



2017 Master Food Preserver Training Lab Recipes

Leathers from Fresh Fruit

1. Select ripe or slightly overripe fruit.
2. Wash fresh fruit or berries in cool water. Remove peel, seeds and stem.
3. Cut fruit into chunks. Use 2 cups of fruit for each 13" x 15" inch fruit leather. Pureé fruit until smooth.
4. Add 2 teaspoons of lemon juice or 1/8 teaspoon ascorbic acid (375 mg) for each 2 cups light colored fruit to prevent darkening.
5. 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. Saccharin-based sweeteners could also be used to reduce tartness without adding calories. Aspartame sweeteners may lose sweetness during drying.

Leathers from Canned or Frozen Fruit

1. Home preserved or store-bought canned or frozen fruit can be used.
2. Drain fruit, save liquid.
3. Use 1 pint of fruit for each 13" X 15" leather.
4. Purée fruit until smooth. If thick, add liquid.
5. Add 2 teaspoons of lemon juice or 1/8 teaspoon ascorbic acid (375 mg) for each 2 cups of light colored fruit to prevent darkening.
6. Applesauce can be dried alone or added to any fresh fruit pureé as an extender. It decreases tartness and makes the leather smoother and more pliable.

Preparing the Trays

For drying in the oven a 13" X 15" cookie pan with edges works well. Line pan with plastic wrap being careful to smooth out wrinkles. Do not use waxed paper or aluminum foil.

To dry in a dehydrator, specially designed plastic sheets can be purchased or plastic trays can be lined with plastic wrap.

Pouring the Leather

Fruit leathers can be poured into a single large sheet (13" X 15") or into several smaller sizes. Spread pureé evenly, about 1/8-inch thick, onto drying tray. Avoid pouring pureé 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.

Spices, Flavors and Garnishes

To add interest to your fruit leathers, spices, flavorings or garnishes can be added.

Spices to Try — Allspice, cinnamon, cloves, coriander, ginger, mace, mint, nutmeg or pumpkin pie spice. Use sparingly, start with 1/8 teaspoon for each 2 cups of pureé.

Flavorings to Try — Almond extract, lemon juice, lemon peel, lime juice, lime peel, orange extract, orange juice, orange peel or vanilla extract. Use sparingly, try 1/8 to 1/4 teaspoon for each 2 cups of pureé.

Delicious Additions to Try — Shredded coconut, chopped dates, other dried chopped fruits, granola, miniature marshmallows, chopped nuts, chopped raisins, poppy seeds, sesame seeds or sunflower seeds.

Fillings to Try — Melted chocolate, softened cream cheese, cheese spreads, jam, preserves, marmalade, marshmallow cream or peanut butter. Spread one or more of these on the leather after it is dried and then roll. Store in refrigerator.