

Making Jerky

Jerky can be made from almost any lean meat, including beef, pork or game such as moose or caribou.

Making jerky is easy, but there are some important steps to follow to help ensure a safe product.

The Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) of the United States Department of Agriculture recommends that you take the following steps to destroy harmful parasites and bacteria in the meat:

Deep freeze the meat (0°F) to destroy parasites such as the trichina worm and the tapeworm.

- Freeze meat that is less than 1 inch thick for at least one month.
- Freeze meat that is thicker than 1 inch for at least two months.

The length of time the meat must be in the freezer depends partly on how fast the meat can get frozen all the way to the center of the thickest piece. It will take longer for the meat to freeze through to the middle if you are putting many packages in the freezer at the same time. Nevertheless, freezing will not kill microbes and may not kill parasites. Only thorough cooking will destroy all parasites.

Heat the meat to destroy bacteria, such as *Salmonella*, *Listeria* and *E. coli*. Use either the marinade method or the dry-cure method to kill bacteria and parasites and dry the jerky. (See next page for heating directions).

Preparing the Meat

The following information is for general information only. It is not intended to be used as a substitute for professional advice. For more information, contact your local health department.

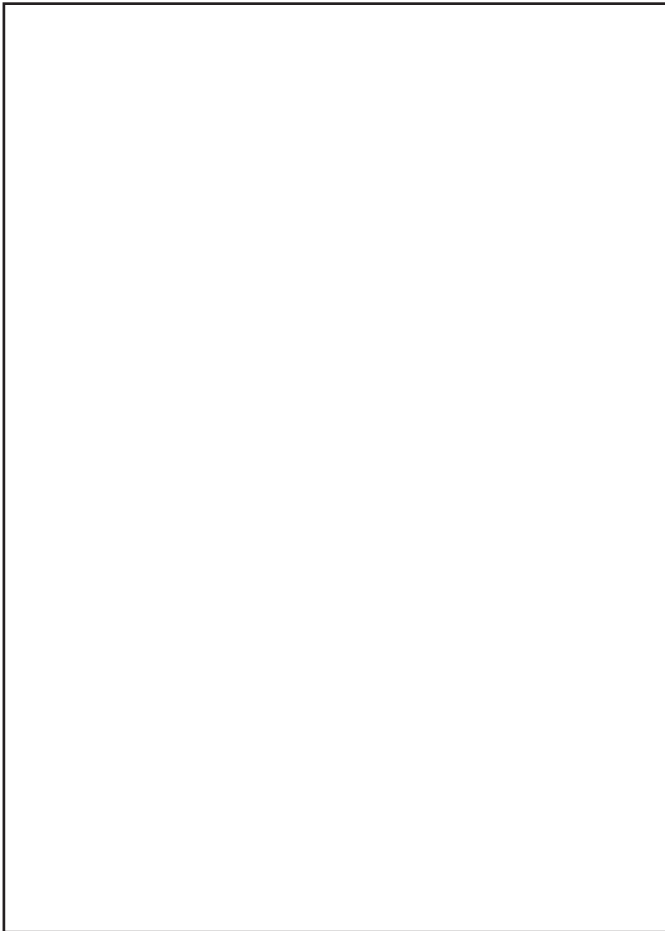
Marinated Jerky

Drying in Home Dehydrators

Many home dehydrators do not heat higher than 140°F — 140°F is not high enough to kill bacteria on meats. Hamburgers cooked to 140°F have caused illness and death.

Here are some suggestions for drying meat in a home dehydrator.

1. Check the temperature of each tray of your dehydrator with a thermometer after turning it on as high as it will go. If the inside of your dehydrator can attain and hold temperatures of 160°F to 200°F, then it is safe to use just as you would the oven. Follow directions for oven drying, using either the marinade or dry-cure method.
- 2.



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