

Preparing Spinach and Other Greens for Canning¹

United States Department of Agriculture, Extension Service²

Quantity: An average of 28 pounds is needed per canner load of 7 quarts; an average of 18 pounds is needed per canner load of 9 pints. A bushel weighs 18 pounds and yields 3 to 9 quarts -- an average of 4 pounds per quart.

Quality: Can only freshly harvested greens. Discard any wilted, discolored, diseased, or insect-damaged leaves. Leaves should be tender and attractive in color.

Procedure: Wash only small amounts of greens at one time. Drain water and continue rinsing until water is clear and free of grit. Cut out tough stems and midribs. Place 1 pound of greens at a time in cheesecloth bag or blancher basket and steam 3 to 5 minutes or until well wilted. Add 1/2 teaspoon of salt to each quart jar, if desired. Fill jars loosely with greens and add fresh boiling water, leaving 1-inch headspace.

Adjust lids and process following the recommendations in Table 1 or Table 2 according to the canning method used.

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Table 1.

Table 1. Recommended process time for Spinach and Other Greens in a dial-gauge pressure canner.						
			Canner Pressure (PSI) at Altitudes of			
Style of Pack	Jar Size	Process Time	0-2,000 ft	2,001-4,000 ft	4,001-6,000 ft	6,001-8,000 ft
Hot	Pints	70 min	11 lb	12 lb	13 lb	14 lb
	Quarts	90	11	12	13	14
*After the canner is completely depressurized, remove the weight from the vent port or open the petcock. Wait 10 minutes; then unfasten the lid and remove it carefully. Lift the lid with the underside away from you so that the steam coming out of the canner does not burn your face.						

Table 2.

Table 2. Recommended process time for Spinach and Other Greens in a weighted-gauge pressure canner.				
			Canner Pressure (PSI) at Altitudes of	
Style of Pack	Jar Size	Process Time	0-1,000 ft	Above 1,000 ft
Hot	Pints	70 min	10 lb	15 lb
	Quarts	90	10	15
*After the canner is completely depressurized, remove the weight from the vent port or open the petcock. Wait 10 minutes; then unfasten the lid and remove it carefully. Lift the lid with the underside away from you so that the steam coming out of the canner does not burn your face				