

FREEZER SALSA

Makes: 10 cups or 40 (1/4 cup) servings

Donna, a Home Cook'n reader, sends us this perfect recipe for delicious, homemade salsa to store in the freezer. This seems the perfect solution when you'd like to make salsa with that bumper crop of tomatoes but wonder if your house can handle the added heat of canning.



10 to 12 large very ripe tomatoes
2 large cooking onions, finely chopped
1 tablespoon vegetable oil
8 minced garlic cloves
2 (5-1/2 oz) cans tomato paste
8 jalapeno peppers, seeded, minced or 1 (4-1/2 oz) can diced green chilies, undrained
2 green peppers, chopped
1/2 cup white or cider vinegar
1 tablespoon paprika
2 teaspoons granulated sugar
1 1/2 teaspoons salt
1/2 teaspoon cayenne pepper (optional)

1. Core, seed, and coarsely chop tomatoes to measure 10 cups.
2. Heat oil in large saucepan over medium heat. When hot, add onions and garlic. Cook, stirring often, until onions have softened, 7 to 10 minutes.
3. Add tomato paste, tomatoes, jalapeno peppers or chilies, green pepper, vinegar, paprika, sugar, salt and cayenne, if using.
4. Bring to a boil, stirring occasionally until thickened, about 30 minutes. Cool to room temperature before packing into straight-sided jars, freezer containers or zip-top freezer bags.

Notes: Measure a cup or two of the salsa into re-sealable plastic bags, gently press flat, then freeze for easy and swift defrosting.