

Beef or Venison Jerky Recipes

Homemade jerky can be a flavorful, easy-to-make snack. But as with any meat product, food safety must be considered so that your product is both tasty and healthy. Try these research-tested recipes.

Jerky Recipe No. 1

For 2 lbs. of lean beef or venison strips**:

Mix together to prepare brine:

1/2 gallon water

1/4 cup + 2 Tbsp. salt*

1/4 cup sugar

3 Tbsp. liquid smoke

1/2 tsp. black pepper

Cut thin meat strips, ¼-inch thick. Freezing the meat slightly before slicing will make this process easier, or ask your local butcher to slice the meat for you. Place meat strips in brine in a refrigerator overnight. Pour off brine and soak in cold tap water for 1 hour. Drain and pat dry. Morton's Tender Quick Salt (containing nitrate and nitrite) may be used instead of regular salt. This curing agent will help the meat retain a deep red color even when dried. If using regular salt, expect the meat to be a darker brown-black color when dried.

Jerky Recipe No. 2

For 2 lbs. of lean beef or venison strips**:

Mix together to prepare seasoning:

1/4 cup soy sauce

1 Tbsp. Worcestershire sauce

1/4 tsp. black pepper

1/4 tsp. garlic powder

1/2 tsp. onion powder

1 tsp. liquid smoke

Cut thin meat strips, ¼-inch thick. (See note above). Stir until seasonings are dissolved. Mix meat strips with seasoning until all surfaces are coated. Let stand 1 hour, or cover and refrigerate overnight.

**Very lean beef or venison is best for these recipes. Recipe 1 produces a lightly seasoned jerky; Recipe 2 makes a highly seasoned jerky. Adjust recipes to taste.

- 1. Remove meat strips from brine or seasoning, pat dry with paper towels. Dry indoors using an oven or a dehydrator.
- 2. Stretch strips across clean oven or dehydrator racks. Strips can be close together but not overlapping. Leave enough open space for air to circulate.
- 3. For oven drying, set the temperature to 150 to 175°F. Place filled racks in the oven, but not within 4 inches of the heat source. It may be convenient to place foil on a lower rack in the oven to catch any drips from the meat strips. Dry at 150-175°F for 6 to 8 hours until dry and almost crisp. Keep the oven door open about 1 inch during the first few hours or frying to allow moisture to escape. [A floor fan angled so that it sweeps air out of, and not into, the oven will aid in drying. In a dehydrator, dry at 145°F, or higher. Do not use a dehydrator that lacks temperature control or a fan to aid in air circulation. Dry at 145-155°F for 6 to 8 hours. The only home-style dehydrators known to produce safe jerky are the Garden Master Pro home dehydrator from Nesco and the Excalibur home dehydrator from Excalibur. Laboratory research indicates that safe jerky can not be guaranteed if

using other models of home dehydrators, even those 'designed' for making jerky such as the Jerky Xpress.

- 4. At the end of drying, remove strips from the oven or dehydrator and place them in a pre-heated 275°F degree oven. Heat for 10 minutes. This extra step is essential for ensuring that home-made ierky is safe to consume.
- 5. Remove oven-heated strips and cool on absorbent paper or wire racks. Pat off fat beads.
- 6. Store in airtight plastic bags or jars with a tight-fitting lid. You can store jerky at room temperature in a cool, dry location for 1 to 2 months, or in the refrigerator or freezer for 3 to 12 months. Freezing or refrigerating jerky will extend the shelf life but is not required for safet., Once dried, jerky can be removed from the freezer or refrigerator and safely placed at room temperature for extended periods of time.

Sources of approved dehydrators:



Excalibur Dehydrator Harvest Essentials* Phone: 877-759-3758

Address: 14525 SW Milikan Way #31950

Beaverton, OR 97005

Web: http://www.harvestessentials.com/index.html Web: http://www.nesco.com/

Garden Master Pro (FD1010) Dehydrator

Nesco American Harvest* Phone: 800-288-4545

Address: 1700 Monroe Street Two Rivers, WI 54241

*Inclusion of these companies is not meant to endorse them, nor to exclude other companies that may offer similar products. The companies listed are known to manufacture and/or sell home dehydrators that have performed well in laboratory studies.

