

# Preserving Spring Greens

Greens are excellent sources of vitamin A, calcium, folic acid and fiber. Preserve extra spinach, collards, kale and other spring greens by freezing, pressure canning, or drying them.

## **Freezing Greens:**

Greens may be canned for long term storage; however, freezing results in a better product. Select young, tender green leaves. Wash leaves thoroughly and cut off woody stems. Water blanch collards for 3 minutes and all other greens for 2 minutes. Cool, drain and package, leaving 1/2-inch headspace. Seal and freeze.

## **Pressure Canning Spinach and Other Greens:**

Roughly 28 pounds of greens is needed per canner load of 7 quarts; approximately 18 pounds is needed per canner load of 9 pints. Can only freshly harvested greens. Discard wilted, discolored, diseased, or insect-damaged leaves. Leaves should be tender and attractive in color.

Prepare only according to hot pack procedure: Wash small amounts of greens at one time. Drain water and continue rinsing until water is clear and free of grit. Cut out tough stems and midribs. Place 1 pound of greens at a time in cheesecloth bag or blancher basket and steam 3 to 5 minutes or until well wilted. Add ½ teaspoon of salt to each quart jar, if desired. Fill jars loosely with greens and add fresh boiling water, leaving 1-inch headspace. Adjust lids.

Process jars in a dial-gauge pressure canner at 11 pounds pressure at altitudes of 0 to 2,000 ft (or at 12 pounds pressure at altitudes of 2,001 to 4,000 ft). Process jars in a weighted gauge pressure canner at 10 pounds pressure at altitudes of 0 to 1,000 ft (or at 15 pounds pressure at altitudes above 1,000 ft). Process pints for 70 minutes and quarts for 90 minutes.

## **Drying Greens** (think kale or collard chips):

Use only young tender leaves. Wash and trim thoroughly. Steam or water blanch greens. (a) To steam blanch, use a deep pot with a close-fitting lid and a wire basket, colander or sieve placed so steam will circulate freely around greens. Add water to pot and bring to a rolling boil. Loosely place greens in basket no more than 2 inches deep. Place basket of greens in pot. Make sure the water does not come in contact with greens. Cover and steam for 2 to 2½ minutes. (b) To water-blanch, fill a large pot two-thirds full of water, cover and bring to rolling boil. Place greens in a wire basket or a colander and submerge them in the water. Cover bring back to a boil and blanch for 1½ minutes.

After blanching, dip greens briefly in cold water but just long enough to stop the cooking action. Do not cool to room temperature. When greens feel only slightly hot to the touch, they will be cooled to about 120°F. Drain greens by pouring them directly onto the drying tray held over the sink. Wipe excess water from beneath tray and arrange greens in a single layer. Place tray immediately in dehydrator or oven. The heat left in greens from blanching will cause the drying process to begin more quickly. Dry for 8 to 10 hours. Watch greens closely at the end of drying period so that they do not scorch.

### Sources:

- "So Easy to Preserve", 6th ed. 2014. 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.
- "[Drying Vegetables](#)" HGIC 3085. Pam Schmutz and Libby Hoyle.
- Freezing Greens. National Center for Home Food Preservation, The University of Georgia, Athens. <http://nchfp.uga.edu/how/freeze/greens.html>
- Selecting, Preparing and Canning Vegetables: Spinach and Other Greens. National Center for Home Food Preservation, The University of Georgia, Athens. [http://nchfp.uga.edu/how/can\\_04/spinach\\_greens.html](http://nchfp.uga.edu/how/can_04/spinach_greens.html).