



Lewis County

Master Food Preservers

WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY
EXTENSION

Food Safety and
Preservation



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Tips and Tricks About Dehydrating Food

1. To keep apples from discoloring, rinse apple rings or thin slices in a mixture of lemon juice and cold water.
2. Infants enjoy chewing on dried apple rings. They help soothe teething and also provide nutrition.
3. Dehydrating food is great for people who like to hike and camp because it often reduces the weight of a given food from 50 to 90 percent.
4. You can dehydrate tomato sauce from a jar and it will resemble a fruit roll up. NOTE: Be sure it doesn't contain meat as it will make it unsafe. It is a compact way to bring marinara sauce on a camping trip, which can easily be rehydrated with water. Think of how much weight and space is saved from carrying a bulky 16 ounce jar!
5. Mushrooms are made up of about 90 percent water. They are easy to dehydrate and easily rehydrated. Be sure to scrub mushrooms of all dirt before dehydrating.
6. Only dehydrate the freshest of mushrooms. They should be plump and full.
7. Vegetables should be at their peak flavor and ripeness if you are going to dehydrate them.
8. Blanch vegetables before dehydrating. This kills any potential bacteria.
9. Dehydrated vegetables and fruits should be stored in tightly sealed food storage containers and stored in a cool dry place.
10. Dehydration of foods results in some loss of nutrients, although the foods can still be nutritious. Vitamin C is the one nutrient that is destroyed most easily by heat.
11. Dipping fruits in lemon, orange, or pineapple juice helps avoid discoloration of most fruits.
12. Before dehydrating tomatoes, dip into boiling water and loosen the skins. Peel and slice tomatoes and then dehydrate. They will become nice and crisp.
13. The fiber content of fruits and vegetables remains relatively the same after dehydrating.
14. You can refrigerate your dehydrated foods if you like.
15. Humid air slows down the dehydrate process.
16. You can avoid wasting celery by dehydrating thinly sliced celery at the time you purchase a bunch. The dehydrated celery works beautifully in many recipes that call for celery to be cooked.

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17. Quicker drying will make the best product, however, too high a temperature will make the outside of the fruit or vegetable harden faster than the inside, and the food may not be fully dehydrated. Be aware of the temperature you are dehydrating at and follow the guidelines of the manufacturer's product.
18. Slice fruits and vegetables the same thickness so they dehydrate as evenly as possible during the process.
19. Foods dehydrate faster at the perimeter or edges of the trays than in the center. This is why you should test samples of dehydrated foods from various sections of your trays.
20. Food dehydration is not an exact science. It is simple. However it will require some trial and error experiments to determine if you need longer dehydrating times, or to slice food products thinner, etc.
21. You can dehydrate bruised fruit, only if you remove the bruised areas before drying.
22. Dried tomatoes, add both texture and flavor to pasta and rice dishes as well as flavored breads and marinated salads.
23. The most common and easiest fruits and vegetables to dry are apples, bananas, berries, cherries, peaches, apricots, pears, peas, corn, bell peppers, tomatoes, onions, potatoes, mushrooms, green beans and carrots.
24. You can add dried fruits to your hot oatmeal for easy rehydration. They also easily rehydrate in cold cereals with milk.
25. Dried apricots cook great in muffins and fruit breads.
26. NEVER dehydrate raw chicken or poultry because it could contain salmonella.
27. Dehydrated fruits and vegetables are lower in fat. However, their calories are higher per serving size because of density. Eating half the amount of a dried fruit or vegetable is about the same calories of twice the amount if eaten fresh. So, for example, if you wanted to eat 1 cup of fresh chopped apple, you would eat ½ cup of dehydrated apple for the same calories.
28. Once food is rehydrated, use it quickly before it spoils.
29. Dehydrated fruits and vegetables make healthy crunchy snacks and don't need to be rehydrated to enjoy their intense flavor.
30. The higher the water content of a given fruit or vegetable, the larger it can be sliced because it will shrink more in the dehydration process.