

Why We Use Frozen Food Ingredients

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Frozen food is on the rise. This is largely because of its convenience. According to the latest reports, out of all segments, especially Millennials seem to buy into the frozen food trend, buying 43% more frozen food in 2017. 89% of millennials who buy frozen food do so because they see it as a quick dinner solution. 54% of them believe frozen food to be healthier than the processed variant. In general, for people who plan to buy more frozen food in the future, 41% says this is mainly because of convenience. ([Grocery Dive](#), 2017)

But there are still a lot of questions about frozen food. We try to address some concerns in this post and will happily receive any questions you may have after reading the article! We'll also go into some of the benefits of frozen food that have shown to be extremely useful in our own use-case.

Frozen food vs. fresh food

Fresh bio fruit and vegetables straight from the kitchen garden, it doesn't get healthier than that.

However, when fresh produce is harvested it immediately starts to lose nutrients. As such, it is super important to consume them as soon as possible! But... that isn't always a practical or viable option.

Some produce comes from quite far away. Just think about the travel time combined with the time the product is in the supermarket – you do the math!

Sometimes, fresh may not always be best.

Is frozen food healthy?

Even though new studies show promising numbers that frozen food consumption is becoming more popular, frozen food is still perceived by many to be an unhealthy option. That's partly due to the fact that frozen ingredients are cheaper and are therefore perceived as being of inferior quality. ([Frozen Food Europe](#), 2017)

Common misconceptions are that frozen food:

- loses most of its nutrients
- is not as tasty as the fresh variant
- contains preservatives (like salt and sodium)

Let's look into these statements and see what's the deal about them!

Is frozen food good for you?

Let's get it out of the way: frozen food *can* be good for you!

Fruit and veggies are frozen within a few hours of harvesting, that means while being at their optimum ripeness. Therefore, all that's good about the fresh produce remains "frozen in time". ([Eufic](#), 2011)

It has even been observed that, after being frozen, in some food products the value of some nutrients, such as vitamins A, C and E, may become greater compared to their fresh counterparts. This can be explained due to natural nutrient degradation during storage.

"You can store them in the freezer for a year and the nutrient level pretty much stays the same" – Hazel MacTavish-West, Food Industry Consultant (qtd in [NPR](#), 2018)

A study from the University of Georgia (UGA) and the Frozen Food Foundation compared the nutrient content of eight of the most commonly purchased frozen and fresh fruit and veggies. The results showed that the nutritional value of many frozen fruits and veggies are generally equal to that of the fresh counterpart. ([Frozen Food Europe](#), 2017)

What is the expiration date of frozen food?

Because they are locked in time, the expiry date of frozen food is extended and you can store them for a very long time. Seeing as we are experiencing a rise in food waste (30% of all fruit and veggies worldwide are thrown away!), the fact that we can safely freeze and store fruit and veggies for later is a key solution!

In addition, your favorite fruit and vegetables are not available year-round. By freezing them, you can still eat your favorite ingredients (even when they aren't in season!). And you don't even need preservatives as no microorganism develops at the temperature below -9.5°C. The only danger exists when you unfreeze food. Make sure you defrost frozen food the right way!

Doesn't frozen food lose its taste?

When people fear that frozen foods lose their taste they are partially right. When food is being frozen for a very long time, the taste and quality may reduce in some products. But in general, all fruit and veggies will stay in shape for at least a year ([Eating Well](#))

But you *should* know that you can't freeze all foods. Some veggies (like lettuce) and fruits (like oranges) practically disintegrate when you freeze then thaw them.

At Alberts, we use a technique called IQF (individually quick-frozen). The advantage is that during this process only small ice crystals are formed instead of the big ones that might rupture cell walls. That would result in damaged products upon thawing. In general, we avoid ingredients at Alberts that would risk impeding the quality of our smoothies. And the only thing we want is to serve you healthy, fresh and nutritious smoothies!

Alberts Smoothie Station uses IQF fruit and veggies to make freshly prepared smoothies. Our freezers store ingredients at -18°C, which is the recommended temperature by the FAVV (The Federal Agency for the Safety of the Food Chain).

If you'd like to know more about our smoothies and vending machine, feel free to email us at team@alberts.be