



FOOD SAFETY:

Whatcom County Master Food Preservers & Safety Advisors
1000 N. Forest Street, Suite 201 * Bellingham WA 98225 * 360/676-6736
<http://whatcom.wsu.edu>

WHEN IS IT DRY?

Food which is intended to be eaten within three or four weeks, such as sliced fruit for snacking, is dry when it reaches the degree of chewy-ness that pleases you. By all means, experiment with one or two apples, peaches, bananas, etc. until you discover your preferences. Dry it until you like it--always remembering that the chewier it is (i.e., the more moisture that remains), the sooner it must be used.

Food dried for long-term storage, one or two years or more, must be completely dry until it is actually hard and brittle, before storing.

Each food requires a slightly different length of time to dry, varying according to your personal preferences, size of load, moistness of the food etc. Drying times are rarely a critical matter. Relax! Check your dehydrator two or three times a day. Observe, taste, turn a tray, raise or lower the temperature a few degrees if it seems necessary . . . enjoy.

Different foods have different time requirements. Leafy herbs dry quickly. If stems are thick and pithy it is a good idea to remove them before drying, or to dry them separately, if you wish to save them, because they will take longer. For maximum flavor, herbs should be removed and packaged as soon as they are dry enough to crumble easily at your touch.

CR 7/93 Materials from Joanne Austin