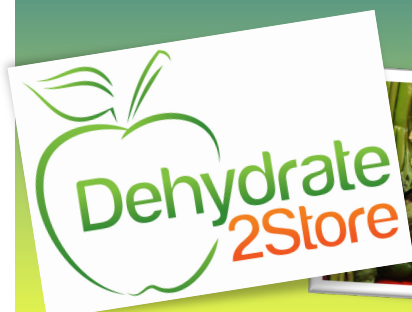


Dehydration and Storage Tips

from your friends at Dehydrate2Store.com



Must-Haves in Your Storage

Think Staples: Store the items that you use everyday and the things that your family eats. Make a list and then determine the best way to store each item.

Dehydrated Foods: Dehydration extends the shelf life of foods for many years (up to 30 years, which is more than canning or freezing!).

Canned Meats: Salmon, tuna, and clams that are canned are safe for years in storage. I do not recommend dehydrating meats or high-oil foods for long-term, so this is a good alternative.

Items with Multiple Uses: If your olive oil reaches the expiration date, don't throw it away! Olive oil can have many different uses. It is one of the cleanest burning fuels; if your lights go out simply pour some olive oil in a glass container and add a floating wick. It can also be used as a lubricant for skin, wood, metal, or anything with a squeak.

Think Beyond Foods: The following are all very important items to have in storage: soaps, medications and medical supplies, eyeglasses, vitamins, toothpaste and extra brushes,

bleach, clean and dry washcloths, socks, blankets, diapers, duct tape, water barrels- consider storing a couple months worth (1 gallon/person/day), solar oven, Dutch oven or other cooking and heating items, generator, manual appliances (hand blender, crank radio, choppers, juicers, slicers, can opener, hand ringer for laundry, etc.), heavy-duty trash bags, a small toolbox filled with simple tools, boxes of vinyl gloves, and a few large empty buckets with lids for a quick sanitary bathroom. A large black hose can also be stored and used to heat water when placed on a flat roof to absorb heat from the sun. Large plastic tarps are also a good idea for your storage, as they can have many uses!

TIP: Dry soaps carry less weight than liquid soaps. I store all of the dry ingredients to make my own laundry and cleaning soap, and mix it up with water when I need it.

Vacuum Sealer: To save space and keep your stored items dry during flood or high humidity get a good vacuum sealer and seal all food and non-food items. Good quality vacuum bags are also very important. (See page 2, "After You Dehydrate," for more info)

The Quick Guide to Dehydration

YOU NEED

Dehydrator- Look for a dehydrator with a fan in the back. These have better circulation, which causes more effective and speedy dehydration. Do not purchase a dehydrator with an automatic shut-off timer. The timer is an added cost, and a waste of money. When the dehydrator shuts off while you are not there your food will sit and reabsorb moisture from the air. It is better to keep your dehydrator running until you get back. Don't worry, you can not "dehydrate too long." I recommend Excalibur® brand dehydrators.

Lemon Juice- Purchased at any grocery store, this is an important prepping agent for many dehydrated foods. It prevents browning and adds vitamin C.

Meat Slicer/Chopper- (Optional) Equal slicing of foods prior to dehydrating is very important. This item will help to ensure your cuts are always uniform.

HOW TO

- 1) Thinly Slice your fruits and veggies the same thickness.
- 2) Prep the food if necessary. (See chart on page 3)
- 3) Spread evenly on your dehydrator tray (no overlapping).
- 4) Dehydrate at 95-105°F for leafy plants and herbs, 135°F for meats, and 120-125°F for everything else. Never go above 125°F unless dehydrating meats. Dehydrate for 8-48 hours. (See chart on page 3)
- 5) For long-term storage: Store in a vacuum sealed bag with O₂ packs, then put into a Mylar bag (See page 3 for shelf-life). For short-term (1-2 years): Put into a mason jar with O₂ packs for convenience.

Why Dehydrate?

When you dehydrate foods you are able to maximize the shelf life of many products, thus preparing yourself and your family in the case of an emergency. Dehydrating also saves money by reducing waste, lets you eat foods during off-season, helps the environment by ensuring that less energy is used (no refrigeration needed!) and less material is wasted, and saves time by allowing you to make “quick meals” and “quick soups” (just add water!). Dehydrated snacks are also a healthy and lightweight choice for camping, or snacking around the house!

Before You Start

Wash Everything Down with an Anti-bacterial Cleanser: It is important to practice good hygiene to avoid bacteria in your final product. **Wear Latex or Vinyl Gloves:** There are natural oils in your hands that will reintroduce moisture to your foods. **Warm Up Your Dehydrator:** Air circulation helps eliminate the growth of contaminants. Therefore it is best to start the dehydrator and get the air moving before putting your food in.

What Can't Be Dehydrated?

Foods high in oil, such as avocados, cannot be dehydrated and stored for a long period of time. Lettuce is not recommended for dehydration, as it burns easily. Butter, milk, eggs, and cheese are not easily and safely dehydrated at home because they require special equipment. You can purchase these items commercially dehydrated and powdered on our Shop page under “Other Great Products.”

Is it Dehydrated?

The most important part is not so much the length of time in the dehydrator, but the percentage of remaining moisture left. For long-term storage you want to stay at 95% and above. **How to Know?** Your food should easily snap and should not be sticking together.

TIP: After dehydrating, let the food cool for 5-10 minutes before testing for dryness. Or, you can place your dehydrated food in a zip-lock bag for a few days before storing away in your vacuum bags. This will give you a chance to see if your food has fully dehydrated. If your food appears limp or sticky you can put it back in the dehydrator for a few more hours.



After You Dehydrate



Vacuum seal your food using high-quality 3-Mil bags with oxygen packs and a vacuum sealer. **NOTE:** The bags are the most important part of your long-term storage. Though a powerful vacuum sealer is helpful and important, the bags will determine how successful your storage is. If your bags leak, your food is ruined. The oxygen packs help to remove residual oxygen. Check out Dehydrate2Store.com/Shop under “Other Great Products” for helpful websites with high-quality vacuum bags and oxygen packs. Next, seal your vacuum bag inside of a Mylar bag. This tough metallic bag will keep out sunlight and protect from punctures and rodents. **NOTE:** You can only heat-seal Mylar bags, you cannot vacuum seal them. Check out our Shop page for high-quality Mylar bags.

Need More Help and Tips? Check out Dehydrate2Store.com/videos for free instructional videos, and Dehydrate2Store.com/helpfultips for tips! Our site is always free!