



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 substitutes	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 lunchmeats	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 shelled eggs



### For More Information

[https://www.fsis.usda.gov/wps/wcm/connect/cce745c9-0fc9-4ce6-a50c-84363e5b5a48/Freezing\\_and\\_Food\\_Safety.pdf?MOD=AJPERES](https://www.fsis.usda.gov/wps/wcm/connect/cce745c9-0fc9-4ce6-a50c-84363e5b5a48/Freezing_and_Food_Safety.pdf?MOD=AJPERES)

<https://food.unl.edu/free-resource/food-storage>



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