



# Blanching

For freezing and canning



# Blanching

- Scalding vegetables in boiling water or steam for a short time stops enzyme actions which can cause loss of flavor, color and texture.
- Blanching cleanses the surface of dirt and organisms, brightens the color and helps retard loss of vitamins. It also wilts or softens vegetables and makes them easier to pack.

- Blanching time is crucial and varies with the vegetable and size.
- Under-blanching stimulates the activity of enzymes and is worse than no blanching.
- Over-blanching causes loss of flavor, color, vitamins and minerals



# Water blanching

- Use a blancher which has a blanching basket and cover, or fit a wire basket into a large pot with a lid.
- Use one gallon water per pound of prepared vegetables.
- Put the vegetable in a blanching basket and lower into vigorously boiling water.

- Place a lid on the blancher. The water should return to boiling within 1 minute, or you are using too much vegetable for the amount of boiling water.
- Start counting blanching time as soon as the water returns to a boil.
- Keep heat high for the time given in the directions for the vegetable.

# Steam blanching

- Heating in steam is recommended for a few vegetables. For broccoli, pumpkin, sweet potatoes and winter squash, both steaming and boiling are satisfactory methods. Steam blanching takes about 1½ times longer than water blanching.



- To steam, use a pot with a tight lid and a basket that holds the food at least three inches above the bottom of the pot. Put an inch or two of water in the pot and bring the water to a boil.
- Put the vegetables in the basket in a single layer so that steam reaches all parts quickly. Cover the pot and keep heat high. Start counting steaming time as soon as the lid is on.

# Microwave blanching

- Microwave blanching may not be effective, since research shows that some enzymes may not be inactivated.
- This could result in off-flavors and loss of texture and color.
- microwave blanching should work in small quantities, using the directions for their specific microwave oven.
- Microwave blanching will not save time or energy.



## Cooling (for frozen product)

As soon as blanching is complete, vegetables should be cooled quickly and thoroughly to stop the cooking process.

To cool, plunge the basket of vegetables immediately into a large quantity of cold water, 60°F or below. Change water frequently or use cold running water or ice water.

If ice is used, about one pound of ice for each pound of vegetable is needed. Cooling vegetables should take the same amount of time as blanching.

- Extracted from "So Easy to Preserve", 5th ed. 2006. Bulletin 989, Cooperative Extension Service, The University of Georgia, Athens. Revised by Elizabeth L. Andress. Ph.D. and Judy A. Harrison, Ph.D., Extension Foods Specialists.