

A Guide to Drying Foods

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Drying foods is one of the oldest methods of food preservation. It is simple, safe, and easy to do. Drying preserves food by lowering the moisture content. When there is little to no water or moisture in the food, the growth of microorganisms is slowed.

Some fruits require sulfur treatments to prevent browning. This also helps retain the fresh fruit flavor and increases the shelf life. Find more on sulfur treatments at: <https://extension2.missouri.edu/gh1563>.



Apples



Pears



Peaches



Apricots



Ascorbic Acid

Steps for Dehydrating Foods

1. Select and wash ripe produce.
2. Remove stems, cores or pits. Cut away any bruising and slice produce evenly.
3. Complete any pretreatments. Blanching can help fruit retain color during drying and storage.
 - To steam blanch, boil several inches of water in a pot and place produce in a wire basket over the boiling water. Water should not touch the produce. Cover with a lid and blanch for appropriate amount of time.
 - To find appropriate blanching times, visit: <https://extension.sdstate.edu/food/preservation> and view our Preserve It! resources.
4. Remove from the steamer and absorb any moisture with a clean dish towel or paper towels.
5. Place produce evenly on dehydrator trays. Drying times vary from 4 hours-12+ hours. To find appropriate drying times, visit: <https://extension.sdstate.edu/food/preservation>.
6. Check for desired dryness. Fruits should be pliable and leathery in texture with little moisture. Vegetables should be chewy and brittle, but vary depending on the vegetable.



Storing Dried Foods



Store dried foods in a sealed moisture-proof container. Keep the products in a cool, dry, and dark place.



Recommended storage times for dried fruits are up to one year.



Recommended storage times for dried vegetables have about half the shelf life of dried fruits.

For more information on storage of dried foods, visit National Center for Home Food Preservation (https://nchfp.uga.edu/how/dry/pack_store.html).

Safety Considerations



Wash all produce in cold running water. Remove any dirt or insect larvae.



Blanching facilitates the reduction or elimination of pathogens that can be found in raw produce.

Cleaning your Dehydrator

- Clean the base of the dehydrator with a damp cloth and wipe dry.
- Always wipe down and wash the trays and lid of your dehydrator after each use.
- If your trays are dishwasher safe, put the trays in the dishwasher to be cleaned.

