



Using, Storing and Preserving Broccoli



Michigan-grown broccoli is available July through October.

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Food Safety and Storage

- Wash hands before and after handling fresh produce.
- Store broccoli in the refrigerator in a plastic bag with holes.
- Wash broccoli under cool running water. Do not use soap.
- Use broccoli within three days. The longer you store it, the lower the vitamin content.
- Choose broccoli with dark green florets. If the florets are enlarged, opened, yellowish-green or wilted, the broccoli is not fresh.
- Avoid broccoli with thick, tough stems.
- Do not purchase broccoli that is soft or slippery — this is a sign of spoilage.
- Keep away from raw meat and meat juices to prevent cross-contamination.
- For best quality and to preserve nutrients, preserve no more than your family can consume in one year.

Yield

1 pound of broccoli	=	about 2 cups of raw, trimmed florets and stems
1 bunch	=	about 3 cups chopped, cooked
2 to 3 pounds of fresh broccoli	=	2 pints frozen broccoli

How to Preserve

Canning

Broccoli is a delicate plant and would discolor and become soft and mushy when canned.

For this reason, Michigan State University Extension does not recommend canning.

Freezing

Select firm, young, tender stalks with compact heads. Remove leaves and woody portions. Prepare a brine by adding 4 teaspoons of salt to 1 gallon of water. Immerse broccoli in the brine for 30 minutes to remove insects. Split lengthwise so florets are no more than 1½ inches across. Rinse and drain. Water blanch* 3 minutes in boiling water.

***Water blanching:** Use 1 gallon of water per pound of broccoli. Put broccoli in blanching basket or strainer and lower into boiling water. Place lid on pan or blancher and return water to a boil. Start counting blanching time as soon as water returns to a boil. If it takes longer than a minute to boil, too much broccoli has been put in the boiling water.

Cool promptly in ice water for 3 minutes, drain and pat dry. Pack into airtight freezer containers, leaving no headspace. Seal, label, date and freeze.

Tray pack: freeze individual broccoli flowerets on cookie sheets or trays, transfer frozen flowerets to freezer bags, remove air, seal, label, date and freeze.

Lawn or garden questions?

Visit migarden.msu.edu.
Call toll-free 1-888-678-3464.

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References

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canr.msu.edu/mi_fresh/.

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