



Using, Storing and Preserving

# Brussels Sprouts

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*Michigan Fresh: Using, Storing and Preserving Brussels Sprouts* was first published in October 2012 and revised in May 2023.

*Michigan-grown Brussels sprouts are available September through November.*

## Yield

One pound makes six servings.

## Food Safety and Storage

- Wash hands before and after handling fresh produce.
- Pick or purchase fresh Brussels sprouts that are not bruised or damaged.
- Select sprouts that are bright green and uniform in size to allow for even cooking. Small, firm, compact sprouts are the best choice.
- Harvest when they are firm and 1 to 2 inches in diameter; begin picking from the bottom of the plant. Harvest before the first severe frost.
- Wash Brussels sprouts under cool running water. Do not use soap.
- Do not wash or trim before refrigerating. You can store Brussels sprouts in a perforated plastic bag for up to a week.
- Keep Brussels sprouts away from raw meat and meat juices to prevent cross-contamination.
- For best quality and to preserve nutrients, preserve no more than your family can consume in one year.



## How to Preserve

### Canning

Brussels sprouts can well when pickled. (See pickling recipe.) If you don't pickle them, then freeze them.

### Freezing

To freeze, select green, firm and compact heads. Make sure the heads are free from insects. Trim and remove the coarse outer leaves. Wash thoroughly. Sort into

small, medium and large heads. Water blanch\* the small heads for 3 minutes, medium heads for 4 minutes and large heads for 5 minutes. Cool promptly in ice water for same number of minutes. Drain and package, leaving no headspace. Seal, label, date and freeze.

**\*Water blanching:** Use 1 gallon of water per pound of prepared Brussels sprouts. Put in blanching basket or strainer and lower into boiling water. Place lid on pan or blancher. Return water to boiling and start counting blanching time as soon as the water returns to a boil. It should take only a minute to come back to a boil. If it takes longer than one minute, too many Brussels sprouts have been put in the boiling water.

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## Recipe

### Pickled Brussels sprouts

- 12 cups of small Brussels sprouts
- 4 cups 5% acidity white vinegar
- 2 cups sugar
- 2 cups thinly sliced onions
- 1 cup diced sweet red peppers
- 2 tablespoons mustard seed
- 1 tablespoon celery seed
- 1 teaspoon turmeric
- 1 teaspoon hot red pepper flakes

**Yield:** About 9 half-pints

**Procedure:** Wash Brussels sprouts (remove stems and blemished outer leaves) and boil in salt water (4 teaspoons canning salt per gallon of water) for 4 minutes. Drain and cool. In large saucepan, combine vinegar, sugar, onion, diced red pepper and spices. Bring to a boil and simmer 5 minutes. Distribute onion and diced pepper among jars. Fill hot jars with pieces and pickling solution, leaving ½-inch headspace. Remove air bubbles, and wipe jar rims with a clean paper towel and adjust headspace if needed.

Adjust lids and process according to the recommendations that follow.

## Sources

Andress, E., & Harrison, J. A. (2014). *So easy to preserve* (Bulletin 989). (6th ed.). University of Georgia Cooperative Extension.

National Center for Home Food Preservation:  
<http://nchfp.uga.edu/>

University of Illinois Extension. (n.d.). *Watch your garden grow: Brussels sprouts*.

University of Wisconsin Extension. (2012, January 3). *Fall vegetables*. (A3900-04).

Recommended process time (in minutes) for pickled Brussels sprouts in a boiling-water canner.

Style of pack	Jar size	Process time at altitudes of		
		0 - 1,000 ft	1,001-6,000 ft	Above 6,000 ft
Hot	Half-pints or pints	10 min	15	20

“Pickled Brussels Sprouts” recipe is adapted from the National Center for Home Food Preservation recipe “Pickled Cauliflower or Brussels Sprouts”: [https://nchfp.uga.edu/how/can\\_06/pickled\\_cauliflower\\_brussel.html](https://nchfp.uga.edu/how/can_06/pickled_cauliflower_brussel.html). That recipe was adapted from the “Complete Guide to Home Canning,” Agriculture Information Bulletin No. 539, U.S. Department of Agriculture, revised 2015.

Find out more about Michigan Fresh at  
[canr.msu.edu/mi\\_fresh](http://canr.msu.edu/mi_fresh).

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