



Fruit Leathers

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There are 10 new products and two revised product pages in this book. Topics include: Preserving Food, Canning, Pickled Products, Sweet Spreads, and more.

DRYING FRUIT LEATHERS

Fruit leathers are homemade fruit rolls. They are a tasty chewy, dried fruit product. Fruit leathers are made by pouring pureed fruit onto a flat surface for drying. When dried, the fruit is pulled from the surface and rolled. It gets the name "leather" from the fact that when the pureed fruit is dried, it is shiny and has the texture of leather.

The advantages of making your own fruit leathers are to save money use less sugar and to mix fruit flavors. Leftover fruit pulp from making jelly can be blended and made into fruit rolls.

For the diabetic adult or child, fruit leathers made without sugar are a healthy choice for snacks or desserts. Individual fruit leathers should contain the amount of fruit allowed for the fruit exchange.

Directions follow for making fruit leathers. Fresh, frozen or drained canned fruit can be used.

Leathers From Fresh Fruit

- Select ripe or slightly overripe fruit.
- Wash fresh fruit or berries in cool water. Remove peel, seeds and stem.
- Cut fruit into chunks. Use 2 cups of fruit for each 13" X 15" fruit leather. Puree fruit until smooth.
- Add 2 teaspoons of lemon juice or ¼ teaspoon ascorbic acid (375 mg) for each 2 cups of light colored fruit to prevent darkening.
- Optional: To sweeten, add corn syrup, honey or sugar. Corn syrup or honey is best for longer storage because it prevents crystals. Sugar is fine for immediate use or short storage. Use ¼ to ½ cup sugar, corn syrup or honey for each 2 cups of fruit.

Leathers From Canned or Frozen Fruit

- Home preserved or store-bought canned or frozen fruit can be used.
- Drain fruit, save liquid.
- Use 1 pint of fruit for each 13" X 15" leather.
- Puree fruit until smooth. If thick, add liquid.

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- Add 2 teaspoons of lemon juice or ¼ teaspoon ascorbic acid (375 mg) for each 2 cups of light colored fruit to prevent darkening.
- Applesauce can be dried alone or added to any fresh fruit puree as an extender. It decreases tartness and makes the leather smoother and more pliable.

Preparing the Trays for Leathers

To dry in an electric dehydrator, specially designed liners for the plastic dryer trays can be purchased. Plastic dryer trays can also be lined with plastic wrap; be careful not to allow leakage.

For drying in the oven, a 13" X 15" cookie pan with short raised edges works well. Line the pan with a non-stick material, being careful to smooth out wrinkles. There are several online sources for electric dryer tray liners for leathers that can be cut to fit your cookie sheets. Silicone non-stick baking mats can also be used to line the cookie pan. Do not use waxed paper or aluminum foil.

Pouring the Leather

Fruit leathers can be poured into a single large sheet (13" X 15") or into several smaller sizes. Spread puree evenly, about ¼-inch thick, onto drying tray. Avoid pouring puree too close to the edge of the cookie sheet. The larger fruit leathers take longer to dry. Approximate drying times are 6 to 8 hours in a dehydrator, up to 18 hours in an oven and 1 to 2 days in the sun.

Drying the Leather

Dry fruit leathers at 140°F. Leather dries from the outside edge toward the center. Test for dryness by touching center of leather; no indentation should be evident. While warm, peel from plastic and roll, allow to cool and rewrap the roll in plastic. Cookie cutters can be used to cut out shapes that children will enjoy. Roll, and wrap in plastic.

Chances are the fruit leather will not last long enough for storage. If it does, it will keep up to 1 month at room temperature. For storage up to 1 year, place tightly wrapped rolls in the freezer.



Baking Sheet Size



Individual Leathers

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