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SIMPLE STRATEGIES FOR FREEZING STRAWBERRIES

Follow Three Simple Steps and Oregon's Strawberry Season Doesn't Have to End

Corvallis, Ore. (July 9, 2009) – The Oregon strawberry's short season is nearing its conclusion, but that doesn't mean you can't continue to savor their sweet flavor throughout the year. With a little planning, you can quickly and easily freeze local strawberries, capturing their peak-season taste.

Janie Hibler, berry expert and author of *The Berry Bible*, offers three simple steps for freezing strawberries:

1. Rinse strawberries and pour them onto a baking sheet lined with a paper towel. Pat dry with another paper towel.
2. Put baking sheet in freezer until strawberries are completely frozen (about 2 hours depending on freezer temperature)
3. Transfer strawberries to self-sealing plastic freezer bags and place back into freezer.

According to Hibler, it is important to freeze strawberries in exact portions, such as pints and quarts. This is because strawberries become condensed when thawed, rendering them impossible to measure with accuracy. Hibler also recommends

consuming frozen berries within a year for maximum freshness. “After that, ice crystals will start breaking down the berries’ flesh, and eventually they will lose their flavor,” adds Hibler.

Frozen strawberries can be used in many ways, from smoothies and pies to jams and butters. For more recipes, visit www.oregon-strawberries.org

Should you run out of time to freeze fresh Oregon strawberries, frozen are widely available in grocery stores.

Unsurpassed flavor, color and nutritional benefits

Unlike strawberries from other regions, Oregon strawberries hang on the vine longer, resulting in a gradual ripening process that develops the sugars more fully. The result is a better tasting strawberry and a more vibrant red color throughout.

In a study by Oregon State University’s Food Science and Technology Department, Oregon strawberries outperformed California varieties in all measures of taste and nutritional quality. Oregon berries had the highest levels of total sugars; higher marks for overall fruit quality and aroma; and higher levels of anthocyanin, a potentially powerful antioxidant.

About the Oregon Strawberry Commission

The Oregon Strawberry Commission (OSC) is a commodity commission that represents more than 100 Oregon strawberry growers. The OSC serves Oregon’s strawberry industry by identifying markets for strawberry promotion and education and by implementing and supporting programs to increase strawberry consumption. For more information, please visit www.oregon-strawberries.org/.

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