



Freezing Tender Greens

One of the biggest challenges onboard is to optimize the availability of fresh vegetables and fruits. But unfortunately, all of them start to ripen extremely fast and do not last more than 10 to 15 days. More so ever, the leafy greens are susceptible to wilting quickly, and most become discoloured and mushy in a week's time, making them useless for cooking.

Solution: The best way to extend the shelf life of tender greens is to freeze them for extended usage. However, freezing is to be done in a methodical way to preserve their flavors and aesthetic appeal.

- 1. Rinse:** The first important step is to rinse them clean of any dirt / pests / soil etc that may be clinging on the leaves. Use cold water so they don't wilt and be sure to rinse them thoroughly. You can give them a rough chop if required, to make them easier handle.
- 2. Blanch:** Bring a large pot of water to a boil, add the clean greens, and use tongs or a spoon to submerge them completely underwater. The water temperature will drop, so keep it at a boil by covering the pot or turning up the heat. Let it boil for at least 30 seconds.
- 3. Cool:** Using a wire strainer, transfer the greens to a large bowl of ice-cold water. The water should be cold (nearly freezing), don't use plain tap water. The cold freezing water will stop the greens from overcooking and help them retain their vibrant green colour. Keep them in this cold water, adding more ice as necessary, for two to three minutes.
- 4. Drain:** Drain the excess water and shake out as much water as possible. Excess water droplets will freeze and will degrade the flavour and texture.
- 5. Pack:** Once the greens are drained dry, make them into very tight packs without any gaps between the leaves. They'll stick together but try not to manhandle them too much.
- 6. Freeze:** Space the packs evenly on a tray, maintaining the shape but not allowing them to touch. Cover the tray tightly with a sheet of plastic wrap; this will keep them from collecting ice crystals. Place it in the freezer for one to two hours, until the greens have frozen partially.
- 7. Package:** Once the greens have frozen partially, transfer them to a plastic bag / container; remove as much air as possible when you seal it. Store in the freezer, for future use.

* STAY SAFE STAY HEALTHY *

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