



# Using, Storing and Preserving Parsnips



Prepared by:

Christine Venema, MSU Extension Educator

*Michigan Fresh: Using, Storing and Preserving Parsnips* was first published in March 2015 and revised in July 2023.

*Michigan-grown parsnips are available in September and October.*

## Yield

4 medium (1 pound)	=	2 cups diced and cooked
--------------------	---	-------------------------

## Food Safety and Storage

- Pick or purchase parsnips that are not bruised or damaged.
- Wash hands before and after handling fresh produce.
- Wash parsnips under cool running water using a vegetable brush. Do not use soap.
- Keep parsnips 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.
- Parsnips are best if stored in cold, moist storage – at temperatures between 32 degrees and 40 degrees F with a relative humidity of 90 to 95 percent. The colder part of the refrigerator offers this range of temperatures. To maintain a high relative humidity, put the parsnips in a plastic bag or place parsnips unbagged in the vegetable crisper of the refrigerator, which should be more than half full of produce. Remove excess water or allow it to evaporate before storing. The average storage life of parsnips using this method is 2 to 6 months.
- Parsnips should be left in the ground until their tops freeze in late fall — the flavor becomes sweeter when the roots are exposed to temperatures below 40 degrees F.
- Unharvested roots may be left in the ground to be used during the winter.
- Small- and medium-width roots have the best flavor and texture. Large roots tend to be woody and fibrous.



## How to Preserve

Parsnips may be canned, but freezing results in a better product.

### Freezing

Choose small to medium-sized parsnips so they will be tender and not woody. Remove the tops, wash, peel and cut into ½-inch cubes or slices. It may be necessary to remove a fibrous core. Heat the parsnips in boiling water for 2 minutes. Cool the parsnips in ice water for 2 minutes and drain. Do not leave water droplets on the parsnips — these will cause freezer burn to occur. Pack into containers, leaving ½-inch headspace. Seal, label, date and freeze.

### Canning

Pressure canning is the *only* safe method of canning parsnips. Parsnips *must* be pressure canned to avoid the potential of the foodborne illness botulism.

**Lawn or garden questions?**

Visit [migarden.msu.edu](http://migarden.msu.edu).

Call toll-free 1-888-678-3464.

# Using, Storing and Preserving Parsnips

## Hot pack

Wash parsnips, scrubbing them very well. Peel, remove fibrous core, slice, or dice the parsnips. Place the parsnips in a saucepan, cover with boiling water and boil for 5 minutes. Pack hot pieces into hot jars leaving 1-inch headspace. If desired, add ½ teaspoon of salt to pints; 1 teaspoon of salt to quarts. Fill each jar to 1 inch from the top of the jar with boiling hot cooking liquid. Remove air bubbles; adjust headspace if needed. Wipe jar rims with clean paper towel. Adjust the lids and process (see tables that follow for recommended processing times).

## References

Albrecht, J. A., Browning, S., & Stoner, N. (2016). *Storing fresh fruits and vegetables*. University of Nebraska, Lincoln, Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources.

Andress, E., & Harrison, J. A. (2014). *So easy to preserve* (Bulletin 989). (6th ed.). University of Georgia Cooperative Extension

Michigan State University Extension. (2022). *How much should I buy? A guide to fresh fruits and vegetables for home cooking*. [https://www.canr.msu.edu/resources/how\\_much\\_should\\_i\\_buy](https://www.canr.msu.edu/resources/how_much_should_i_buy)

Robbins, J. A., Colt, W. M., & Raidl, M. (2012). *Harvesting and storing fresh garden vegetables*. (Bulletin 617). University of Idaho Extension.

Recommended process time (in minutes) for parsnips in a dial-gauge pressure canner.

Style of pack	Jar size	Process time	Canner pressure (PSI) at altitudes of			
			0 - 2,000 ft	2,001 - 4,000 ft	4,001 - 6,000 ft	6,001 - 8,000 ft
Hot	Pints	30	11 lb.	12 lb.	13 lb.	14 lb.
	Quarts	35	11 lb.	12 lb.	13 lb.	14 lb.

Recommended process time (in minutes) for parsnips in a weighted-gauge pressure canner.

Style of pack	Jar size	Process time	Canner pressure (PSI) at altitudes of	
			0 - 1,000 ft	Above 1,000 ft
Hot	Pints	30	10 lb.	15 lb.
	Quarts	35	10 lb.	15 lb.

Let jars stand undisturbed for 12 to 24 hours, remove rings, check to make sure lids are sealed, wash jars, label, date and store. Food in jars that do not seal must be reprocessed in a clean jar with a new lid within 24 hours, refrigerated or frozen.

Tables were adapted from the information in Andress, E., & Harrison, J. A. (2014). *So easy to preserve* (Bulletin 989). (6th ed.). University of Georgia Cooperative Extension.

Find out more about Michigan Fresh at [canr.msu.edu/mi\\_fresh/](https://canr.msu.edu/mi_fresh/).