Storing Vegetables
for
Home Use
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By

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It is to the interest of every family to grow each season a supply of those vegetables suitable for storage, and to see that they are properly stored for use during the winter months when prices are high and vegetables often hard to get. Storage is one of the important ways of conserving our food supply and is to the interest not only of the family but of the nation as well.

Less work and less expense are involved in storing vegetables than in keeping them by other methods, as canning, drying, and preserving, and the product retains its characteristic flavor much better.

It is with the idea of helping the gardener to prevent his products from going to waste that the following brief notes on the storage of the more common vegetables are given. For the sake of brevity, those crops requiring about the same conditions are grouped together.

**ROOT CROPS**

- Potatoes
- Beets
- Carrots
- Parsnips
- Winter Radishes
- Turnips
- Rutabagas
- Salsify
- Kohl-Rabi

1. **Small Quantities.** Store in boxes (or heaps) of slightly moist (not wet) sand or sandy soil in cellars. Put in alternate layers of sand and vegetables. Vegetables stored in this way will not shrivel. Tops of vegetables should be removed, of course, before storing. Do not cut beet tops too close.

2. **Large Quantities.** Store in root cellar in bulk, or in outdoor pits, as follows: Make excavation 6 or 8 inches deep, 4 feet wide, and as long as necessary. Cover ground with layer of straw, and place vegetables in conical heap of any desired length. Cover with 12 to 18 inches of straw. On the layer of straw, as the weather gets colder, place a layer of soil 4 to 6 inches in depth. If some straw is left protruding at the top of the pile at first, it will provide for the passing off of any heat which may be generated when the vegetables are first covered.
This protection will suffice except in the most severe weather, when an additional layer of straw or strawy manure may be put on. In removing the vegetables from the pit after the layer of soil is frozen, a small hole may be chopped in one side and the vegetables needed taken out.

**CABBAGE**

1. When it is desired to store a small quantity for two or three months, the stems and outer leaves may be removed, and the heads stored in a cool cellar. Keep the temperature low to prevent premature growth.

2. A common method for out-door storage is to dig a trench 6 or 8 inches deep, wide enough to accommodate three heads, and as long as necessary. The plants are pulled up roots and all and placed heads down in the trench, leaving the outer leaves and stems intact. On top of the three rows of heads, put in the trench in this way, are placed two more rows, between the stems of the first. A layer of straw is put next to the cabbage, and on top of this a layer of soil, which is increased as the weather gets colder. It is not necessary to cover sufficiently to prevent freezing, as some freezing does not injure cabbage stored in this way.

**CELERY**

1. Dig plants as late as possible (avoid injury from severe freezing) with some soil adhering to roots, and partially replant the plants in an upright position, placing them closely together, in a cool cellar. The soil or sand in which the roots are replanted should be kept moist by watering. In watering, do not wet the tops of the plants. Keep cellar well ventilated, and the temperature just above freezing, if possible.

2. Dig a trench in the field about one foot wide, deep enough so that tops of plants come to the surface of the ground, and as long as necessary. Set the plants, which should be dug with good portion of root system left on, as closely together as possible in this trench, and water the soil around the roots, being careful not to wet the tops. Nail two planks together to form a trough, and invert this over the trench. Until severe weather, ventilate by putting blocks under trough during warm weather. As the weather gets colder, put on straw, strawy manure, or soil in sufficient quantity to prevent plants from freezing.

**ONIONS**

1. Keep in cool cellar (temperature just above freezing point) where it is dry and where there is good ventilation. Store in slat crates or shallow trays, not in bulk.

2. Onions may be stored in a dry cold place, such as a barn loft, where they are allowed to freeze and remain frozen until ready to use. After freezing, cover them with a layer of straw,
so they will not freeze and thaw alternately. When ready to use them, place the onions where they will thaw out very slowly (as in a cool cellar). Handle carefully and as little as possible while frozen.

**VEGETABLES REQUIRING WARM STORAGE**

- Pumpkins
- Sweet Potatoes
- Squashes

These vegetables require dry, comparatively warm storage. The temperature should be around 45° to 50°F., which is considerably warmer than for other vegetables. The cooler parts of a furnace room are often satisfactory for these vegetables.

When harvesting squash and pumpkins, leave the stems on, as decay at the stem end is then less likely to occur.