



Module 7: Storing Fresh Goods

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Objectives: This module teaches people how to:

- Care for herbs
- Wash or not to wash? How to wash
- Refrigerate or not to refrigerate?
- Freezing your produce
- Dehydrating your produce
- freeze-drying your produce
- Value-added produce

Storing your harvested produce

Having a way to store your harvest is an excellent way to manage gluts (an abundance of a single vegetable) and months in which very little is growing. There are a lot of different techniques you may use to store your vegetables, such as drying, freezing, and preserving.

If you grow your own veggies in a backyard garden, you'll have the opportunity to select them at the peak of their flavour and enjoy them right away.

Simplified produce storage

If they are preserved in the appropriate circumstances, certain fruits and vegetables have a good storage life of many months. The secret to being successful is picking healthy specimens and monitoring them frequently to get rid of anything that might be infected. As an illustration, only one rotten apple can spoil the entire batch. It is possible to stop the crop from decaying by storing it in a location that is both dry and adequately ventilated.

You can purchase storage boxes, but a shallow cardboard box or wooden crate can serve the purpose just as well. Some of the crates and boxes that you buy will have a design that allows you to stack them, but if you do this, you need to ensure that there is adequate ventilation between each level.

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- Apples and pears are both excellent candidates for long-term storage. Wrap each piece of fruit in a piece of newspaper, and then arrange them in a single layer at the bottom of the container.
- Additionally, root vegetables like carrots, potatoes, and beets keep well in the pantry. Remove the leafy tops from the beets and carrots, then lay them out in a single layer without wrapping them in anything. Both could benefit from having a coating of sand spread over them to prevent them from turning rubbery. It is possible to store potatoes in paper or hessian sacks. They should be gathered on a day that is clear and dry, then left out in the sun to dry. To prevent mould from growing on the potatoes, remove any mud that may have accumulated on them. Keep them in a cool, dark area to prevent potentially lethal green spots from growing on the skins. The easiest way to harvest parsnips is to let them remain in the ground over the winter and just dig them up as needed.
- Before storing them in a dry location, onions, garlic, and shallots should ideally be completely dried out, then plied. You can also remove the tops and suspend the bulbs by stringing them up in an old pair of tights or netting.
- Depending on the variety, plants belonging to the squash family, such as pumpkins and zucchini, can survive for up to three months in the ground. Pumpkins and marrows do not keep until the middle of winter, while other types of squash (including butternut and spaghetti) can sometimes be stored until the beginning of spring. Make sure they are not damaged in any way, and then put them away in a location that is both cool and dry, such as a closet. Because zucchini does not keep well, it must be stored in the refrigerator for no more than three weeks at a time.
- It is best to consume leafy vegetables such as lettuce and spinach within a few days of harvesting them because they do not store well. Maintain a consistent sowing schedule all the way until the beginning of autumn so that you will still have leaves to pick up over the winter.
- You can blanch and freeze legumes like peas and beans, or you can dry them and use them in stews later.

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- Caring for herbs

Growing most types of herbs is rather simple. Your herb garden will be up and running in no time at all if it receives the appropriate amount of sunlight and the soil conditions are favourable. You show your garden gratitude and give an abundance of love on a regular basis if you want it to remain thriving and in good condition. This can be done by watering it, weeding it, connecting with and fertilizing it. Continue reading to gain knowledge about how to properly care for your garden herb.

1. Watering herbs: Your herb garden will require consistent watering in order to thrive. The amount of watering required will vary depending on the type of herbs you plant and whether they are planted in containers or directly in the ground. Herbs grown in containers typically dry up more quickly than those grown in the ground, so they require more frequent watering. When the temperature is high and the air is dry, your garden will, of course, require more water.

2. Weeding herbs: a significant component of properly caring for and maintaining your herb garden is ensuring that it is clear of weeds. Make it a habit to look for weeds once a week; the more manageable they are when found when they are young, the more you can get away with leaving them. When an herb garden is overrun by weeds, the plants in the garden are unable to extract the vital nutrients from the soil that they require for healthy growth.

After that, the once vibrant green of your herbs will begin to take on a sickening yellow colour. When there are an excessive number of weeds in your herb garden, your herbs run the risk of not receiving adequate amounts of water since they will be in competition with the other plants that are not wanted. When there are an excessive number of weeds, the herbs will wither, turning brown and becoming dry. One more good reason to keep weeds out of your herb garden is that too many weeds will attract pests that could hurt your herbs.

3. Fertilizing herbs: The majority of herbs do not require an excessive amount of fertilization. Nonetheless, giving them one or two applications when they are actively growing will do them a lot of good. A straightforward liquid fertilizer should be all that is required to keep its content.

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4. Herb pruning: If you keep your herbs well pruned, they will not only continue to look their best, but you will also prevent them from generating seeds and maybe keep them productive for a much longer period of time. At the very least, pruning should be done once each month. If you want to enjoy the herbal blossoms or you want them to reseed themselves in the garden, keep a few of your chosen flowering herbs clipped while letting a couple of them go on to flower. This will allow the herbs to reseed themselves in the garden. They will eventually make seeds, which will give you enough herbs to use every day while also letting the herbs' natural cycle of reproduction happen for the benefit of next year's garden.

5. Herb Dividing: In order to ensure that your perennial herbs remain healthy, they will need to be divided once per year or two. Herbs can be divided by first removing them from their soil environment, then cutting the plant in half vertically through the centre of its root system, and finally replanting the two halves of the plant into its original soil environment. If you find that after dividing your plants, you have too many for your personal garden, you could always ask a neighbour if they would want a few of your plants to start their own herb gardens. This would be a great way to share your extra plants with your community.

6. Collecting herbs and/or transporting them to a new location: As the growing season comes to a close and the first frigid winds approach, you will need to bring the herbs that are the most sensitive indoors and harvest the stems and leaves from the plants that are still growing outside. Be cautious not to cut your perennial herbs too close to the ground when collecting them, as this could cause them to rot. Allow a couple of inches, or about five centimetres, of the plant's growth to wither away naturally so that the plant will be able to replenish itself the following year. If you end up having a large number of picked herbs, you'll need to preserve them for later use by either drying them out or putting them in the freezer.

To wash or not to wash, How to wash

The majority of fresh fruits and vegetables may be cleaned by giving them a light scrub under running cold water (using a clean, soft brush for those with harder skins), and then they can be dried. Produce that has many layers that can retain dirt can benefit from being soaked, drained, and rinsed multiple times. Before consuming fresh fruits and vegetables, it is important to give them a thorough wash in lukewarm water so as to ensure your personal cleanliness and the safety of your meal.

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It is important to remember that fresh fruits and vegetables should not be cleaned until just before they are ready to be consumed. The practice of washing fruits and vegetables before putting them in storage can create an environment that is more conducive to the growth of bacteria. First, thoroughly clean your hands with some soap and water, then move on to cleaning the fresh food. Make sure that any utensils, sinks, or surfaces that you will be using to prepare your food are likewise cleaned well before you begin. To begin, chop away any sections of fresh food that are visibly rotting or bruised using a sharp knife. If you are going to peel a fruit or vegetable, such as an orange, you should wash it beforehand so that any germs that may be present on the surface do not get into the flesh of the fruit or vegetable.

To refrigerate or not to refrigerate

Whether you cultivate them yourself or buy them at the store, fresh fruits and vegetables are both nutritious and delicious. They are also subject to spoilage. Having the knowledge to properly store and enjoy produce extends the amount of time it can be enjoyed, helps make the most of the available harvest, and minimizes the amount of food that is wasted.

Some fruits should be placed in the refrigerator as soon as possible, while others might not ripen properly in the refrigerator and should instead be left out on the counter before being chilled. Some veggies should be stored in the refrigerator, while others should be maintained in a dark, airy environment. To put it another way, there is a lot of variance, which means that it is really helpful to know what goes where and why it gets there.

The cold can cause harm, or it can hinder them from ripening to a point where they have a wonderful flavour and texture. For instance, when pink tomatoes are allowed to ripen at room temperature, they develop a more desirable flavour and turn red in colour. They do not turn red in the refrigerator, and even red tomatoes that have been kept in the refrigerator lose their flavour while stored there.

There are certain fruits that ought not to be kept in the refrigerator.

If you leave fruits out on the counter, they will continue to ripen, including apricots, Asian pears, avocado, bananas, guava, kiwis, mangoes, melons, nectarines, papayas, passion fruit, pawpaw, peaches, pears, persimmons, pineapples, plantains, plums, starfruit, soursop, and quince.

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Freezing your produce

Spreading cut fruits and vegetables out in a single layer on a sheet pan with a rim is the fastest way to freeze the food. When the produce has reached a solid state of freezing, keep it in freezer bags or airtight containers. It is recommended to use containers with high sides to their maximum capacity and to deflate freezer bags as much as possible. Make sure the dates are written on the packages.

Corn, peas, broccoli, cauliflower, carrots, green beans, squash, and winter greens like spinach, kale, chard, and collards are some of the best veggies that you should think about purchasing.

Additionally, onions, peppers, celery, and herbs can be preserved in the freezer. The process of blanching is useful.

Most veggies benefit from blanching before freezing. Prepare the produce for cooking as you normally would, by rinsing it and cutting it up. Remove the stems, roots, and any sections that are damaged. Prepare fresh peas and beans by shelling them. Do whatever to the vegetable that you would normally do before cooking, such as peeling, deseeding, or coring it. Do that now. Reduce the size of any very large veggies by chopping them.

Before freezing, blanch leafy greens and the vast majority of other vegetables for two to three minutes. Work with a single variety of vegetable at a time because blanching times vary greatly depending on the type of vegetable.

Dehydrating your produce

One of the earliest known techniques for preserving food is called dehydration. When it came to drying food, our forefathers relied on the sun, but now we have commercial equipment and household appliances that can eliminate moisture that might lead to the growth of bacteria. Using this method, food can be preserved for a period of time that is far longer than its typical shelf life.

You may make many dishes healthier by including dehydrated foods in them, such as salads, oats, baked goods, and smoothies. These foods can be a better option than many snacks. In addition, it is simple to use them in recipes due to the fact that they can rehydrate themselves in fluids.

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The nutritional value of foods that have been dehydrated is preserved. Dehydrated foods are a great choice for hikers and travellers who want to save space because they are compact, lightweight, and high in nutrients. Dehydration can happen to just about anything. The following are some examples of common foods that are produced through dehydration:

- Apples, berries, dates, and a variety of other fruits are all used to make fruit leather.
- Mixtures of dried onions, carrots, mushrooms, and several other vegetables are used in soup making.
- Herbs that have been dried in order to extend their shelf life
- These chips are made from potatoes, kale, bananas, beets, and apples that were baked at home.
- The dried peel of an orange, lemon, or lime that is ground into a powder and used in teas, alcoholic beverages, and other recipes.

You may dry your own fruits, vegetables, herbs, and even meat using an oven or a food dehydrator that is specifically designed for that purpose. Stores carry a wide variety of dehydrated foods. However, you should be wary of those that contain additional additives such as sodium, sugar, or oils.

Freeze-drying your produce

People who wish to try their hand at freeze-drying food for the first time will find that having a home freezer makes the process much simpler. It is an even more appealing choice if you have access to a large freezer. However, a conventional home freezer will continue to function normally.

Step 1: After spreading the food out, which is to place the food on a tray or plate.

Step 2: Put the tray into the freezer since the food must be frozen at the coldest possible setting.

Step 3: Leave the food in the freezer for two to three weeks, or until it has reached the desired level of freeze-dried consistency.

Step 4: Once the process is complete, place the finished product in an airtight storage bag and store it in your pantry or freezer.

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Value-added proud

The term "value added" refers to the process of increasing the worth of a raw material by bringing it through at least one more stage of production. This can be as easy as keeping ownership of your calves and spending the winter with them on wheat pasture or in a feedlot. Both of these options are viable options.

After finishing module 7 read over the information again if you need then take the quiz.

After completing your meditation and write in your journal how you felt after

Module 7: Quiz

1. Define gluts?

2. Name 3 root veggies?

3. What is a significant component for caring for herbs?

4. Define pruning?

5. Selecting veggies at peak has what benefits?

**Check out recipe book pick out a dish to make tag us and or email us how
@flavorbyfaith #gardentotable**

**Write in your journal any new thoughts ideas or feelings you have
pertaining to gardening or the course**

Sustainability through Gardening

Thank you for taking this course. I hope you go away with One of the best things you can do to help live a more sustainable life is to create a vegetable garden. Besides being a great help to nature, it's also a way of saving money and reducing one's carbon footprint. Using recycled materials in your garden is one of the first steps to creating a sustainable garden. Also, try using drip systems, rainwater or soakers instead of complicated irrigation systems when gardening. Finally, be as hands-on as possible using the minimal tools as suggested throughout the course.

Sustainable living is one of my favourite subjects to speak on outside gardening and culinary topics! Many don't believe it, but sustainability is becoming even more critical as it improves the quality of our lives and future generations. We must understand that our daily choices significantly affect the environment we plan to leave for the next generation. Therefore, we need to do things in a manner that makes our planet feel better. Operating in a state of gratitude and practising good intentions towards mother earth ensures our habits and lifestyle don't negatively affect us. Although most people do not want to harm Mother Earth, many are unaware of how much our everyday habits and lifestyle may affect it negatively.

Take time daily to pay attention to your surroundings and understand environmental friendliness. It's imperative that we collectively raise awareness about the critical state that our world is in and how our everyday behaviours affect it.

Human technological desires and improvements, coupled with ignoring sustainability, are leading us to the exhaustion of natural resources, creating a threat to humanity. We must educate the world to care about the environment actively, as normal living conditions for future generations are critical. Actively practising sustainability ensures a better future for all!

Many people ask me why I decided to become a farmer; by doing my part to be more efficient, I can help make a difference for the next generation. Tuning with mother nature to understand and protect it is vital; if we protect nature, our future is protected. As I stated in earlier chapters, sustainability is your birth right to reduce your carbon footprint and make a conscious decision to be a solution, not a part of the problem. Incorporating small changes that make a significant impact, such as buying fruit and vegetables at a local farmer's market, will also help the farmers and the environment and benefit us all.

Message form Faith



Special thanks

If you've made it this far, thank you so much for being interested in my words and life. I'm so grateful you are here. I appreciate your willingness to learn gardening and be a participant of creating and basking in nature's offering to us.

Thank you purchasing my first gardening course I have great faith that you will walk away even more knowledgeable and renewed.

All the best in receiving your abundance

Faith



from **Garden** **to Table**

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