headspace. Seal, label and freeze.

Freeze no more than 2 pounds of food per cubic foot of freezer capacity per day. One cubic foot will hold 7.4 gallons.

Strawberry Freezer Jam (5 to 6 half-pints)

2 cups crushed strawberries (about 1 quart berries)
 4 cups sugar
 1 package (1¾ ounces) powdered pectin
 (Purchase fresh pectin each year. Old pectin may result in poor gels.)
 1 cup water

Sort and wash fully ripe berries. Drain. Remove caps and stems; crush berries. Place prepared berries in a large mixing bowl. Add sugar, mix well, and let stand for 20 minutes, stirring occasionally. Dissolve pectin in water and boil for 1 minute. Add the pectin solution to the berry and sugar mixture; stir for 2 minutes.

Pour jam into freezer containers, leaving ½ inch headspace. Cover containers and let stand at room temperature for 24 hours or until jam has set. Label and freeze.

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Strawberry Jelly with Added Pectin (5-2 3 cups)

2½ quarts strawberries (or 3½ cups of strawberry juice)
 5 cups sugar
 1 box (1¾ ounces) powdered pectin
 (Purchase fresh pectin each year. Old pectin may result in poor gels.)

Prepare juice: Thoroughly crush, one layer at a time, 2½ quarts of strawberries. Place crushed fruit in a jelly bag or double layer of cheesecloth and let drip. When dripping has almost ceased, press gently. Measure 3½ cups of juice into a large saucepan.

Measure sugar and set aside. Stir pectin into juice and bring to a full boil, then add sugar all at once. Stir and bring mixture to a full rolling boil, and boil hard for 1 minute, stirring constantly. Remove from heat and skim off foam. Ladle into hot, sterilized jars, leaving ¼ inch headspace. Adjust lids and process.

Strawberry Jelly with Added Pectin
 Recommended Process Times in a Boiling-Water Canner

Style of pack	Jar size	Process Times (in minutes) at Altitudes of		
		0-1,000 ft.	1,001-6,000 ft.	6,001-8,000 ft.
Hot	Half-pints	5	10	15

Strawberry-Rhubarb Jelly (7 half-pints)

1½ pounds red stalks of rhubarb
 1½ quarts ripe strawberries
 ½ teaspoon butter or margarine to reduce foaming (optional)
 6 cups sugar
 2 pouches (6.35 ounces) liquid pectin
 (Purchase fresh pectin each year. Old pectin may result in poor gels.)

Wash and cut rhubarb into 1-inch pieces and blend or grind in a blender or food processor. Wash, stem and crush strawberries one layer at a time in a saucepan. Place both fruits in a jelly bag or double layer of cheesecloth and gently squeeze out juice. Measure 3½ cups of juice into a large saucepan. Add butter and sugar, thoroughly mixing into juice. Bring to a boil over high heat, stirring constantly. Immediately stir in pectin. Bring to a full rolling boil and boil hard 1 minute, stirring constantly. Remove from heat, quickly skim off foam, and fill hot, sterilized jars, leaving ¼ inch headspace. Adjust lids and process.

Strawberry-Rhubarb Jelly
 Recommended Process Times in a Boiling-Water Canner

Style of pack	Jar size	Process Times (in minutes) at Altitudes of		
		0-1,000 ft.	1,001-6,000 ft.	6,001-8,000 ft.
Hot	Half-pints	5	10	15

Strawberry Syrup (9 half-pints)

Juices from fresh or frozen strawberries can be easily made into toppings for use on ice cream and pastries. This procedure may also be used with fresh or frozen blueberries, cherries, grapes or raspberries (black or red).

Select 6½ cups of fresh or frozen fruit. Wash, cap and stem fresh fruit and crush in a saucepan. Heat to boiling and simmer until soft (5 to 10 minutes). Strain hot through a colander and drain until cool enough to handle. Strain the collected juice through a double layer of cheesecloth or a jelly bag. Discard the dry pulp. The yield of the pressed juice should be about 4½ to 5 cups. Combine the juice with 6¾ cups of sugar in a large saucepan, bring to a boil, and simmer 1 minute. To make syrup with whole fruit pieces, save 1 or 2 cups of the fresh or frozen fruit, combine these with the sugar, and simmer as in making regular syrup. Remove from heat, skim off foam, and fill clean, hot, half-pint or pint jars, leaving ½ inch headspace. Adjust lids and process.

Strawberry Syrup
 Recommended Process Times in a Boiling-Water Canner

Style of pack	Jar size	Process Times (in minutes) at Altitudes of		
		0-1,000 ft.	1,001-6,000 ft.	over 6,000 ft.
Hot	Half-pints	10	15	20
Hot	Pints	10	15	20

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