

CANNING & FREEZING TOMATOES

Read our canning and freezing basics. Allow 2 1/2 to 3 1/2 pounds unblemished tomatoes per quart.

Tomatoes	Preparation	Boiling-Water Canning	Freezing
Crushed	Wash and peel tomatoes. Cut into quarters; add enough to a large pan to cover bottom. Crush with a wooden spoon. Heat and stir until boiling. Slowly add remaining pieces, stirring constantly. Simmer for 5 minutes. Fill jars. Add bottled lemon juice* and salt.** Leave a 1/2-inch headspace.***	Process pints for 35 minutes and quarts for 45 minutes.	Set pan of tomatoes in ice water to cool. Fill containers, leaving a 1-inch headspace.***
Whole or halved, no added liquid	Wash and peel tomatoes; halve, if desired. Fill jars, pressing to fill spaces with juice. Add bottled lemon juice* and salt.** Leave a 1/2-inch headspace.***	Process pints and quarts for 85 minutes.	Fill freezer containers, leaving a 1-inch headspace.*** (Use only for cooking; freezing changes the texture.)
Whole or halved, water-pack	Wash and peel tomatoes; halve, if desired. Fill jars. Add bottled lemon juice* and salt.** Add boiling water, leaving a 1/2-inch headspace.*** Or heat tomatoes in saucepan with enough water to cover; simmer for 5 minutes. Fill jars with tomatoes and cooking liquid. Add bottled lemon juice* and salt.** Leave a 1/2-inch headspace.***	Process pints for 40 minutes and quarts for 45 minutes.	If heated, set pan of tomatoes in cold water to cool. Fill freezer containers, leaving a 1-inch headspace.***

* Add 1 tablespoon bottled lemon juice for pints, 2 tablespoons for quarts.

** If desired, add salt: 1/4 to 1/2 teaspoon for pints; 1/2 to 1 teaspoon for quarts.

***CHECKING HEADSPACE

The space between the top of the food and the container rim is the headspace. Leaving the correct amount is essential.

CANNING: Headspace allows a vacuum to form and the jar to seal. Use a ruler to make sure you have the amount specified in each recipe.

FREEZING: Headspace provides room for food to expand as it freezes. When using unsweetened (dry) pack, leave a 1/2-inch headspace unless otherwise directed. When using water, sugar, or syrup pack in freezer containers with wide tops, leave a 1/2-inch headspace for pints and a 1-inch headspace for quarts. For narrow-top containers, don't fill above the "shoulder."