

# FOOD DEHYDRATOR USER MANUAL



**PKFD23**

**PLEASE READ ALL INSTRUCTIONS CAREFULLY  
BEFORE USING YOUR DEHYDRATOR**

**This product is intended for the use of dehydrating food products.**

**Do not use this appliance for any other purposes other than intended.**

**WARNING:** To avoid the risk of electric shock, burns, or injuries, always make sure the product is unplugged from the electrical outlet before moving, cleaning or servicing this unit.

**When using any appliances and to reduce the risk of fire, electrical shock, burns or serious injury, basic safety precautions should always be followed:**

1. Before using this appliance, please check carefully to make sure the voltage (AC120V-60Hz) is compatible with your home and that the electrical cord is properly grounded and connected to the electrical outlet of similar voltage. **CAUTION:** Risks of fire, electric shock, burns or injury if the dehydrator is not connected as instructed.
2. **ALWAYS** place the appliance on a flat, level and stable surface.
3. Make sure the dehydrator and all controls are in the **OFF** position before inserting the plug in the electrical outlet.
4. Do not plug/unplug the dehydrator into/from an electrical outlet with wet hands.
5. To disconnect the dehydrator from an electrical outlet, pull directly from the plug. Make sure to not pull from the wire.
6. **DO NOT** let the power cord hang over edge of table or counter.
7. **DO NOT** place or use the unit or any parts of the unit on or near a hot gas or electric burner, in a heated oven, or on a stove top.
8. This appliance should not be used by or near children, or people with certain disabilities.
9. This product is equipped with a polarized plug (one blade is wider than the other blade) as a safety feature to reduce the risk of electrical shock and fire. This plug will fit into a polarized outlet only one way. If you are unable to insert the plug into the electrical outlet, try reversing the plug. If the plug still does not fit, contact a qualified

electrician. Never use the plug with an extension cord unless the plug can be fully inserted into the extension cord. Make sure the voltage levels of the extension cord is at least as great as the appliance (listed on the bottom panel of the unit). Do not alter the plug.

**10. DO NOT** operate this or any other appliance with a damaged cord or plug. Also, do not use this appliance if it malfunctions, has been damaged in any way, or has been immersed in water or any other liquids. Send the unit to the nearest authorized Service Center for inspection, repair or adjustment.

**11. To avoid risk of electrical shock, fire or injuries: DO NOT immerse or expose this appliance, cord or plug into water or other liquids.**

**12.** A short power-supply cord is provided to reduce accidental tripping as the result of a longer cord. An extension cord may be used (with care); however, be sure that the marked voltage/rating is at least as great as the voltage/rating of this appliance (listed on the bottom panel of the unit). The extension cord should be positioned such that it does not drape over the counter or table top where it can be pulled on by children or tripped over. **DO NOT** use an outlet or extension cord if the plug fits loosely. **DO NOT** use an extension cord if it feels hot after use; unplug it immediately.

**13.** The use of any accessories or attachments not recommended by the manufacturer may cause fire, electric shock or injury.

**14.** Always use the Control Functions/Buttons to operate unit.

**15.** Make sure the appliance is in the **OFF** position and unplugged before adding/removing parts or cleaning.

**16.** Do not move the product while it is in use.

**17.** Unplug power cord from outlet when not in use. Clean & cover the unit and store in a cool dry place if not being used for an extended period of the time.

**18.** This appliance is **NOT** recommended for outdoor use.

**19.** If the appliance malfunctions during use, shut it down **IMMEDIATELY** and discontinue use. **DO NOT** attempt to open any part of the base. This product has no user-serviceable parts. Always contact the authorized Service Center if this unit malfunctions or needs servicing. **DO NOT** replace the parts of this machine with any

unauthorized parts that are not intended for this unit. All parts for this appliance must be used according to the Instruction Manual. **ONLY** use manufacturer approved parts from the authorized Service Center. Any other parts or accessories not intended for use with this appliance is strictly prohibited and will void the warranty.

**KEEP OUT OF REACH OF CHILDREN. DO NOT LEAVE THIS APPLIANCE UNATTENDED WHILE IN USE. ALWAYS SUPERVISE CHILDREN WHEN THEY ARE NEAR THE APPLIANCE. DO NOT ALLOW CHILDREN TO OPERATE OR BE NEAR THE APPLIANCE WHEN IN USE.**

**CAUTION: BURNS, INJURY AND/OR FIRE MAY RESULT FROM NON-COMPLIANCE WITH ALL OPERATING PROCEDURES DESCRIBED IN THIS INSTRUCTION MANUAL. FOR HOUSEHOLD USE ONLY; THIS APPLIANCE IS NOT FOR COMMERCIAL USE.**

**SAVE THIS USER MANUAL FOR FUTURE REFERENCE**

**Congratulations on choosing Nutrichef's Dehydrator.**

This quality appliance is designed to give you many years of use. For best results and trouble-free service, please read this entire manual.

**Dehydration-Preserving Food**

Thousands of years ago, one of the few ways people had to preserve foods was by laying them out to dry in the sun. Before modern appliances (such as refrigerators) and before chemical preservatives, dehydration was an easy way to safely store foods. Your new food dehydrator applies modern science to this ancient art to bring you a controlled, predictable and safe way to preserve foods at home.

Dehydrating food opens a new dimension in preserving fruits, vegetables and meats for you. Your new food dehydrator will be able to perfectly capture the fresh-picked, in-season flavor and nutrition of almost any food for enjoyment. These dried, foods can be more easily stored because they are less likely to spoil and they take up less

room as well. The dehydrated food will also weigh less, making them perfect for camping or backpacking meals. Dried fruit snacks are delicious and nutritious. Ingredients for your favorite soup recipes can be dried and stored which also make great last-minute meals, ready to cook.

Your Dehydrator Unit keeps food in the drying chamber at a computer-controlled constant temperature. Food is bathed in a constant stream of warm dry air which gently removes the moisture from the food. The result is beautifully dried food every time.

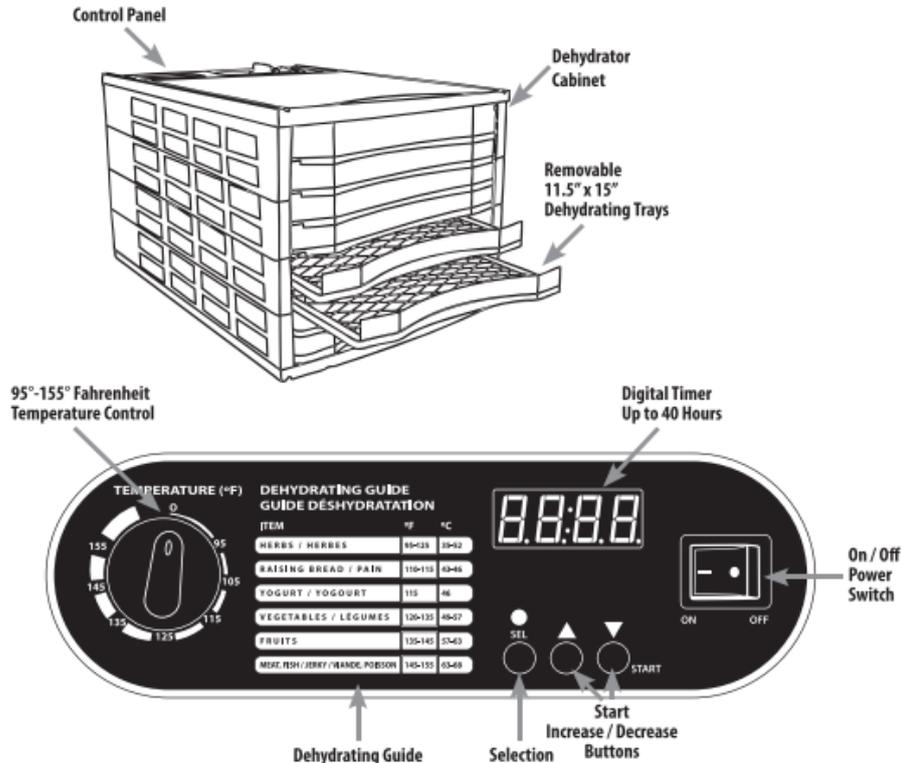
You will find that drying food is practical and economical as well as easy. And it all starts with your state-of-the-art food dehydrator.

### **Why Dehydration?**

When done properly, few nutrients are lost during dehydration. According to the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), dehydrating retains 95-97% of the nutrients in the original food. In contrast, canning only preserves 20-30% and freezing only retains 40-60% of the food's nutrition. Dehydrated food tastes good too! Since natural flavors become concentrated as you remove moisture, the dried product is naturally delicious.

As you will soon learn, reconstitution is an integral part of dehydration. Reconstitution refers to the adding of water to the dried food. When allowed to soak in water, dried food absorbs the water and swells back to its original size, shape and texture while retaining nearly 100% of its original flavor and nutrition.

## PARTS AND OPERATING INSTRUCTIONS



**For the safest results, read all of the instructions before use.**

1. Make sure the power switch is turned off. Place the unit on a clean, dry surface away from children and pets. Plug into an undamaged electric outlet.

**Warning:** Do not use an extension cord with your dehydrator.

2. DO NOT block the air vents on the door or at the rear of the Dehydrator. Keep the Dehydrator at least 12" (30.5cm) away from any wall to allow for proper air circulation.

3. DO NOT operate the Dehydrator on flammable surfaces such as carpeting.

4. Turn the unit on by pressing the Power Switch.

5. Set the temperature by turning the Temperature Knob to a desired setting.

6. Set the Timer by pressing the Select button. The Digital Timer Display will flash.

7. Set the Hours by pressing the Arrows ( $\Delta$   $\nabla$ ) to increase or decrease Hour Setting, up to 40 hours.

8. Press & Hold Select (make sure you hold select for at least 5 seconds) again and set

the minutes by press the Arrows ( $\triangle$   $\nabla$ ) to Increase or decrease the minutes Setting.

9. The display will show the Time setting. Press Select again (hold select down to confirm) to set the Time Setting. Press Start ( $\nabla$ ) to begin the dehydration process.

10. Prior to the dehydrating process, heat the unit to 90°F for 45 minutes to remove any moisture.

11. If the unit stops for any reason, turn it off, unplug it and then repeat Steps 4 to 9. If the unit still does not operate normally, turn it off, unplug it and contact your authorized Service Center.

12. While using oven mitts, slide the dehydrator trays out of the unit and load the produce that is to be dehydrated onto the trays. For the best results, do not overlap anything and be sure to leave space between the items to allow for maximum air circulation.

13. Using both hands for maximum stability, slide the dehydrator trays back into the unit.

14. Set the temperature by turning the knob on the top of the unit.

15. Note: Moisture may collect on the surface of the food. This should be blotted off with a paper towel.

### **Tools You Need To Get Started**

- Paring knife (Stainless Steel Blade)
- Cutting board
- Storage containers

### **Additional tools that make the job easier and faster can include:**

- A food processor or other similar appliances for faster and consistent slicing
- A steamer and basket, or kettle and collapsible steamer for blanching
- Blender for making fruit puree for fruit leather
- A small notebook to keep track of length of time and recipes that work for you

## **Basic Food Preparation Tips**

Fruit and vegetable peels often contain much of the food's nutritional value. Therefore it is better not to peel if the dried food is to be eaten as a snack or used in cookies. On the other hand, you will want to peel apples intended for a pies or tomatoes intended for soup. Generally, if you normally peel the food for a specific recipe, then peel the food before it is to be dehydrated.

One of the most important factors in successful dehydration is how the food is sliced. When drying fruits, it helps to get all the slices about the same thickness so they all dry to the same moisture level, at the same time. Thick slices dry more slowly than thin slices. The thickness you choose is up to you but slicing all the pieces to as close to the same size as possible will help ensure consistency in your dehydrated foods.

The skin of many foods naturally protects the food, but it can hamper the dehydration process. During dehydration, moisture escapes best from a cut or broken surface (not through the tough skin). Therefore, the larger the cut area, the faster and better the food will dehydrate.

For this reason, thin stalked vegetables like green beans, asparagus, and rhubarb should be cut in half the long way, or with an extreme diagonal cut to expose as much of the inner parts of the food as possible.

Fruit should be sliced across the core and not down through the core. Try to always make thin, flat cuts. Broccoli stems should be halved or quartered depending upon the diameter. Small fruits like strawberries can be cut in half. Even smaller berries should either be cut in half or merely blanched slightly to break the skin.

### **Filling the Drying Trays**

When loading the food into the trays you can use the entire surface, but some airflow must be maintained. Try to place the food in a single layer whenever possible. This is particularly important with foods like banana slices and pineapple rings. If some of the pieces come out with too much moisture when you are finished, one of the reasons is that it might have been covered by other pieces of food.

Dehydration removes the moisture and will cause the food to shrink as it dries. This allows you to store the same amount of food in a smaller space. Chopped food should not be spread thicker than 3/8 inch. If needed, use the mesh sheet to hold food.

It may be necessary to stir or flip the finely chopped food once or twice during dehydration to ensure even drying of all the pieces. To do so, turn the machine off, unplug it, remove the trays, stir/flip, then reassemble and restart the machine according to the instructions.

### **Prevent Dripping**

Some foods, such as very ripe tomatoes, citrus or high-sugared fruits may drip. Dripping from a tray above can change the flavor of different foods on lower trays. To help lessen the dripping: after placing the food on the drying trays (and before placing them on the dehydrator base), tap the tray firmly on a towel on a counter top to remove any excess moisture.

## **Vegetable Dehydration Tips**

Dried vegetables are every bit as flavorful and versatile as dried fruits. With dried vegetables you can make delicious soups, stews, casseroles and more. Basically, anywhere you would use fresh vegetables, you can use dehydrated vegetables.

Before preparing and dehydrating your chosen vegetables, always wash them in cold water. A certain amount of coring, slicing, peeling or shredding is required. A food processor can be a handy tool when using vegetables.

Be creative when drying vegetables. Placing vegetables in diluted lemon juice or similar flavors for approximately 2 minutes will add a hint of flavor to vegetables such as green beans and asparagus.

## **Pre-treatment of Vegetables**

For the most part, vegetables need little in the way of special treatment for dehydration although there are some exceptions. A few vegetables, such as onions, garlic, peppers, tomatoes and mushrooms can be dried and reconstituted successfully without pre-treatment. In general, if vegetables must be steamed or blanched for freezing, they have to be treated for drying.

With the above-named exceptions in mind, most remaining vegetables will need to be steamed or blanched before drying. Many vegetables have enzymes that help the food ripen; leaving these enzymes active in the food will cause them to continue to bring about changes in flavor and aroma which can be undesirable. Although untreated vegetables which are dehydrated can still be good for as long as three to four months, heat-treated vegetables reconstitute in less time, keep longer, and generally retain more flavor when reconstituted.

## **Steaming**

Steaming is the best method of pre-treatment. Place a single layer of chopped or sliced vegetables in a colander or steam-basket. Shredded vegetables can be 1/2 inch deep in the colander or basket. Set vegetables in a pot above a small amount of boiling water and cover. Water should not touch the vegetables. Begin timing

immediately. When they are ready to remove, the vegetables should be barely tender. Drop in a bowl of cold water to stop cooking and for food to retain its color. Pat dry and spread on trays to dehydrate.

### **Blanching**

Blanching is recommended for green beans, cauliflower, broccoli, asparagus, potatoes and peas. Since these vegetables are often used in soups or stews, blanching will ensure that they retain a desirable color. To blanch, place prepared vegetables in a pot of boiling water for 3 to 5 minutes only. Strain and pat dry; then place the vegetables in the dehydrator.

Blanching is faster than steaming, but many nutrients are lost in the water. It is not recommended for chopped or shredded vegetables, which would easily overcook during blanching. To blanch sliced vegetables, drop the prepared vegetables into a large pot of boiling water. Do not add more than 1 cup food per quart of boiling water. Begin timing immediately. For timing, follow standard freezing directions. Timing is approximately one-third to one-half that of steaming or until vegetables are barely tender.

### **Fruit Dehydration Tips**

Dried fruit is a superb food treat. Try it plain as fruit leather, or in ice cream cobblers and pies. It's hard to imagine a better tasting or more nutritious snack than dried fruit. Dried fruit is naturally sweet, has no preservatives, and is inexpensive.

Your food dehydrator makes drying fruit easy. With all fruits, it is best to wash them before starting. After that, most fruits just need halving, coring or pitting and slicing before placing them in the dehydrator.

You do not have to pre-treat fruits to get good results, but some fruits, such as apples, pears, peaches, apricots and bananas tend to darken somewhat with drying or storage beyond six to seven months. Although they are still edible when dark, they tend to not look appealing. If you don't mind the change in color of your dried fruit, there is no need to pre-treat. Fruits like bananas turn brown without pre-treatment, but at the

same time they become very sweet with pure banana flavor by simply slicing and placing directly into the dehydrator. For drying times of fruits, refer to the Fruit Preparation Table.

To avoid fruits from darkening, fruit pieces can be dipped in solutions of lemon pineapple, or orange juice, or any other ascorbic acid. Prior to dehydration, dip the fruit in the solution for two minutes. Drain on paper towels and place in drying trays.

### **Lemon, Pineapple or Orange Juice**

Fresh or bottled lemon, pineapple or orange juices are the best because of their natural sweetness. Pineapple and orange juice can be used full strength or diluted to taste. If you use lemon juice, it is best to dilute it with 1 part juice to 8 parts water and soak the fruit pieces for two minutes. Be aware that the taste of these juices can overpower the taste of the fruit being dried and may not always prevent discoloration of food. Experiment with the dilution and soaking times to suit your taste.

### **Ascorbic Acid**

Crystalline ascorbic or products with ascorbic acid made for preserving fruits for canning may be obtained from drug stores. Most grocery stores sell it with their canning supplies as well. Mix 1 tablespoon in four cups of water and soak the fruit for about two minutes. Like lemon juice, the taste can be quite overpowering, so experiment with concentrations and soaking times.

### **Sodium Bisulfite**

Sodium Bisulfite can be purchased at your local pharmacy. If you or anyone who will be eating the food has any known chemical allergies, you should check with your physician before using this chemical. Be certain to ask for food grade (safe) product only. Mix 1 teaspoon of Sodium Bisulfite in 1 quart of water. Dip the sliced fruit the solution for a few minutes. Remove, drain and place on the dehydrator tray.

## **Fruit Leather Dehydration Tips**

Sometimes referred to as Fruit Rolls, Fruit Strips, or Fruit Jerky, fruit that is pureed and dried in thin sheets becomes a tasty, chewy, candy-like snack we call fruit leather. You have probably sampled the commercial versions from the market, but once you've tasted it made fresh at home with quality fruit, you'll never go back to store bought! Fruit leather is a good way to make use of leftover or overripe fruit that might otherwise be discarded.

Making fruit leather is very easy. Start by thoroughly washing the fruit in cold water and remove any stems or leaves left on the fruit. Remove the peel, skin, pits, or seeds as necessary. Then just puree the fruit or fruit combination of your choice, and add just enough liquid to the blender to make a smooth thick puree. Honey, fruit juice or water can be used but don't make the mixture too thin or it won't stay put on the dehydrator shelf. With fruits that have a high moisture level little or no liquid needs be added at all.

Since you are the cook, you get to taste the puree as you are making it. It is not only your privilege, but an important part of the process. If the puree tastes good, the leather will taste even better! Remember that the flavors and sweetness will concentrate when the leather is dry, so don't make it too sweet!

It is best to use a fruit leather sheet designed for this purpose, but if not available, you can line one half of each drying tray with plastic wrap. To maintain adequate circulation, only half of each tray should be covered. If using more than one tray, place the plastic on alternate halves of the trays in the stack. Remember that the trays only go in one way, so stack the trays properly on the counter before lining them to assure proper placement of the plastic wrap.

When drying sticky purees (bananas, for instance), spray a small amount of vegetable oil spray on the fruit leather sheet or plastic wrap. After all fruit leather sheets are filled, stack the drying trays atop the base. Dehydrate until the fruit puree is the texture of leather. It should be easy to peel off of the fruit leather sheet. Wrap in plastic wrap and store at room temperature. Spices, chopped nuts or coconut may be added to the puree for extra flavor. For further variation, puree several types of fruit

together.

Feel free to experiment with your recipes. Single fruit flavors will work just fine, but there are lots of various fruit combinations that combine to make flavorful snacks (Strawberry-Banana, Pineapple-Orange, Mixed Berries, etc).

### **Meats-Fish-Poultry Dehydration Tips**

Dried meats are best when made for upcoming camping and backpacking trips. When reconstituted they yield a tasty meat, somewhat like fresh cooked.

**IMPORTANT NOTE: Except for jerky, cooking of all meats and fish before drying is required to ensure safety. Do not store dried meat, fish or poultry longer than two months.**

Use only very lean meats and cut away as much fat as possible. Meat should be marinated before drying to add flavor and to tenderize it. The marinade should contain salt, which helps extract water from the meat and also helps preserve it, but it should not have any oil. Most marinades contain some sort of acid (like tomato sauce or vinegar) because the acid breaks down the fibers making the meat tender.

Slicing meat while partially frozen will be easier, especially if you want very thin slices. A food processor or a specialized meat slicer will also do a great job. You can tell your butcher that you are making dried meat or jerky and they will be glad to thinly slice it for you.

When drying meat or game for stews, soups, etc., remember that these types of meats must be cooked prior to drying. Cook, cut into small cubes and then place the slices in the dehydrator. Dry until all moisture has been removed from the meat; anywhere from 2 to 8 hours. When ready to use in your favorite stew, simply rehydrate by soaking in water or broth for at least 1 ½ hours, or until tender and about the size they were before dehydrating.

## **BEEF**

Choose lean cuts. Beef flank steak, round or rump work better than beef chuck or rib.

## **POULTRY**

All poultry **MUST** be cooked before drying. Steaming or roasting is the best method. Chicken breasts are leaner than dark meat.

## **FISH**

A good idea is to steam the fish before dehydrating or, if you chose to bake it, preheat your conventional oven to 200°F and bake for 20 minutes or until the fish is flaky. When you are drying fish, sole and flounder are good choices.

## **Jerky**

Dehydrating meat without prior cooking will produce the rigid chewy style of meat known as jerky. It is one of the oldest known forms of meat preservation. Because jerky is made without cooking the meat first, it is important to start with quality meat, and to have a clean and sanitary work area. Also, be sure to thoroughly cleanse the work surfaces when done. Remember that Jerky is the only meat to be placed uncooked in the dehydrator.

## **Making Beef Jerky**

As with nearly all foods, it is important to start with a quality cut of meat. Select a lean flank or round steak about 1 to 1/2 inches thick. Trim off all fat and connective tissue. Fat hampers the ability of the meat to dry, and the connective tissue will make for a tough jerky to chew.

For easier cutting, place meat in the freezer for about 30 minutes to partially freeze. Then turn it over and freeze for an additional 15 minutes. Cut across the grain into strips about 1/8 of an inch thick.

Marinate the strips for at least 3 hours, or even overnight. This gives the meat a unique flavor and at the same time tenderizes the meat. Increase the marinating time

for a stronger flavored jerky.

Meat may be seasoned with salt, pepper, garlic, onion powder, or other spices.

Because flavors intensify during dehydration, use salt sparingly! There are lots of jerky recipes available. Try them or create your own unique flavor!

Drain marinated strips on paper towels, and place the strips on drying trays (remember to protect the dehydrator from dripping foods as described earlier in this manual). Dehydrate until the strips are really dry and stiff. This will take from 6 to 16 hours. Unlike other dried meats, Jerky should be slightly chewy but not brittle.

**IMPORTANT NOTE: Remember that keeping a sanitary work area is crucial. Be sure to wash all work surfaces and your hands before handling the meat, and wash your hands after touching any other object or surface before handling meat again.**

### **Flowers**

Flowers being used for drying should be picked after the dew has dried and before the evening dampness. Flowers should be dried as quickly as possible after picking.

Discard any damaged or brown leaves. Place them in the trays without overlapping.

Drying times will vary depending upon the size and type of flower. Dry for approximately 2 to 36 hours.

### **Herbs**

Rinse and shake off excess water and then pat them dry. Remove any dead or discolored leaves. If using seeds, pick them when the pods have changed color. You should leave herbs on the stem and remove them when the drying has been completed. Spread herbs loosely on the tray. Drying times will vary according to size and type. Dry for approximately 2 to 6 hours.

## **Storing Dried Foods**

Once food is dried it is important to store it properly for best results. By following these storage techniques, your food will stay fresh and ready-to-use for the longest time possible.

### **Containers**

Any container which is clean, airtight, and moisture-proof is suitable for storage. Heavy, zippered plastic bags or heat sealing cooking bags are excellent as well. Fill each bag as much as possible and squeeze out any excess air. Filled bags may be placed in metal cans with lids (coffee cans are good) to keep out insects. Glass jars with tight-fitting lids can be used with or without plastic bags. Quality plastic containers with tight-fitting lids are good but they must be airtight. Do not use paper or cloth bags, lightweight plastic bags, bread wrappers, or any container without a tight-fitting lid.

### **General Food Storage Tips**

- Wait until food is cooled off completely before storing.
- Heat and light will cause food to deteriorate. Keep food in a dry, cool, and dark place.
- Remove all the air you possibly can from the storage container and close tightly.
- Ideal storage temperature is 60°F or lower.
- Never store food directly in a metal container.
- Avoid containers that breathe or have a weak seal.
- Check the contents of your dehydrated food for moisture during the weeks following dehydration. If there is moisture inside, you should dehydrate the contents for a longer time.
- For best quality, dried fruits and vegetables should not be kept for more than 1 year.
- Dehydrate your produce in the summer when it is at optimum freshness and

replace it annually.

- Dried meats, game, poultry and fish should be stored for no more than 3 months if kept in the refrigerator, and no more than 1 year if kept in the freezer.
- Vacuum sealing can help to extend storage life by several months, if food has been properly and thoroughly dried.

### **Location**

Cool dark and dry are the keys to maintaining the quality of dried food. Shelves near a window may need to be covered to keep out light. Glass jars or plastic containers should be placed in a paper bag or in a closed cabinet. Cement walls and floors are often damp and cold. Therefore, dried food containers should not be placed directly on the floor, or touching a basement or cellar wall as this can cause condensation in the container. Do not store dried food near items with a strong odor (such as varnish, paint remover or kerosene).

### **Length of Storage**

Dried fruits and vegetables should not be stored longer than one year. Plan to use all dried meats, fish, poultry or jerky within a month or two. Label dried foods, and rotate on a first-dried, first-to-be-used basis. Check dried foods periodically. If the food seems more moist than when packed, moisture is getting into the container. Spread food on drying trays and re-dry. Mold indicates that the food was not properly dried before being stored. Destroy moldy food; it is not safe to eat.

### **Reconstitution**

Dehydration is the process of removing moisture from food. Reconstitution is the replacement of that moisture to bring the food back to its natural state. Although some dried foods such as fruit are excellent in their dehydrated state, you will often want to reconstitute other dried foods before eating them. Here are some tips on reconstitution:

### **Just Add Water**

For chopped or shredded vegetables, and for fruits to be used in cookies, no reconstitution is usually needed. If the pieces are quite crisp and dry you can try sprinkling with 1 tablespoon of water per cup of dried food.

For vegetables and fruits to be used in soufflés, pies, quick breads, dough or batter, use 2 parts water to 3 parts (by volume) dried food.

For vegetables and fruits which will be cooked in liquids such as vegetable side dishes, fruit toppings, and compotes, use 1 to 1 ½ parts water to 1 part dried food.

Extra liquid may be required for proper cooking.

### **Time for Reconstitution**

Chopped and shredded foods reconstitute quickly. Generally, 15 to 30 minutes is sufficient. Larger vegetable or fruit slices, and meat cubes can be reconstituted overnight in water, while being left in the refrigerator. Alternately, you can also choose to place them in boiling water, remove it from the stove, and let stand 2 to 3 hours. Whole pieces of fruit take longest to reconstitute, and are best left to soak overnight.

### **Other Reconstitution Hints**

If you drain reconstituted foods, save the liquid. This liquid has great nutritional value. Freeze this liquid for later use in soups, leathers, pies or compotes. There is no need to reconstitute ahead of time when making soups. Dried vegetables can be added directly to the soup about one hour before serving. Do not add spices, salt, bouillon cubes or tomato products until the vegetables are reconstituted and cooked. These items considerably hinder rehydration. Some foods take longer to reconstitute than others. Carrots and beans require more time than green peas or potatoes. A rule of thumb: those that take the longest to dehydrate will take the longest to reconstitute. Try not to use more liquid than necessary for reconstitution because nutrients will be drained away with the excess water. Place dehydrated food in a container and use just enough water to cover the food. Add more water later as needed to replace what the food absorbs.

## Care and Maintenance

After each use, clean the drying trays and dehydrator lid with warm soapy water.

**Do not wash trays, lid or base in dishwasher.**

Stubborn particles may be removed by soaking and / or using a plastic scrubber. Do not use abrasive materials or solvents to clean the plastic! To clean the dehydrator's base (the bottom part with the motor and heating element), unplug the dehydrator and wipe it clean with a damp sponge or cloth. NEVER immerse the base in water or allow liquid to flow into the area that contains the electrical parts.

## Storage

After the dehydrator is cleaned, dry all the parts and store in a clean and dry place.

## DEHYDRATION REFERENCE CHART

Food type	Recommended temperature
Herbs	95° F / 34° C
Living foods	105°F / 41° C
Raising bread	110°F / 43° C
Making Yogurt	115°F / 46° C
Vegetables	125°F / 52° C
Fruits, Fruit rolls	135°F / 57° C
Meats / Fish	155°F / 68° C
Jerky	155°F / 68° C