

Store it Alive!



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FERMENTED VEGGIES

There are three keys to successfully fermenting veggies:

- 1) The presence of natural bacteria
 - Use good quality local produce if possible and wash as little as possible (just remove excess dirt)
 - Cucumbers and cabbage have the most naturally occurring fermentation bacteria, so adding these to your ferment or adding some liquid from a previous cucumber or cabbage ferment will help you have a good start of bacteria
- 2) The correct salt balance
 - Too much salt and you suppress the good bacteria
 - Too little salt and you can get mold and yeast
- 3) The absence of oxygen
 - This allows for the development of good lactic acid bacteria
 - The more airtight your jar, the less you have to rely on complete immersion to prevent mold

I have tried mason jars (I almost always get mold), jars with water/airlock tops (expensive) and have settled on Fido jars. These jars have an airtight seal, but when the ferment really bubbles the air can push its way out of the seal, so it won't explode on you. I have never gotten mold in a Fido jar.

I have found the 1.5 liter and 3 liter jars to be the most useful. The 1.5 liter jar is narrow, and doesn't take up too much room in the fridge. I use that for sauerkraut, salsa, etc. The 3 liter jar is wider, which makes it perfect for stacking long veggies horizontally. I use it for pickle spears, green beans, etc.

Salt Solution Math

2% = 5 g salt /cup of water

2.5% = 6 g salt (1 teaspoon) /cup of water

3% = 7 g salt /cup of water

3.5% = 9 g salt (1½ teaspoons) /cup of water

Most veggies thrive in a 2-2.5% solution. Cucumbers and peppers require 3.5%. Sauerkraut is made by adding the salt directly to the cabbage without any water. This is added at 1 t/lb. of cabbage.



Sauerkraut (1.5 l jar)

Ingredients:

6 g (1 t) of salt per pound of cabbage
2-3 lbs. cabbage



Instructions:

Shred the cabbage as thinly as possible. Pick out any thick strands and use those for cooking. Having all thin, even strands promotes uniform fermentation. Ideally, weigh the shredded cabbage to calculate how much salt you need. However, people's opinions on how much salt they prefer varies, so feel free to estimate if you don't have a scale.

In a large, metal bowl put a layer of cabbage, a layer of salt, and continue to alternate until the salt is distributed through the cabbage. Let it sit for about 30 minutes. The salt will start to draw out the water from the cabbage. Pound the cabbage (I use a wood rolling pin with a flat end). Pound it some more. Continue to pound until the cabbage is wilting and you can see the water starting to gather in the bottom of the bowl.

Start packing the cabbage into the Fido jar and pounding it down in so that the water being released from the cabbage covers the cabbage completely. Do this in layers until the Fido jar is full and the cabbage is submersed in the water, leaving about 1-2 inches of headspace. Seal the jar and put it on a rimmed cookie sheet in a place you can keep an eye on it for the next week.

After about 2 days the fermentation will become pretty active, and you may have some brine leak out of the jar (you'll be saved by that rimmed cookie sheet). If it gets really active and you lose a lot of brine, you can refill to cover the cabbage with a salt solution.

After one week, the fermentation will settle down and you can put the jar away in the pantry. Keep it at room temperature for 2 weeks. After that it will enter a different stage of fermentation, and can be put in a fridge or cool basement/root cellar. 50 degrees is ideal, though 10 degrees either way will be OK. Let it continue to ferment for 8-12 weeks for maximum probiotic development. When you are ready to eat, simply remove the needed amount from the Fido jar, using a clean fork so you don't introduce other bacteria (though the good stuff with probably be strong enough that it wouldn't matter). Store the rest in the refrigerator. When the sauerkraut is gone, the brine (packed full of probiotics) is perfect for using in salad dressings. ¼ cup before each meal can help heal the gut and dramatically improve digestion. Even a tablespoon has countless times more probiotics than any pill!

Dill Pickles (3 l jar)

Ingredients:

3.5% brine (approx. 6 cups of water and 3 T salt)
2-3 lbs. cucumbers
2-3 grape leaves (the tannins keep the pickle crunchy)
9+ cloves garlic, peeled and smashed
6 T dill seed
¾ t mustard seed
¾ t peppercorn
¾ t fennel seeds (optional)
3/8 t red pepper flakes

Instructions:

Place the spices in the bottom of the Fido jar. Layer in the cucumbers, (whole, sliced, or spears) leaving 2 inches headspace. Cover the top with grapes leaves. Pour in the brine solution until everything is covered, still leaving 1-2 inches headspace. Seal the jar and put it on a rimmed cookie sheet in a place you can keep an eye on it for the next week. After about 2 days the fermentation will become pretty active, and you may have some brine leak out of the jar (you'll be saved by that rimmed cookie sheet). If it gets really active and you lose a lot of brine, you can refill to cover the cucumbers with a salt solution.



After one week, the fermentation will settle down and you can put the jar away in the pantry. Keep it at room temperature for 2 weeks. After that it will enter a different stage of fermentation, and can be put in a fridge or cool basement/root cellar. 50 degrees is ideal, though 10 degrees either way will be OK. You can eat them at any time or store them for months or up to a year.

Bread and Butter or Sweet Pickles (3 l jar)

Ingredients:

3.5% brine (approx. 6 cups of water and 3 T salt)
2-3 lbs. cucumbers
2-3 grape leaves (the tannins keep the pickle crunchy)
1½ c diced onion
3/8 t red pepper flakes
1½ T celery seed
1 T turmeric
1½ t mustard seed



Instructions:

Place the spices in the bottom of the Fido jar. Layer in the cucumbers, (whole, sliced, or spears) leaving 2 inches headspace. Cover the top with grapes leaves. Pour in the brine solution until everything is covered, still leaving 1-2 inches headspace. Seal the jar and put it on a rimmed cookie sheet in a place you can keep an eye on it for the next week. After about 2 days the fermentation will become pretty active, and you may have some brine leak out of the jar (you'll be saved by that rimmed cookie sheet). If it gets really active and you lose a lot of brine, you can refill to cover the cucumbers with a salt solution.

After one week, the fermentation will settle down and you can put the jar away in the pantry. Keep it at room temperature for 2 weeks. After that it will enter a different stage of fermentation, and can be put in a fridge or cool basement/root cellar. 50 degrees is ideal, though 10 degrees either way will be OK. You can eat them at any time or store them for months or up to a year. For sweet pickles, add 1 c honey to the jar before placing in cold storage.

Fermented Dilly Carrots or Green Beans (1.5 liter jar)

Ingredients:

2.5% brine (1 t salt for each cup of water)
2 cloves garlic
1 T dill seed
A few tablespoons sauerkraut or pickle juice
for added probiotics (optional)

Instructions:

Place the spices in the bottom of the Fido jar. Cut carrot spears the width of the jar or slice them thinly if preferred. Layer in carrot spears or beans horizontally, leaving 2 inches headspace. Pour in the brine solution until everything is covered, still leaving 1-2 inches headspace. At about 2 days, or whenever you like the taste (it will get stronger the longer it ferments) transfer the jar to the fridge to stop the fermentation process. It will store in the fridge for around a year.



Curried Cauliflower (1.5 L jar)



Ingredients:

2 heads cauliflower, broken into small chunks
4 T curry powder
A few tablespoons sauerkraut or pickle juice
for added probiotics (optional)

Instructions:

Break cauliflower into small florets. Place the spices in the bottom of the Fido jar. Layer in cauliflower pieces, leaving 2 inches headspace. Pour in the brine solution until everything is covered, still leaving 1-2 inches headspace. Seal the jar and put it on a rimmed cookie sheet (to catch any overflow) in a place you can keep an eye on it for the next few days. At about 2 days, or whenever you like the taste (it will get stronger the longer it ferments) transfer the jar to the fridge to stop the fermentation process. It will store in the fridge for around a year.

FERMENTED FRUIT

The sugar in fruit means that it will turn to alcohol if left to ferment for a long period. So here are some tips for making successful fruit ferments, without making wine:

- 1) Tomatoes are a fruit, so they are included in these precautions
- 2) After bottling your ferment, only leave it at room temperature for about 2 days. This will give it time for the beneficial bacteria to become fully active, but not long enough to produce significant alcohol. After 2-3 days, move the bottle to the fridge. This will slow fermentation enough to prevent any alcohol production. However, all the beneficial bacteria will remain, preserving the fresh food for a full year in the fridge.
- 3) Unlike vegetables which (if garden fresh) already are coated in the needed bacteria for fermentation, with fruit you can add whey, a bit of fermented veggie juice, or a starter culture to ramp up the probiotic content. However, be assured it will still ferment even if you don't.

Fermented Salsa (1.5 L jar)

Chop tomatoes, peppers, onions, cilantro, and garlic in the proportions of your favorite recipe. Place all the ingredients in a colander to drain excess water. Place a large bowl on a kitchen scale and zero out the weight of the bowl. Add the salsa ingredients to the bowl to find the total weight. Calculate 2.5% salt (multiply the total salsa weight by .025), weigh the needed salt and then mix it into the salsa thoroughly.

Transfer the salsa mixture to Fido jars, still leaving 1-2 inches headspace. Seal the jar and put it on a rimmed cookie sheet (to catch any overflow) in a place you can keep an eye on it for the next few days. After 2-3 days, transfer the jar to the fridge to stop the fermentation process. It will store in the fridge for around a year.



Fermented Bruschetta (1.5 L jar)

Ingredients:

5-6 cups of tomatoes
4-6 minced garlic cloves
1 cup julienned fresh basil

Instructions:

Place all the ingredients in a colander to drain excess water. Place a large bowl on a kitchen scale and zero out the weight of the bowl. Add the bruschetta ingredients to the bowl to find the total weight. Calculate 2.5% salt (multiply the total bruschetta weight by .025), weigh the needed salt and then mix it into the bruschetta thoroughly. Transfer the bruschetta mixture to Fido jars, still leaving 1-2 inches headspace. Seal the jar and put it on a rimmed cookie sheet (to catch any overflow) in a place you can keep an eye on it for the next few days. After 2-3 days, transfer the jar to the fridge to stop the fermentation process. It will store in the fridge for around a year.



Fermented Cranberry Chutney (1.5 L jar)

Ingredients:

2 pounds cranberries
2 t grated orange zest
2 t grated fresh ginger
1 T pink Himalayan or Utah "Real" salt
2 diced fresh apples
½ cup raw honey

Instructions:

In a large bowl, mash the cranberries with a potato masher to whatever consistency you prefer. If you want them even finer, you can pulse them in a food processor. Add the other ingredients and mix well. Mash the mixture tightly into the Fido jar, still leaving 1-2 inches headspace. Seal the jar and put it on a rimmed cookie sheet (to catch any overflow) in a place you can keep an eye on it for the next few days. After 2-3 days transfer the jar to the fridge to stop the fermentation process. At this stage you can also add more honey to bring it to whatever sweetness you prefer. It will store in the fridge for around a year.



PROBIOTIC SALAD DRESSINGS

Poppy Seed Dressing

- 1 cup extra virgin olive oil
- 1 cup flaxseed oil (like Barleans)
- ½ cup raw honey
- ½ cup fermented veggie juice
- 1 T raw apple cider vinegar
- ¼ cup raw onion
- 1 t pink Himalayan or Utah “Real” salt
- ½ t pepper
- 2 T poppy seeds

Blend all ingredients except poppy seeds. Stir in poppy seeds and store in a glass quart jar in the fridge.

Sundried Tomato Dressing

- 1 cup extra virgin olive oil
- 1 cup flaxseed oil
- 1 cup fermented veggie juice
- 1 cup dried tomatoes
- 3 cloves garlic
- 2 T dried chives
- 1 t pink Himalayan or Utah “Real” salt
- ½ t pepper

Blend all ingredients together in a blender. Store in the fridge in a glass quart jar.

Vinaigrette Dressing

- 1 cup extra virgin olive oil
- 1 cup flaxseed oil
- ½ cup lemon or lime juice
- ½ cup fermented veggie juice
- 4 cloves garlic
- 4 t Dijon mustard
- 1½ t pink Himalayan or Utah “Real” salt
- ½ t pepper

Blend all ingredients in a blender. Store in a glass quart jar in the fridge.

Asian Dressing

- 1 cup extra virgin olive oil
- 1 cup flaxseed oil
- ½ cup raw honey
- ½ cup lemon juice or fermented veggie juice
- ½ cup Braggs or Coconut aminos (soy sauce substitute)
- 2 T low temp roasted sesame oil
- 2 t pink Himalayan or Utah “Real” salt
- 1 t pepper
- 1 inch piece of ginger
- 2 cloves garlic
- ¼ t cayenne

Blend all ingredients in a blender.
Store in a glass quart jar in the fridge.



DRIED FOOD

Dehydrating preserves food by removing enough water that bacterial and fungal growth are prohibited. This is how food has been preserved indefinitely without any refrigeration throughout history. Any fruit or vegetable can be uniformly chopped or sliced and dehydrated. Commercially dried fruit, raisins, veggies, and fruit leathers are dried at high temperatures, so many nutrients are destroyed and the food is “dead.” The ability to dry food and keep it “alive” is a huge advantage of home dehydrating. The other huge advantage is how much less storage space dehydrated food requires.

Hints for effective dehydrating:

1. Make sure the temperature is kept at or below 115 degrees so that the food stays “alive” (enzymes are preserved). If you sun-dry food, this is automatic. If you are using an electronic dehydrator, make sure you can control and monitor the temperature.
Make sure slices/dices are uniform thickness. Cutting food into wedges is not very effective for dehydrating
3. Fruits that tend to brown (like apples and apricots) can be soaked for 5 minutes in a solution of water and a little lemon juice. This will reduce browning.
4. Finished food can be stored in zip-lock bags, glass jars, or any other container that is air tight.



Fruit Leather

Fruit leather is the easiest form of dehydrating live food because there is **no slicing**. You just throw everything in the blender, pour onto dehydrator sheets, and walk away. As long as you keep the temperature at 115 degrees, you will have **live** food, full of essential enzymes and vitamins, that can be stored and eaten year-round. You can also cut it into any shape and size for the perfect portions for your family for grab and go eating.

Any flavor combination is possible. Strawberry/banana, apple cinnamon, apple/grape, etc. Adding sweet fruits (like apple or pear) to tart ones (like berries) helps balance the flavor. Also, the more ripe the fruit is, the better. This is a great place to use overripe or bruised fruit. This leather can also be reconstituted later to make jam.

Instructions:

- 1) Blend ripe fruit and add a small amount of raw honey (if desired, to taste). If using fruits that brown (such as apples or apricots) add a teaspoon of lemon juice
- 2) Spread the fruit on dehydrator trays with a liner or parchment paper. You can lightly grease the liner/parchment with coconut oil, if you want, for easier removal. Spread the puree about ¼ inch thick. If you spread it too thin, you will get brittle, hard leather
- 3) Dehydrate at 115 degrees until the sheets of leather are no longer sticky, but still pliable, and peel off easily
- 4) Cut the leather into strips and roll them up into the familiar fruit roll-ups, or simply cut them into squares (this is my preferred method because the flat squares are easier to store). Store in an airtight container



Dried Fruit Jam

Dehydrate any fruit at 115 degrees. After the fruit is dried, grind it up in a food processor or blender to the desired consistency. The bigger pieces of fruit you have, the “chunkier” jam you will have. If you want more of a pureed consistency jam, grind the fruit to more of a powder. But don’t grind it too fine or your jam will turn out more like baby food. You can grind some dried fruit whenever you want to make jam, or grind it in bulk and store the ground, dried fruit in a Ziploc bag or glass jar.

Anytime you want fresh, live jam, simply mix equal portions of fruit powder and water, and add a little sweetener, lemon juice, and salt. You can do this in as small or as large of a quantity as you desire. The following is a small portion example.

Ingredients:

½ cup ground, dried fruit

½ cup water

2-4 T honey, pure maple syrup or dates (or adapt quantity to your desired sweetness)

1 t pure lemon juice

Pinch salt

Instructions:

Mix all ingredients and allow to rehydrate for about an hour. Use immediately or store in the fridge for up to a week.



Bone Broth Bullion

Bullion is a great food storage item. However commercial bullion isn't food, it is a health-destroying combination of artificial-flavored chemicals and highly processed additives. However, the good news is that homemade bullion is simple to make and highly nutritious, full of vital minerals!

When you make your own bone broth (see our video class from the digital retreat, available on www.simplydivineeating.com, if you would like specific instructions), you can reduce and dehydrate the broth to make your own nutrient dense bullion. Simply boil down the bone broth until it is a dark brown, thick syrup. Pour this syrup on dehydrator trays with the same liners used for fruit leather (I use silicone ones). Spread it to a uniform consistency. The thickness is not critical since you will be blending this into a powder once it is dry. The thinner the layer, the quicker it will dry. Set your dehydrator to the highest temperature (since this is not a "live" food). Dehydrate for several days, until completely dry. You can munch on this "leather" as a mineral supplement, or blend it into a powder to create bullion. Because the water has been removed, this will store safely at room temperature in an airtight container. You can also add this to other dehydrated vegetables to make your own soup mix.

Instant Soup Mix

You can have instant soup without any of the "junk" in commercial mixes or canned soups, and without having to pressure can at home. This is so simple!

Ingredients:

8 cups of any dehydrated veggies you enjoy
(example: 1 dehydrator tray of carrots, 1 tray of mushrooms,
1 tray of tomatoes, 1 tray zucchini, ½ tray of red peppers,
½ tray of onions = 8 cups total veggies)
2 cups lentils
2 T bone broth bullion
2 T dried rosemary
2 t dried thyme
Pinch red pepper flakes (optional)



Instructions:

Mix ingredients and store in an airtight container. When you want soup, simply mix the desired amount with 1.5x water (for a thick soup) or 2x water for a thinner soup, and add salt to taste. Bring the mix to a boil and then simmer on medium low for 1 hour.

The complete recipe makes 1 gallon as a thick soup.

Using 5 cups mix/7.5 cups water would create 8 cups of thick soup.



Dried Spaghetti or Pizza Sauce

Drying tomatoes saves so much space! You can have nearly instant Marinara Sauce for pasta or pizza if you have dehydrated tomatoes. The dehydrated tomatoes give a more intense flavor, which is nice in this type of sauce.

Ingredients:

- 4 cups dehydrated tomatoes
- 4 cups water
- 1 T dried Italian spices
- 2 cloves minced garlic
- 1 large onion, diced
- 1 T salt

Instructions:

Add all ingredients to a large pot and simmer until the tomatoes are reconstituted. Blend for uniform consistency, if desired. Enjoy!

