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Storing Vegetables Successfully

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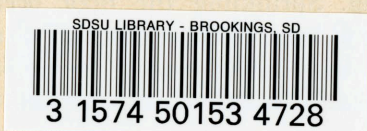
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Storing Vegetables

Successfully

Vegetables, to be satisfactorily stored, must be **Properly Matured**, neither **Diseased** nor **Bruised**; placed in **Suitable Containers**, and stored with proper **Temperature**, **Humidity** and **Ventilation**



Cool Moist Storage

Potatoes, Root Crops, Cabbage, Apples

Warm Dry Storage

Winter Squash, Pumpkins

Cool Dry Storage

Onions, Dry Peas, Beans

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EXTENSION SERVICE

SOUTH DAKOTA STATE COLLEGE ♦ BROOKINGS

Cool, Moist Storage for *Potatoes, Root Crops, Cabbage, Apples*

Essential requirements for these main storage crops are not ordinarily found in furnace-heated homes unless special provisions for proper temperature, humidity and ventilation have been made.

Temperature Just Above Freezing

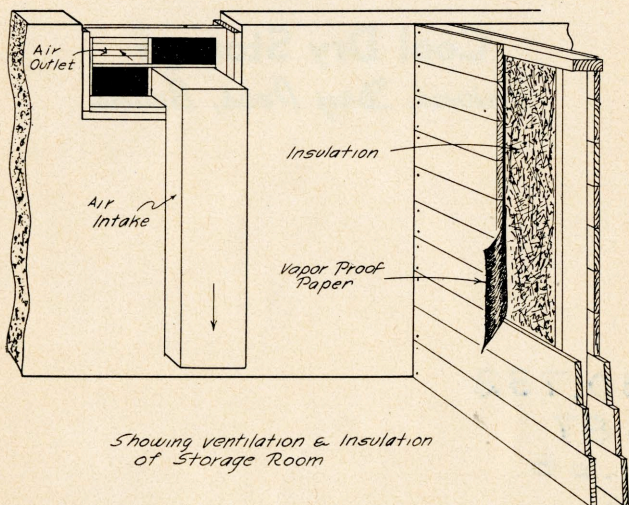
Right temperature (32-40 degrees) can be assured only by protecting against house heat by tight partitions or insulations; or preventing freezing by insulation and banking.

Air Must Be Moist

The moisture in the air must be sufficient to prevent shriveling. Sprinkling the floor occasionally during winter will help maintain the needed moist air. If storage place is too wet or musty, provide floor drainage and ventilation. Excessive ventilation may also cause shriveling.

Ventilation Is Essential

Ventilation must be provided to cool storage room in the fall and remove excessive moisture. The living cells of the stored crops probably need some air. Ventilators or windows should be opened in the evening and closed in the morning, so regulating to keep temperature between 32 and 40 degrees. The illustrations



IF YOU HAVE A BASEMENT WITH FURNACE, place insulation between storage room and rest of basement. In some cases, it may be necessary to also insulate concrete foundation wall.

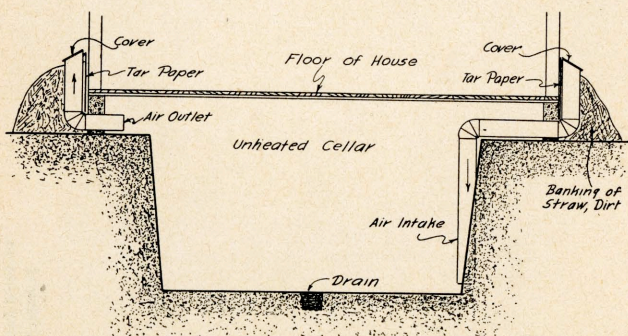
show ways to provide the needed cool, moist storage conditions.

Potatoes—Potatoes should not be too ripe for storing and for this reason, late varieties usually store best. In handling, avoid bruising, sunscald from too much sun, or greening from too much light. Do not let them freeze. (They freeze at 29 degrees.) For 8 to 10 days after digging, a 65-70 degree temperature with high humidity will help form the corky layer, heal bruises and prevent decay. After this sweating period, temperature is lowered to correct winter storage point. The lower the temperature the longer before they will sprout. Below 36, they may become sweet but tend to return to normal when exposed to room temperature a few days. Potatoes may be stored in crates or bins small enough to permit air circulation through the pile which should not be more than 4-6 feet in diameter.

Apples—Pick when hard ripe in padded baskets or sacks—never drop into containers. Place in boxes or baskets stacked in storage room. Prompt cooling and storing after picking is important because apples ripen much faster off than on the tree.

Late Beets, Carrots, Rutabagas, Parsnips, Salsify, Turnips and Winter Radishes—Harvest before overgrown, woody, strong. Leave half-inch of top. Roots may be stored in barrels or crates but not in large piles where they may heat and decay. Storing in closely covered crocks or burying in moist sand, sawdust or soil (to maintain humidity) may be satisfactory. Thirty-two degrees is best storage temperature.

Late Cabbage, Kohlrabi—Pile heads one or two layers deep on slatted shelves in same room with roots.



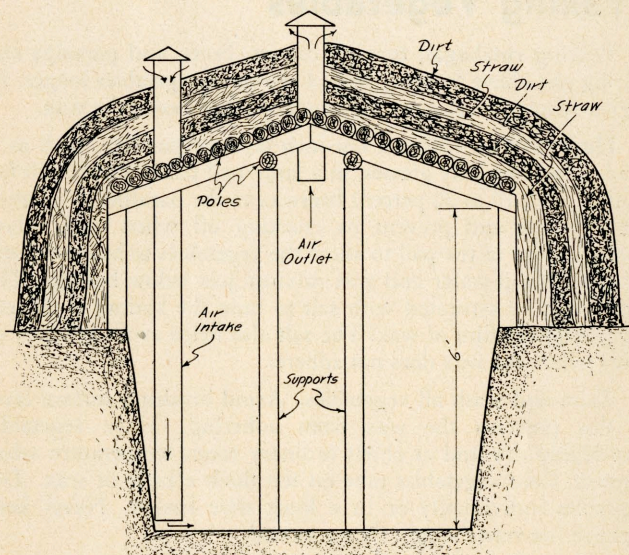
IF YOU HAVE AN UNHEATED CELLAR, bank house foundation.

Late Cabbage, Parsnips, Salisfy, are not injured by freezing and may also be stored in pits for this reason. Harvest after freezing weather, store in convenient piles and cover to prevent alternate freezing and thawing. Place in pits when ground is frozen, mounding to prevent water running in. Cabbage stored frozen should be used before March. Parsnips and salsify may be left in ground over winter without injury.

Pit storage for other vegetables is not generally recommended for South Dakota because of danger of freezing during severe cold. Pits are usually safe until Thanksgiving.

Warm, Dry Storage for *Winter Squash, Pumpkins*

Ordinary furnace rooms, basements, attics and upstairs rooms usually provide the warm, dry air with proper 40 to 50 degree temperature these vegetables need. To test for maturity: Squash and pumpkins when properly matured, are difficult to puncture near stem end with thumb nail. Several inches of stem should be left attached. Do not break the skin. Pick before exposed to frost. Harden shell by leaving outside during several warm days or keeping in heated rooms (75 to 80 degrees) for two weeks. Then store, not on floor in root cellar or vegetable storage room, but in rows on shelves where warm and dry. Sweet potatoes are placed in baskets, crates or shallow bins with slatted bottoms.



IF YOU HAVE NO BASEMENT OR CELLAR, build an outside root cellar or (for fall use) a temporary pit.

Cool, Dry Storage for *Onions, Dry Beans, Peas*

Unheated closets, attics, storage rooms or porches which do not freeze are suitable for onion storage. Such places will also store beans and peas even if they do freeze.

Beans, Peas—Harvest when maximum number of pods are ripe, beginning to dry. Vines are pulled, cured like hay, then threshed. Or pods may be picked; spread in a warm place until thoroughly dry. Shell, place in bags, hang in cool, dry, airy place. If thoroughly dry, will keep in cans or jars.

Onions—Are mature when tops topple over while still green. Then pull and cure 3 or 4 weeks before storing. This may be done outdoors, in windrows protected from rain or in an airy shed or rooms in trays 4 x 3 ft. x 3 in. with ventilated bottoms. It is important that onions are not allowed to become wet. Before freezing weather, store in such trays or boxes or in shallow layers on shelves at 32 to 36 degrees temperature.

May Keep Tomatoes Several Weeks

It is possible to keep tomatoes several weeks, if the evening before frost is predicted, the vines are pulled (with fruits on them) and hung in some protected spot where light frosts are not likely to hurt them.

Waxing Vegetables

Waxing rutabagas, turnips, carrots, beets, and parsnips and storing just above freezing helps keep these vegetables longer. At higher temperatures gases are produced that loosen the wax.

How to Wax—Float a one-inch layer of paraffin, such as is used for sealing jelly glasses, in a large pail partly filled with hot water. Add 10 to 20 percent beeswax to the paraffin to toughen the wax layer and prevent its cracking off when cold. Have enough water in the pail to allow the vegetables to be completely covered. Keep water and wax mixture just below boiling. The water may be saturated with salt to raise the boiling point and give a thinner film of wax. The salt also helps avoid spoilage on spots where the wax does not adhere.

Trim and wash all vegetables. Avoid breaking surface layer as this prevents the wax from adhering. Have vegetables thoroughly dry and at about ordinary room temperature when dipped. Cold vegetables take on too thick a layer of wax. Dip vegetables individually or in a loose wire basket. Never keep them in hot water longer than a second.

In preparing waxed vegetables for cooking, peel the wax layer off along with the skin.

We Must Preserve All the Food

we possibly can. Food is fully as important as arms to win the war. We must have food to ship to our boys in the Service, to our Allies and at the same time have enough to keep our people in good trim at home so production will not lag.

Vegetable Crops Are Abundant

in South Dakota this year. We cannot afford to let any of them go to waste. We will need every ounce of food we can get in the trying months and perhaps years ahead. This leaflet tells how to save through STORAGE those bountiful crops with which Nature has blessed our Struggle for Freedom.

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