

Stock Up!

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Saving all of your kitchen scraps and leftovers to compost? Good for the earth, good for you, and good for your garden! How about one more step so that you can also make it good for your tummy?

Instead of stashing your vegetable trimmings in the compost container by your sink, stash them in a freezer bag marked —For Stock. Continue adding all your trimmings to the bag. When you have a large amount, you can toss them in a pan or stockpot with water to cover. And I do mean all, including onion and garlic skins, trimmed off root ends-everything! The only things to avoid in large amounts are strongly flavored or red colored veggies like broccoli, beets, cabbage, etc. If you don't have enough carrots, celery or onions in your stockpile, toss some in also. Bring to a boil, lower to a low simmer, and go about your business for a couple of hours.

Simple from here—strain through a colander, pour into containers or ice cube trays, and freeze. Now you have a multiple use flavor enhancer! And the strained out remnants can go—guess where—right into the compost pile! Use your stock for a soup base, to deglaze pans, to cook vegetables or grains like rice, in stews and casseroles —essentially wherever you would use water in cooking.

For carnivores, save and freeze poultry bones, skins and trimmings after picking off and freezing separately any meaty bits. Toss them in with your veggie trimmings and process the same way. Put this stock in the fridge overnight and you can easily lift off the fat from the top, then store. While you're at the saving and freezing business, save all of your bits of leftovers from meals in separately labeled freezer bags, even very small amounts. For example, cooked rice, veggies, that little bit of taco filling left in

the pan, beans, greens for sure, stews—almost anything! Since these are already seasoned, you've got lots of good flavors to start a soup, not to mention the good nutrients that you're adding. So this is your reward. Use all of these reserved treasures for easy, quick, always delicious, and always different soups!