

# healthy hood river

## HAHRC BEATS

### 'Tis the season for freezing

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Our recent run of hot weather in the Pacific Northwest has made for fast and furious food production so far this year. Most crops are several weeks early which can leave a food preserver feeling a little rushed. In most years we might still be able to find some asparagus to pickle in early July. But this year we are already feeling the pressure of oncoming tomatoes, peaches, and squash coming in from



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farms and gardens. If you blink, you are likely to miss cherries which are already getting "raisiny" on the trees and blueberries aren't far behind. To make matters worse, the thought of standing in front of a hot stove in triple-digit temperatures to do canning is probably low on most folk's priority list.

That's why freezing is one of my favorite options this time of year. Most freezers should be pretty empty at this point, if you've been working your way through your stores.

Not to mention, just about anything can be frozen simply, easily, and quickly with little or no preparation. That frees you up until those cooler months to get back to your veggies for making jams, sauces, and other canned goods. In fall and winter you can happily warm up your home with a canning pot of boiling water all afternoon.

Eating foods when they are in season is usually much cheaper. It's also tastier and healthier. If you've ever compared a ripe farm or garden-fresh tomato to the tomatoes you buy in the store during the winter, you know what I'm talk-



File photo

**RETAIN MORE** nutrients and save money when you buy fresh and freeze for later use.

ing about. Local produce contains more nutrients than the produce that had to be trucked in from far-away places and has sat on the shelf for several days or

weeks. When you freeze that fresh, ripe, local produce straight from the farm or garden, you can retain much of those nutrients. If you aren't sure how to

freeze, can, or preserve your food, check out some of the food preservation courses offered by Oregon

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## Good food: a prescription for good health

Summer brings a garden of eatin' to the Gorge. With a bounty of choices for fresh produce in stores and farmers markets, summer is a great time to fill up on the fruits and vegetables that everybody needs for good health.

And to make it even easier to add fruits and veggies to your diet, Providence Hood River Memorial Hospital has some delicious new recipes for you to try. They're tasty ways to get the nutrients you need to help prevent health problems such as heart disease, stroke, diabetes and cancer.

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