



Freezing Strawberries at Home

Preparation – Select fully ripe, firm berries with a deep red color. Discard immature and defective fruit. Wash and remove caps. Berries can be stored well in a 0°F freezer for 8-12 months. Serve frozen berries with a few ice crystals still remaining to avoid the mushiness that occurs when fully thawed.

Unsweetened Packs

Dry Pack

The dry pack is good for small whole fruits such as strawberries that give a good quality product without sugar. Simply pack the fruit into a container, seal and freeze. A tray pack is an alternative that may make the fruit easier to remove from the container. Spread a single layer of prepared fruit on shallow trays and freeze. When frozen, promptly package and return to the freezer. The fruit pieces remain loose and can be poured from the container and the package re-closed. Be sure to package the fruit as soon as it is frozen, to prevent freezer burn.

Other Unsweetened Packs

In addition to a dry pack, unsweetened strawberries can be packed in water or unsweetened juice. Unsweetened packs generally yield a product that does not have the plump texture and good color of those packed with sugar. The fruits freeze harder and take longer to thaw. However, some fruits such as raspberries, blueberries, steamed apples, gooseberries, currants, cranberries, rhubarb and figs give a good quality product without sugar.

Sweetened Packs

Whole Berries Syrup Pack – Prepare a 50 percent syrup at least 2 hours prior to preparing to freeze the berries to allow it to chill completely. To make 5 cups of syrup, dissolve 1-3/4 cups granulated sugar in 4 cups lukewarm water, mixing until the solution is clear. Chill syrup before using.

To freeze the berries, put berries into containers and cover with just enough cold syrup to cover the prepared fruit after it has been placed in the container (about 1/2 to 2/3 cup of syrup per pint). Leave an appropriate amount of headspace for the container being used. To keep the strawberries under the syrup, place a small piece of crumpled parchment or waxed paper on top, press fruit down into the syrup before sealing the container. Seal and freeze.

Whole Berries Sugar Pack – Add 3/4 cup sugar to 1 quart (1-1/3 pounds) strawberries and mix thoroughly. Stir until most of the sugar is dissolved or let stand for 15 minutes. Put into containers, leaving headspace. Seal and freeze.

Sliced or Crushed – Prepare for packing as for whole strawberries; then

slice or crush partially or completely. To 1 quart (1-1/3 pounds) berries add 3/4 cup sugar; mix thoroughly. Stir until most of the sugar is dissolved or let

stand for 15 minutes. Pack into containers, leaving headspace. Seal and freeze.

Headspace to Allow Between Packed Food and Closure

Type of Pack	Container with wide top opening		Container with narrow top opening	
	Pint	Quart	Pint	Quart
Liquid Pack*	1/2 inch	1 inch	3/4 inch	1 1/2 inch
Dry Pack**	1/2 inch	1/2 inch	1/2 inch	1/2 inch
Juices	1/2 inch	1 inch	1-1/2 inch	1-1/2 inch

*Fruit packed in juice, sugar, syrup or water; crushed or puréed fruit.

**Fruit packed without added sugar or liquid.

Source: National Center for Home Food Preservation, <http://www.uga.edu/nchfp/how/freeze.html>
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