

## **Food Prep – for storage & freezer**

**Apples** – Bushel from Tehachapi - peel & slice into thin wedges, add some lemon juice to prevent browning, for pies, cobblers, fried apples sides – store in freezer for 6 – 9 months in seal-a-meal bags or freezer bags.

**Berries** – wash as soon as home from store. Eat within 2 days. Can mold quickly. If there is leftovers, pat dry and store in freezer bags for future smoothies.

**Cheese** - cheapest at Costco in block form. Grate and store in quart freezer bags for up to 6 months, best defrosted in the fridge.

**Chicken** – baked – Bake chicken breasts in ½ c chicken broth with salt & pepper at 350\* for 45 min. Cut up into ½ inch cubes – store in quart freezer bags ¾ full for: stir fry's, fajitas, salads, etc.

**Chicken** – fried – Cut chicken breast into long thin slices using filet knife. Dredge in flour, Lawry's Season Salt and Pepper, Black Pepper, Garlic Granules, Onion powder mixture. Fry in ½" of Canola oil in pan until golden brown & crisp. Dry on paper towels. Store in gallon freezer bags for fried chicken, orange chicken, Marsala etc..

**Chicken** – roasted whole – prep whole bird, remove gizzards, rinse, pat dry. Preheat oven to 475\*. Run fingers under skin to help crisping. Brush with olive oil or butter. Season with salt & pepper. Set in roasting pan breast up. Bake according to weight. Let stand, juices should be clear. Check temp with meat thermometer in thickest part of the thigh – 180\*. Shred chicken off of bones and store in freezer bags for soups, fajitas and casseroles.

**Frozen Corn, Green Beans, Peas** – Add 1-2 cups frozen veggie to microwavable dish, 1 Tbsp. butter and ½ c water and cook on high for 2-4 minutes. If green beans add ¼ c Craisins or toasted almonds or 2 slices of chopped bacon add before microwaving.

**Frozen Stir Fry Veggies** – Buy already bagged or use quart size ziplocks and make your own with chopped onions, red & green bell pepper, carrots, celery, water chestnuts, sugar snap peas and green beans

**Green Chilies or Jalapenos** – Wash and de-seed peppers and dice into small ¼” pieces. Store in flat gallon freezer bag to be able to break off chunks while cooking.

**Grilling** – all meat/veggies should be defrosted and at room temperature before you put on the grill. All meat should only be flipped once and brought to almost doneness. Let sit & rest for 5 min. before serving.

**Grilled Veggies** – thinly slice red potatoes, yellow squash, zucchini, sweet potato and toss in olive oil, salt & pepper and lots of minced garlic. Freeze in quart sized bags. Defrost in fridge day before and put on hot skillet or grill plate

**Hamburger** – cheaper to buy in larger portions and portion out for your uses. I make my own patties, season with garlic granules, onion powder, Lawry’s seasoned salt & pepper, use wax paper squares for in between each patty. Portion out 1 1/2 lb. in freezer bags for 4 people meals. For large trays of lasagna & enchiladas – 2 1/2 lb. bags.

**Kabobs** – cut meat in smaller portions and consistent thickness for a more even cooking. Cut the veggies in thicker portions since they cook faster than the meat. Marinate for tenderness.

**Lemon Juice** – Get free lemons from friends and family in LA/San Diego. Rinse all lemons in sink. Zest all rinds and store flat in freezer Ziplocks. Cut all in half and juice. Pour juice into ice cubes trays and store in Ziplocks for cubes of pure lemon juice for cooking.

**London Broil or Top Sirloin** - Trim all fat off and cut into thin ¼ in. X 2” long strips and store in seal-a-meal bags or quart freezer bags for Mongolian Beef, Fajitas, Stroganoff, Swiss Steak, Chimichangas, Beef Curry, etc.

**Marinades** – I like to freeze the meal in the marinade and let it defrost in the fridge overnight, then the counter to come to room temperature. I

will put chicken in a gallon ziplock and pour a bottle of BBQ sauce or teriyaki sauce or catalina dressing or Italian dressing and freeze it. I also like to use up the last of the fresh salsa and put flap meat or steaks in it and freeze.

**Nuts** – All varieties last longer if stored in freezer. Up to 2 yrs. Keep in air-tight jars.

**Pork Roast** – Buy pre-packaged large boneless loins and cut into chops, cubes for stew, won tons, fried rice and kabobs, ½ roasts for pulled pork & glazed.

**Seasoning** – most chefs season at the end of cooking and I like to season before and really let the flavor blend in. I know it is done by how it smells and tastes instead of measured amounts.

**Vegetables** – Not a big fan of steamed veggies. To roast and serve as a side, line shallow pan with tin foil, roast at 450\* – for every 2 lbs. cleaned, peeled and cut up into 1 in. cubes toss with 1 Tbs. olive oil and minced garlic, 20 – 40 min. After roasting, add salt & pepper then add lemon or orange peel zest, or Italian seasoning, or rosemary, or chopped parsley, or parmesan, or asaigo, or romano, or fresh basil, or red pepper flakes for zing!