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Cowboy frozen fruit

K W Lent July 2024



It's the time of summer when peaches and apples are starting to mature. It will be a few weeks yet before they are finally ready to eat right off the trees but if you want to save them for winter months there are some easy ways to simply freeze them to last in your freezer over winter (about 8 months safe storage). I've only done this with peaches and apples so I can't verify if it works for all fruits.

By the way --- if you want a ton of fruit from your fruit trees just fertilize the trees with your left over wood ash from the wood burning stove. Trees love this fertilizer method and you can get rid of that pile of ash at the same time. Spread the ashes heavily around the base of the tree in the late Fall or Winter for the next Spring rains to soak it into the ground. You'll be amazed how it boosts your peach and apple production on the branches.

Let's cover three freezing methods for peach and apple slices. Canning is a good way to store fruit too but its a lot of work in a hot kitchen. Freezing works easier.

Cowboy frozen fruit

I call this “cowboy frozen fruit” because the end product is not as pretty as the following two methods described in this article. If you’re a cowboy or hard core survivalist you won’t care what your fruit slices look like when you pull them out of the freezer in, let’s say, 4 months. They’ll still taste great, you’ll get all the vitamins, and still have a good side dish to go with your venison. It’s going to have the fruit skins which you will need to chew a little more than peeled, but you don’t really care.

When your peaches or apples are ripe on the tree pick as many as you want and give them a quick rinse in clean water. Then slice the fruit into about 1/3” thick slices with skins on. Toss out the pit and core. Stuff the slices into a quart size freezer bag leaving ½” space at the top, then squeeze out the air, and seal the bag tightly. That’s it. Put as many bags as desired into your freezer. When you retrieve a bag later the fruit will be all stuck together and probably a bit brown. Thaw in your refrigerator. You can spoon your serving size out for each meal (and if desired, you can pour a little sweetener of your choice on them or not). The nutrition and fiber will still be there and you’ll have made good use of all those extra fruits that were just going to fall off the tree and decompose.

Day time hikers and pop-up campers frozen fruit

This is a little more stylish than the cowboy fruit, but nearly the same method. Rinse the fruit in clean water, peel the skins, and slice into 1/3” thick slices. Fill a bowl with 1 quart of water and stir in 3 tablespoons of lemon juice. (bottled is fine) This will coat the slices with a solution that will retard most of the browning that happens when freezing. (the browning isn’t harmful to ingest though). Pick the fruit out of the water, fill quart freezer bags with the slices and freeze. When you pull them out of the freezer they will look better and you won’t have the skins to chew. They will still be stuck together, but when thawed the bag will be good for a field trip luncheon addition.

Stylish gourmet frozen fruit

If you really want to upgrade your frozen peach and apple appearance to impress your family or friends it’s not that difficult. Rinse the fruit, peel, and core. Slice into 1/3” slices. Soak the slices in a pre-packaged anti-browning agent (it’s usually powdered vitamin C) by following the directions on the package. Place the slices, spread out, on a cookie sheet and place the sheet in the freezer for 1 hour. This will freeze all the slices individually. Place the frozen slices in a quart size freezer bag, seal, then freeze. When you retrieve a bag at a later date the slices will have kept most of their original color and you can pick separate pieces out of the bag for your use.

That’s about it. It’s easy and fun. Good eating and God bless!