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With new freezing technology, frozen foods can retain the same flavor and nutritional qualities as fresh foods, and in some cases, better.

Why Frozen Foods May Actually Be Better Than Fresh

NEW TECHNOLOGY MEANS THAT FROZEN FOODS OFFER BETTER QUALITY AND NUTRITION VALUE THAN YOU MIGHT THINK.

By [Peggy Carouthers](#) | [Jun 09, 2017](#) | Sponsored by [Stouffer's](#)

Many chefs have been conflicted over frozen foods despite the cost and labor benefits these products offer because of perceived quality differences as compared to “fresher” produce, but research suggests that the idea that the quality of frozen foods is not as high as never-frozen products is inaccurate.

A study conducted by the University of Georgia comparing the nutritional content of fresh and frozen produce over two years demonstrated that frozen foods can actually be just as nutritious as fresh and fresh-stored produce, and in some cases, more nutritious. A paper on the study published in the *Journal of Food Composition and Analysis* this year also reported that in some cases, the frozen foods actually retained significantly more nutrients than their “fresher” counterparts.

For chefs, another concern has traditionally been the quality difference the freezing and thawing process creates in the taste, texture, and appearance of foods. Because water expands when it's frozen, cells rupture, and flavor is often lost in the process. Additionally, because foods have needed to be heated before freezing to kill harmful bacteria and then reheated again before serving, flavor has been sacrificed. Now, with new technology and quicker freezing, flavor is preserved meaning that chefs can be assured that frozen foods retain their quality.

“Due to our unique processing, we are able to capture that freshness at that point in time and make the food safe and free of dangerous bacteria,” says Ted Skapura, division quality manager for Nestlé professional. “We capture all of those important components using this new technology that allows our products to keep their vibrancy and pure and natural flavor compounds because we aren't destroying them in our manufacturing step.”

This technology has opened a whole new era of frozen foods in which chefs can use these products as foundations for high-quality signature sides and other premium dishes, says Bridget McCall, culinary sales and business development manager for Nestlé professional.

“Frozen foods get a bad wrap in general because of people’s perceptions of frozen foods are sort of old-school, and with the new technology and the products we’re working with at Nestlé, it’s a whole new ballgame,” McCall says. “We show customers some of these items, like the Basil Pesto, and they are surprised at the quality and color.”

By harvesting fresh basil grown hydroponically in a greenhouse, using it within 12 hours to create pesto with fresh garlic and olive oil, and then freezing the dish in a process that doesn’t damage the product, Nestlé ensures that foods are safe and flavorful.

“We are able to capture that freshness at that point in time and make it safe without the use of heat,” Skapura says, “and 18 months later, it will taste as fresh as the day that we made it with those fresh ingredients.”

By using quality frozen products, fresh-tasting food is available to restaurants year-round, regardless of seasonality, food waste is reduced with extended shelf life, and kitchens can spend less time on food preparation. In turn, these assets help restaurants save money, please customers, and reduce back-of-house stress.

Today, using frozen foods does not mean that chefs must compromise quality or nutritional content. By delivering excellent quality in a cost-effective manner that reduces waste and labor constraints, frozen foods offer chefs a consistent foundation from which they can make their own signature creations, as well as tremendous business benefits.

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