



Cooling and Drying Prepared Vegetables¹

Susan Reynolds, M.S.²

After blanching, dip the vegetables briefly in cold water, only long enough to stop the cooking action. Do not cool them to room temperature. When they feel only slightly hot to the touch, they will be cooled to about 120°F Drain the vegetables by pouring them directly onto the drying tray held over the sink. Wipe the excess water from underneath the tray and arrange the vegetables in a single layer. Then place the tray immediately in the dehydrator or oven. The heat left in the vegetables from blanching will cause the drying process to begin more quickly. Watch the vegetables closely at the end of the drying period. They dry much more quickly at the end and could scorch.

It is best not to dry strong smelling foods like onions or garlic in the home. The odors may linger in the drapes, clothes and furniture. Place the dehydrator on a carport, covered porch or covered

patio. Keep the dehydrator away from rain. Also, avoid drying strong smelling food with other food because their flavors will blend.

There is an additional step to the process of drying green beans which produces a product more similar to canned green beans. After the green beans have been blanched, place them in a single layer in a freezer for 30 to 40 minutes. Then start the drying process.

DETERMINING DRYNESS OF VEGETABLES

Vegetables should be dried until they are brittle or "crisp." Some vegetables would actually shatter if hit with a hammer. At this stage, they should contain about 10 percent moisture. Because they are so dry, they do not need conditioning like fruits.

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2. Written by Susan Reynolds, M.S., former Extension Foods Specialist, University of Georgia, College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences, Athens. Reviewed for use in Florida by Mark L. Tamplin, associate professor, Food Safety Specialist, Department of Family, Youth and Community Sciences, Cooperative Extension Service, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, University of Florida, Gainesville, FL 32611.

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