

Harvest & Preservation Quick Reference

What to do with the harvest · distilled from Guide 12 · all canning times altitude-adjusted for 4,700 ft

HARVEST INDICATORS + BEST PRESERVATION METHOD *Guide 12 §2*

Crop	Harvest indicator	Best preservation (BWB time at 4,700 ft)
Peppers — green (jalapeño, poblano, bell)	Firm, fully sized; bright vegetal heat	Roast and freeze (poblano); fermented or pickled (jalapeño); BWB pickle 25 min pints
Peppers — ripe red (cayenne, chiltepin, Rocoto)	Full color, shoulder-shine just starting to dull; chiltepin pea-sized red	Sun-dried whole (chiltepin, cayenne); ristra + powder; fermented hot sauce; fresh-frozen halves (Rocoto)
Tomatoes — sauce/can	Full red , slight give; vine ripening builds sugar + lycopene	Pressure-can low-acid tomato 25 min at 15 psi; or BWB with added acid (1 Tbsp lemon/qt) 55 min qt; freeze whole; sun-dry Principe Borghese
Cabbage — storage	Tight, heavy head; pre-frost (post 30°F night sweetens)	Kraut or kimchi (canonical); cellar at 32–40°F
Broccoli	Tight bead, before yellow flowering	Blanch (3 min) and freeze; side shoots continue
Cauliflower	Tight white curd, before separation	Pickled (BWB 15 min pints); or blanch (3 min) + freeze
Brussels sprouts	Firm, marble-golf-ball; after first frost	Blanch + freeze; or fresh through winter on stalk
Kale	Outer leaves continuously; before bolt	Massaged fresh; dehydrator chips; kale powder for stocks
Garlic — hard-neck (Muscic)	2–3 outer leaves brown + folded; lift on dry afternoon	Cure 2–3 wk in shade at 80–90°F, 50% RH; stores 6 mo. Don't wash — brush soil.
Garlic — soft-neck (Inchelium Red)	As above; harvest late June–late July	Cure 2–3 wk ; braids well; stores 9 mo
Onions — storage	Tops fall over, necks dry; July	Cure 3–4 wk on screens, single layer, shade; stores 5–8 mo by variety
Greens (chard, mature kale, spinach)	92–95% water — poor preservation candidates	Blanch + freeze for soups (not raw use); the 30-min rule matters most here
Lettuce, herbs (fresh)	Pick early morning, into shade in 5 min	Lettuce: not preserved; succession-plant. Herbs: see Guide 12 Ch 17
Beans — green snap	4–6 in long, pod still tender, seed not bulging	Pressure-can 25 min pints / 30 min qt at 15 psi (low-acid); blanch + freeze
Beans — dry (Hopi Yellow, tepary)	Pods rattle, vines fully dry; harvest before monsoon return wets them	Cure 1 week indoors, shell, freeze 48 h to kill weevil eggs; jar in pantry
Carrots	Shoulders 3/4 in; sweetest after frost	Cellar in damp sand 32–40°F; pickled (BWB 15 min pints)
Sweet potatoes	Before vines blacken; before first frost	Cure 7–10 d at 85°F, 85% RH (non-negotiable); cellar at 55–60°F, 6–9 mo
Figs (Black Mission, Brown Turkey)	Soft neck, honey drop at eye, slight body give	Freeze whole; fig preserves BWB 15 min half-pint; halve and dry
Pomegranates (Wonderful)	“Tink” sound when tapped; full red color	Whole at 50°F up to 2 mo; juice frozen in pints; pomegranate molasses
Jujubes (Li, Honey Jar)	Yellow-green speckled (fresh) or brown wrinkled (dried)	Dry — often on the tree; store dried 12 mo
Peaches, apricots (Red Haven, Harglow)	Background yellow; fragrant; slight give	BWB in light syrup 35 min qt; freeze sliced; dry; jam BWB 10 min half-pint
Apples (Pink Lady, Granny Smith)	Brown seeds; clean stem release	Cellar 32–40°F (3–6 mo); sauce BWB 30 min qt; cider; dried slices

THE 4,700 ft ALTITUDE RULE *Guide 12 §4.1 — non-negotiable*

Process	Sea level	Dragoons (4,700 ft)
BWB ≤20 min process	Stated time	Add 5–10 min
BWB >20 min process	Stated time	Add 10 min
Pressure canner, dial gauge	10 psi	15 psi
Pressure canner, weighted	10 lb	15 lb
Boiling temperature	212°F	204°F
Atmospheric pressure	14.7 psi	12.4 psi
Internal temp at 15 psi	—	≈252°F (above 240°F botulism kill)

Memorize three numbers. At 4,700 ft: **water bath, add 10 min; pressure dial, 15 psi; pressure weighted, 15 lb.** Write the altitude-adjusted time in any kitchen recipe notebook — future-you will not remember which one is in the book.

WARNING. Low-acid foods (vegetables, meats, beans, low-acid tomatoes without added acid) **must be pressure-canned, not BWB** — BWB at 4,700 ft reaches only 204°F, not hot enough to kill *C. botulinum* spores. If you can't measure pH and can't pressure-can, **freeze instead.** Clear vent pipe before every use (blocked vent = explosion). Dial gauges: free annual calibration at UA Coop Ext Cochise.

THE 30-MINUTE RULE *Guide 12 §3.1*

Everything harvested in summer/fall is hot when it comes off — leaf temp on a Dragoons August afternoon is 90–100°F. Cell respiration at 90°F is twice as fast as at 70°F and four times as fast as at 50°F.

Into shade within 5 min; kitchen within 30; wash bath, fridge, or processing within 60. Strictest for greens, herbs, berries; less strict for peppers, tomatoes, roots — but still applies.

Field-heat removal is the single highest-return habit in preservation. A 90°F basket of basil chilled in 50°F water for 5 minutes keeps three days longer than the same basil set on a counter.