



# Fish

<b>NUTRITION:</b>	Fish and other seafood are an excellent source of protein. Most are low in fat. Phosphorus, iron, calcium, niacin, potassium and the B vitamins are important nutrients received from seafood.
<b>HOW TO SELECT:</b>	<p>Top quality fish will have a fresh, mild odor (the fishier it smells, the older it is). The gut cavity will be glossy, brilliant and it will be difficult to tear bone from the flesh.</p> <p><u>Gills:</u> Clear pink to bright red translucent, free of slime <u>Slime:</u> Transparent or water bright <u>Eyes:</u> Bright and clear; convex, black pupil <u>Skin:</u> Bright and shining <u>Fillets or Steaks:</u> Moist, firm and elastic, bright color, fresh odor.</p> <p>Fish should be cleaned within two hours of when it is caught.</p>
<b>STORAGE:</b>	All fish or seafood should be kept cold and preferably on ice until used or processed. They should be processed as soon as possible after catching or purchasing. The fresher the seafood, the better it tastes.
<b>PICKLING:</b>	PNW 183 “Fish Pickling for Home Use”, (\$0.50) outlines the basic steps for pickling fish.
<b>SMOKING/ DRYING:</b>	PNW 238 “Smoking Fish at Home Safely”, (\$1.00) describes how to smoke fish. A special procedure is required if smoked fish is to be canned. Refer to PNW 450 “Home Canning Smoked Fish” (\$1.00).
<b>FREEZING:</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Wash fish and remove scales.</li><li>2. Remove entrails after cutting the full length of the belly. Remove gills, head and fins. Wash well in cold running water.</li><li>3. Leave whole or cut into steaks or fillets.</li><li>4. To protect against drying and loss of flavor, prepare by glazing the fish. Put unwrapped fish on a tray in the freezer. Freeze quickly. When frozen, dip into cold water. The water will freeze, leaving a thin ice layer on the fish. Repeat process to build up additional layers, if desired.</li><li>5. Wrap well in wrap suited for freezing, extracting as much air as possible from package.</li><li>6. Recommended storage times vary according to variety of fish. Some for only 4 months, others freeze well up to 12 months.</li></ol>
<b>CANNING:</b>	<p><b><u>PRESSURE CAN</u></b> <b><u>SALMON, STEELHEAD, TROUT AND OTHER FISH. EXCEPT TUNA:</u></b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. When fish is caught, remove viscera at once. Chill the cleaned fish until it is canned.</li><li>2. Before canning remove head, tail, and fins. Wash fish carefully, removing all blood.</li></ol>

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**CANNING (cont.):**

3. Split fish lengthwise. Cut into lengths suitable for jars. (About 1 pound of fish will fill one half-pint jar.)
4. Pack fish tightly into pint or half-pint jars, leaving 1-inch headspace. 1 teaspoon salt per pint may be added.
5. Adjust lids. Process half-pints and pints for 100 minutes at 10 pounds pressure (weighted gauge) or 11 pounds pressure (dial gauge). Increase pressure for higher elevations.

TUNA

1. Can tuna either precooked or raw. Precooking removes most of the oil that tends to be strong-flavored; however, many people find it easier to can the tuna raw in its own juices.
2. To precook, remove viscera and wash fish well in cold water. Allow blood to drain from the cavity. Place cleaned tuna on a rack or metal tray, at the bottom of a large baking pan. Bake at 225 to 250 degrees F for 2 1/2 to 4 hours depending on size; or bake at 350 degrees F for about 1 hour. In place of baking, tuna may be steamed for 2 to 4 hours. The internal temperature of the fish should reach 165 to 175 degrees F. Refrigerate the fish overnight to firm the meat.
3. To can raw tuna, fillet the fish when it's partially frozen. Skin raw fish before or after filleting. It's not necessary to remove the viscera before filleting.
4. For either raw or precooked tuna, peel off the skin with a sharp knife. Scrape the surface lightly to remove blood vessels and any other discolored flesh.
5. Separate the fish into quarters by cutting meat away from the bones. Pull off and cut out all bones and fin bases. Scrape and cut out all dark flesh. The dark flesh has a strong flavor and can affect the delicate tuna flavor.
6. Cut quarters crosswise with a sharp knife into lengths suitable for jars. (About 1 pound of fish will fill a half-pint jar.) Pack pieces into pint or half-pint jars, pressing down gently to make a solid pack. Leave 1-inch headspace.
7. For precooked tuna, add 1/2 teaspoon salt (optional) and 1 to 3 tablespoons oil (cottonseed, soy, or other vegetable oil) per half-pint; 1 teaspoon salt (optional) and 2 to 6 tablespoons oil per pint. Water can be substituted for the oil. For raw pack tuna, no added liquid is needed.
8. Adjust lids. Process half-pints and pints for 100 minutes at 10 pounds pressure (weighted gauge) or 11 pounds pressure (dial gauge). Increase pressure for higher elevations.

For more information call WSU Skagit County Extension:

360-428-4270

Or visit:

<http://skagit.wsu.edu/FAM/MFP.htm>

**HANDOUT DEVELOPED BY: WSU Master Food Preservers  
Under the direction of  
Joanne Austin, Skagit County Extension Faculty  
WSU Skagit County Extension**