

PRESERVING INDIGENOUS FOODS

▶ Growing our own food connects us to the Earth, to each other, and to a traditional lifestyle that was free from chronic diseases and cancer. Food preservation can be an effective, cost-saving way to enjoy our healthy Indigenous foods all year long, even after harvest season ends.

TYPES OF FOOD PRESERVATION ▼



DEHYDRATION removes enough moisture from food so bacteria, yeast, and molds cannot grow. Dehydration methods include the use of:

- ▶ Dehydrators
- ▶ Oven drying
- ▶ Sun drying: not recommended for places with high humidity and low overnight temperatures
- ▶ Air drying
- ▶ Microwave drying

INDIGENOUS FOODS TO DEHYDRATE:
corn, berries, peppers, squash, tomatoes, wild game (deer, buffalo, moose, elk), fish, apples, teas, chiles

CANNING creates an environment that removes oxygen and destroys active food enzymes, preventing the growth of undesirable microorganisms. It's important to follow proper canning techniques to help prevent the growth of harmful bacteria. Consider the following before you begin canning:

- ▶ Quality of produce: high quality, freshly washed foods are recommended
- ▼ **ACIDITY:** acids like lemon juice or vinegar can help prevent the growth of unwanted microorganisms
- ▼ **EQUIPMENT:** ensure jars, lids, and other equipment are functional and are sterilized properly

INDIGENOUS FOODS TO CAN:
beans, beets, corn, carrots, potatoes, berries, fish, pumpkin, squash, bone broth

PICKLING is a relatively easy process for preserving certain vegetables using acid, spices, and sugar. Each vegetable has different pickling needs. Be sure to follow recipes for specific vegetables from a reputable source such as the National Center for Home Food Preservation.

INDIGENOUS FOODS TO PICKLE:
asparagus, green beans, peppers, radishes, zucchini

FREEZING is a quick and convenient way to preserve fruits, vegetables, and meats.

For fruits and vegetables, it is important to freeze produce at their peak degree of ripeness. Some may need to be pretreated before freezing, which can require: adding ascorbic acid (vitamin C) or blanching

Airtight containers that are vapor and moisture proof are recommended for freezing. Rigid plastic containers work well, especially for freezing liquids. Freezer bags are also a great option for fruits, vegetables, and meat.

INDIGENOUS FOODS TO FREEZE:
broccoli, cauliflower, cabbage, onions, nuts, mushrooms, squash, corn, wild game and fish