Tomatoes and Tomatillos are available in the grocery store all year long. Tomatoes and Tomatillos are high in vitamin C, a good source of fiber and with only 45 calories per serving, they add abundant flavor to a wide variety of food. Tomatoes/Tomatillos are sodium, fat and cholesterol free, and provide a number of other key nutrients, such as phosphorous, and potassium.

Canning Tomatoes

Canning vegetables must be done with care. All foods harbor microorganisms; these decrease food quality and may form toxins or poisons under certain conditions. To preserve food for long-term storage, conditions must be made unfavorable for the growth of microorganisms.

Food acidity determines which canning method is needed. A pressure canner is needed for canning vegetables. Pressure canners attain a temperature of 240 - 250°F in order to destroy harmful effects of bacteria.

For further information on proper canning practices and processing times for vegetables refer to the National Center for Home Food Preservation at: www.uga.edu/nchfp

For more information, contact your local University of Idaho Extension Office or visit www.uidaho.edu/extension/twinfalls

Eat Smart Idaho  |  www.uidaho.edu/extension/eatsmartidaho

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Let’s Eat Tomatoes and Tomatillos!

Pasta Salad

Ingredients *makes 6 (1-cup) servings
2 cups cooked pasta (any shape)
1 cup diced cucumber
1 large tomato chopped
\( \frac{1}{2} \) medium green pepper, diced
\( \frac{1}{4} \) medium onion, diced
\( \frac{1}{2} \) cup frozen peas
\( \frac{1}{4} \) cup Italian salad dressing

Directions
- Mix all ingredients in a medium-sized bowl.
- Cover and refrigerate.
- Mix again before serving.
- Refrigerate leftovers.

How to select
When purchasing your tomatoes at the store, smell the blossom (not stem) end. The most flavorful ones will have a rich tomato aroma. The skin should be tight and not shriveled. Select tomatoes that are round, full and feel heavy for their size, with no bruises or blemishes.

Select a tomatillo and pick it up. Most of the tomatillos will still have the papery husk attached. This papery husk should be intact and relatively crispy and free from moisture or mold.

Peel the husk back slightly and check the color of the tomatillo. The color should be bright green and evenly colored. Do not pick tomatillos with black or brown spots, which can be an indication of spoilage.

Squeeze the tomatillo. It should be firm. Soft tomatillos may be spoiled and should be avoided.

Storing
Store fresh ripe tomatoes in a cold, dark place, stem-side down, and use within a few days. Never refrigerate tomatoes as they will lose their flavor and turn the flesh mealy.

Tomatillos should be stored in a dry and ventilated area such as a hanging basket in your pantry. Tomatillos store in their husks like onions and will last for about 2 months like this. They may also be placed in a paper bag and kept in the crisper drawer or in a bowl covered with a paper towel in the refrigerator. Make sure they don’t get wet or the inside of their husk will become slimy. Leave their husks on. This storing method works well if you aren’t going to use the tomatillos right away, and will last far about a month.

Freezing & Drying

 Freeze and dry vegetables by removing the moisture through a method of either freezing or drying.

Freezing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vegetable</th>
<th>Preparation</th>
<th>Blanching and Freezing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tomatoes</td>
<td>Remove stem ends, peel and quarter, cook until tender. Best if pureed or minced.</td>
<td>Cool by setting pan in cold water, pack and freeze.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Drying

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vegetable</th>
<th>Selection and Preparation</th>
<th>Pre-treatment and blanching*</th>
<th>Time*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tomatoes</td>
<td>Select tomatoes of good color. Steam or dip in boiling water to loosen skins. Chill in cold water; peel. Cut into sections not more than 3/4 inch wide. Cut small pear or plum tomatoes in half.</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Leathery to crisp. 10-18 hours</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Blanching and drying times are guidelines only. Test food frequently for dryness according to the criteria described in this chart. Cool food before testing.