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Blueberries – Food Preservation Series
Michigan State University Extension Service
Sandra L. Andrews, Food Science and Human Nutrition
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BLUEBERRIES

AVAILABILITY

July and August

TRIM LOSS

Approximately 2 percent from cleaning and sorting.

YIELD

¾ pound	2 cups fresh 1 pint frozen
10-pound carton	26 cups 13 pints frozen 4-6 quarts canned
8 pounds	canner load of 9 pints
12 pounds	canner load of 7 quarts
24-quart crate (36 pounds)	18-24 quarts canned (1¾ pounds per quart)

RECOMMENDED VARIETIES

Bluecrop, Bluejay and Jersey varieties are good for freezing and canning.

FREEZING

Elderberries, huckleberries and gooseberries may be frozen using the following directions.

Whole: Syrup pack is preferred for berries for cooking. Select full-flavored, ripe berries of similar size, preferably with tender skins. Sort, wash and drain. Use one of the following packs:

Syrup pack: Pack berries into freezer containers or bags and cover with cold 50-percent syrup (1 cup water and 1 cup and 3 tablespoons sugar), leaving ½ inch headspace. Seal, label and freeze.

Unsweetened pack: Pack berries into freezer containers or bags. Seal, label and freeze.

Crushed or Puréed: Select fully ripened berries. Sort, wash and drain. Crush, or press berries through a fine sieve or food mill, or purée with a blender or a food processor. To 1 quart (2 pounds) crushed berries or purée,

add approximately ⅔ cup sugar, depending on tartness of fruit. Stir until sugar is dissolved. Pack into freezer containers or bags, leaving ½ inch headspace. Seal, label and freeze.

Pectin pack: This alternative uses pectin and less sugar than syrup pack and retains the fresh berry flavor, color and texture. Combine 1 box powdered pectin (1¾ ounces) with 1 cup of water in a saucepan, stir and boil 1 minute. Stir in ½ cup sugar and dissolve. Remove the pan from heat, add cold water to make 2 cups of syrup. Chill. Put cleaned and prepared fruit in a 4- to 6-quart bowl; add enough pectin syrup to glaze the fruit with a thin film. Gently fold fruit to coat each piece with syrup. Pack into freezer bags or containers, leaving ½ inch headspace. Seal, label and freeze.

Freeze no more than 2 pounds of food per cubic foot of freezer capacity per day. One cubic foot will hold 7.4 gallons.

Blueberry Freezer Jam (about 6 half-pints)

Preparation: Sort and wash berries. Drain thoroughly. Crush berries one layer at a time. Add 2 tablespoons lemon juice to the berries. In a bowl, mix 3 cups of prepared fruit with 5¼ cups sugar. Stir well and let stand 10 minutes. Combine 1 box powdered pectin with ¾ cup water in a saucepan. Boil for 1 minute, stirring constantly. Mix fruit

with pectin mixture. Stir 3 minutes. Ladle into airtight freezer containers and cover. Allow to "set" at room temperature for 24 hours. Label and store in the freezer.

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CANNING

This procedure may also be used with blackberries, currants, dewberries, elderberries, gooseberries, huckleberries, loganberries, mulberries and raspberries.

Choose ripe, sweet berries with uniform color.

Wash 1 or 2 quarts of berries at a time, drain and stem. Prepare and boil medium syrup, if desired. Add ½ cup syrup, apple or white grape juice, or water to each hot, clean jar.

Hot pack: For blueberries (also currants, elderberries, gooseberries and huckleberries), heat in boiling water for 30 seconds and drain. Fill hot jars and cover with hot juice, leaving ½ inch headspace.

Raw pack: Pack hot jars with blueberries (or any of the berries listed above), shaking down gently while filling. Cover with hot syrup, juice or water, leaving ½ inch headspace. Adjust lids and process.

Medium (30%) Syrup

Measure 5¼ cups of water and 2¼ cups sugar (enough for 9 pints or 4 quarts). For 7 quarts of fruit, measure 8¼ cups water and 3¾ cups sugar. Bring sugar and water mixture to a boil and pour over fruit in jars.

Whole Blueberries, in a Boiling-Water Canner

Recommended Process Times

Style of pack	Jar size	Process times (in minutes) at altitudes of			
		0-1,000 ft.	1001-3,000 ft.	3,001-6,000 ft.	Over 6,000 ft.
Raw	Pints	15 min.	20 min.	20 min.	25 min.
Raw	Quarts	20	25	30	35
Hot	Pints	15	20	20	25
Hot	Quarts	15	20	20	25

Whole Blueberries, in a Weighted-Gauge Pressure Canner

Recommended Process Times

Style of pack	Jar size	Process time	Canner pressure (pounds pressure) at altitudes of	
			0-1,000 ft.	Above 1,000 ft.
Raw	Pints	8 min.	5 lb.	10 lb.
Raw	Quarts	10	5	10
Hot	Pints	8	5	10
Hot	Quarts	8	5	10

Whole Blueberries, in a Dial-Gauge Pressure Canner

Recommended Process Times

Style of pack	Jar size	Process time	Canner pressure (pounds pressure) at altitudes of			
			0-2,000 ft.	2,001-4,000 ft.	4,001-6,000 ft.	6,001-8,000 ft.
Raw	Pints	8 min.	6 lb.	7 lb.	8 lb.	9 lb.
Raw	Quarts	10	6	7	8	9
Hot	Pints	8	6	7	8	9
Hot	Quarts	8	6	7	8	9

Blueberry Syrup (about 9 half-pints)

Juices from fresh or frozen blueberries are easily made into toppings for use on ice cream and pastries.

Select 6½ cups of fresh or frozen fruit of your choice. Wash and stem fresh fruit and crush in a saucepan. Heat to boiling and simmer until soft (5 to 10 minutes). Strain hot through a colander and drain until cool enough to handle. Strain the collected juice through a double layer of cheesecloth or a jelly bag. Discard the dry pulp. The yield of the pressed juice should be about 4½ to 5 cups. Combine the juice with 6¾ cups of sugar in a large saucepan, bring to boiling, and simmer 1 minute. To make a syrup with whole fruit pieces, save 1 or 2 cups of the fresh or frozen fruit, combine these with the sugar, and simmer as in making syrup without fruit pieces. Remove from heat, skim off foam, and fill clean, hot half-pint or pint jars, leaving ½ inch headspace. Adjust lids and process.

Blueberry Syrup

Recommended Process Times in a Boiling-Water Canner

Style of pack	Jar size	Process times (in minutes) at altitudes of		
		0-1,000 ft.	1,001-6,000 ft.	Over 6,000 ft.
Hot	Half-pints	10 min.	15 min.	20 min.
Hot	Pints	10	15	20

Blueberry-Banana Milk Shake (10-ounce serving)

- 1 medium banana
- 1 cup milk
- ¼ cup blueberries, fresh or frozen
- 1 tablespoon honey or corn syrup

Blend all ingredients in blender until smooth.

Prepared by Sandra L. Andrews, Ph.D., R.D., Assistant Professor and Extension Specialist, Department of Food Science and Human Nutrition, Michigan State University.

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This bulletin was originally prepared by Shirley Hamman, Allegan County Extension home economist, Kathleen Staskiewicz, Ottawa County Extension home economist, and Penny Ross, Extension Food and Nutrition Specialist, MSU.