

# Methods of Food Preservation

6/8/2012 9:07:00 PM

All of the different types of preservatives require different methods of food preservation

August 17, 2010- Food preservation is an important task in the contemporary context. We consume a lot of processed and packaged food that lies on the retail shelves for quite a long time. To ensure that this packaged food remains edible and safe for consumption, preservatives are added to it. Food preservatives are broadly categorized into two categories – one is the natural food preservatives and the other is the artificial food preservatives. In general natural food preservatives are much more natural and therefore considered safer for consumption.

All of the different types of preservatives require different methods of food preservation. There are more than one methods of food preservation and each of them may not always be valid. Different food preservation methods are fit for different food products and climatic conditions.

## Food Preservation Methods

Among the many popular methods for preserving food are basic processes that are crucial to these preservation methods. All these important processes are targeted either at killing the existing microorganisms like bacteria and fungus or at preventing their production. Most commonly used food preservation processes are heating, oxidizing, drying or dehydrating, freezing, osmotic and toxic inhibition, chelation, etc.

### Drying

Drying or dehydrating is one of the most effective ways of preserving fruits and vegetables. Drying or dehydrating food preserving method has the advantages of retaining all the nutrients of the food product and reducing the weight of the food product substantially. Of the important nutrients that are lost in this particular method is thiamin and vitamin C. To retain vitamin C often sulphur dioxide is added to fruits and vegetables, which might lead to allergic reactions for a few of the consumers.

### Smoking

Out of the food preserving methods, smoking uses treatment to smoke to preserve the foods. This method is more suitable for fish and meat products. Smoking method of food preservation uses the dual preservation technique of heat that dehydrates the food product and the hydrocarbons absorbed.

### Freezing

Freezing is a food preserving method that works by keeping the foods in extremely low temperatures thus preventing the growth of any kind of microorganisms in the foods. In everyday life also, the use of refrigerators is an example of this method of food preservation only.

### Pickling

Pickling one of the traditional methods of food preservation, This method usually includes drying process as the basis and following it up with cooking the foods in substances that prevents bacterial or fungal growth. Fruits, vegetables and meats, all of these products are preserved through the process of pickling.

### Canning

Canning, as a food preservation method is carried out by sealing the edible food items in sterile cans and jars and then boiling these cans, bottles and jars to kill any of the remaining menace-making microorganisms. But even a little lack in attention in this process can lead to easy and fast contamination of the canned food products.

Besides the above mentioned methods of food preservation, adding natural preservatives like salt & sugar to the food is also a very popular method, specially in the households. This kind of preserving is generally easy, cheap and quick and needs no artificial materials. Salt works better for meat products, sugar on the other hands is preferred for preserving fruits and vegetables. In close following come the chemical preservatives that substantially increase the shelf life of a food product, while restoring its important nutrients. The only problem with these artificial nutrients is that they tend to have negative and harmful effects, allergies and reactions

foodadditivesworld: By