



How to Preserve Green and Yellow Beans

Whatever the name, green, yellow, wax, string or snap beans can be preserved by freezing, canning and or pickling. Choose the method that works for you!

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Freezing Snap Beans

Let's Preserve: Snap Beans provides detailed instruction on freezing beans. Some additional tips to remember when freezing:

- The quality of frozen beans will be better if they have been blanched. Blanching stops enzyme actions that continue the ripening process and can

make the beans tough.

- Tray pack beans by placing them in a single layer on a tray to freeze before packing. This allows you to take just the amount you need from the package. Individually frozen beans cook more quickly than a frozen mass of beans.
- Ideally frozen beans should not be cooked more than seven minutes to preserve their bright green color.

Canning Beans

When canning beans they must be processed in a pressure canner. The high temperatures of a pressure canner destroys *Clostridium botulinum* spores, preventing the formation of the botulism toxin which can cause illness or even death. As a low-acid food, jars of home canned snap beans processed in a boiling water bath canner can support the growth of *Clostridium botulinum* when sealed and stored at room temperature.

Procedure for Canning Beans

The National Center for Home Food Preservation provides directions for canning [Beans, Snap and Italian - Pieces, Green and Wax](#). Some additional things to keep in mind when canning beans:

- For best results cut or snap beans into 1-inch pieces or leave whole.
- Beans may be packed into jars **hot** or **raw**. Cooking the beans before packing them into the jar drives air out of the beans and allows more beans to fit into the jar.
- Canning or pickling salt is optional and is only added for flavor. One-half teaspoon salt per pint or 1 teaspoon per quart may be used.
- [Process in a pressure canner for designated time and pressure for your altitude.](#)

Do not use these directions for canning lima beans, butter beans, pinto beans or soy beans.

Note: It is **not** safe to process beans in a boiling water bath, not even for long periods of time.

Problem Solving for Canned Beans

White deposit at the bottom of jars of beans:

- If proper canning procedures and processing times are used and there are no signs of spoilage, a precipitate is not a concern. Sometimes the calcium level of water is higher or pectic substances are higher than other years. Calcium and pectic acids (the glue that holds cells together) can combine and form an insoluble precipitate.

Causes of spoilage:

- Beans were not clean when put into the jars. Soil that clings to the bean contains bacteria that can cause spoilage.
- Food is not processed long enough or at the proper pressure to reach temperatures adequate to kill spoilage organisms.
- Jars have an inadequate vacuum seal allowing jars to unseal during storage. Use correct headspace and process properly.
- After processing, jars do not cool quickly enough. Allow at least 1 inch between jars when setting on the counter for air to circulate between jars. Slow cooling may cause flat-sour spoilage where the food smells like vinegar. Jars left to cool in the pressure canner overnight result in the same problem.

If there is any doubt as to the safety of a canned product, throw it out.

Pickled Green Beans

The addition of vinegar to green beans produces a high acid pickled product making it safe to process in a boiling water bath. Try [Pickled Dilled Beans](#), sometimes called Dilly Beans for a tasty treat.