



Backpacking Cookbook

Issued: May 2010

This cook book is comprised of recipes that would be appropriate for Scouts to use on a backpacking outing. I have tried to collect ideas that require some cooking but are not very complex. I did include a few cold lunch items. I have also tried to stick with ideas that should appeal to boys.

These have been collected from mostly internet sites and a few books and magazine articles. There are a huge amount of recipes on the internet that you can also look through for both backpacking and car camping.

Since a lot of backpacking recipes require dehydrated food, I have also included a section on dehydrating techniques.

Stan Haywood

Breakfast

Wilderness Man Quick Breakfast

Servings: 1

At home, mix:

1-Packet of regular instant oatmeal

1-Packet of flavored oatmeal (Maple & Brown Sugar is good)

1/2-Packet of hot chocolate mix with or without marshmallows

2Tbs. ground almonds or pecans

1/3c. raisins, or dried mixed fruit

Mix it all together and put in a zip-lock bag. On the trail, put it in a cup and add 1c. hot water, enjoy. For variety, use instant Cream of Wheat instead of oatmeal.

Tasty Omelets

Powdered eggs

Dehydrated tomatoes

Dehydrated green peppers

Onion flakes

Use however many powdered eggs you want, differing quantities of eggs, tomato, peppers, and onion to taste, and the proper amount of water for consistency. The trick is to pre-mix everything at home, after experimenting with spice quantities, so that all you have to do is pour your powdered concoction into hot water to get a morning or lunch omelet. Mix and cook in freezer or turkey bags to save clean up of pots.

Backpacking Biscuits

2 cups biscuit mix
1/4 cup powdered milk
1/2 cup water
1/2 tsp dried parsley
2 Tbsp freeze dried corn
3 single serving Parmesan or Romano cheese packets

*At home: combine all dry ingredients into a quart size freezer zip lock bag.
In camp: gently stir water into bag. Make the dough into biscuit shapes. Cook on pan, turning them when light brown. Best if you cook with a bit of oil or grease in the pan.
Makes 12 biscuits*

Chocolate Banana Oatmeal

1/3 cup instant oatmeal
1 tsp unsweetened cocoa powder
2 Tbsp powdered milk
2 tsp brown sugar
1/4 cup freeze-dried bananas
Chocolate cookies, crumbled (optional)

*At home: combine everything except the cookies into a zip lock bag. If you are bringing the cookies, package them separately.
In camp: bring 1 cup of water to a boil, add the oatmeal mix and stir. Simmer until the oatmeal is cooked through. Serve topped with the cookies.
Makes 1 serving*

Note: Don't try this with regular dried bananas, they are too hard. Look for the freeze-dried ones or in the cereal aisle as 'cereal toppers.' You can also try the same thing with freeze dried strawberries or raspberries.

Trail Pancakes

1 cup biscuit mix
1 Tbsp dry milk
1 Tbsp sugar
2/3 cup water
1 Tbsp squeeze margarine
At home: add mix, milk, and sugar into a quart size zip lock bag. Seal and shake well.

*In camp: add water and margarine to bag, seal and squish bag with hands to mix and remove air and lumps. Cut hole in the corner of the bag and squeeze onto a hot pan. Cook until bubbles form, flip, and cook till they are golden brown!
Makes approx. 6 pancakes*

Note: Instead of squeeze margarine, you may substitute vegetable oil. If you do, keep 1 Tbsp of oil in a separate container and pour onto pan before cooking pancakes.

Butter-fried PB&J Crepes

1/2 cup flour
1/4 cup instant dry milk
3 tablespoons powdered eggs
2 tablespoons sugar
1/4 teaspoon salt
4 tablespoons ghee
2 tablespoons peanut butter
3/4 cup water
1/4 cup strawberry jam

At home: Mix first 5 ingredients and seal in a Zip-fop bag.

In camp: Combine peanut butter and 1 tablespoon ghee in a plastic bag. Gradually mix in dry ingredients, then water. Allow batter to rest for 15 minutes. Heat medium (8-inch) skillet over high heat. Melt 1/2 teaspoon ghee. Pour 2 tablespoons batter into pan, swirling to cover with a thin layer. Cook about 30 seconds, until top appears dry; flip and cook for 10 more seconds. While the bottom is cooking, drop a teaspoon of jam on top, spreading lightly with spoon. Fold pancake in half, then fold again into a quarter-circle. Remove from pan, repeat process, melting 1/4 teaspoon ghee for each new pancake. Makes 10-12 crepes.

Ghee

Place 1 pound unsalted butter in a saucepan and stir over medium heat until melted. Bring to a boil and reduce heat to medium-low. Foam will form on top as the solid milk particles fall to the bottom. Return to a low boil for 8 minutes, until particles are golden brown. Strain the clarified liquid into a glass jar using a cheesecloth or fine-mesh sieve. Cover with lid; discard particles. The ghee becomes semisolid and keeps at room temperature for several weeks, or refrigerated up to 6 months. Transfer the amount you need into a plastic container or zip-top bag for the trail. Makes about 1 3/4 cups.

Lunch

Tuna Pita

*Servings: varies
Preparation Time: 5 min.*

1 pouch tuna fish (they come in all diff. flavors now)
2-3 small packets of mayo.
1-2 small packets of pickel relish
2-3 small pita pockets
salt and pepper to taste

The nice thing about this recipe is you can play with the taste very easily. With no cooking required it is a fast and healthy lunch. Now that the tuna is packed in pouches there is no need for a can opener or to drain the tuna.

Tuna Salad Wraps

1 foil pouch tuna (use the small 3 oz size pkg)
1 packet mayo
1 packet relish
2 medium tortillas

*In camp: rip open tuna pouch, add mayo and relish, beat around with spoon, and put on tortillas.
Makes 1 serving*

Lunch/Dinner

Trail Dad's Spaghetti

Weight per serving: 4 ounces

Total servings: 2

At home:

1 (26 ounce) jar spaghetti sauce (your favorite brand)

4 ounces whole wheat angel-hair pasta

1/4 cup Kraft Parmesan cheese

Dehydrate your favorite spaghetti sauce until it is hard and brittle. Low-fat vegetarian sauce dries more readily. A chunky brand of sauce should be pureed in a blender prior to dehydration. Place dried spaghetti sauce in a ziplock bag. Carry pasta and cheese separately.

Note that thoroughly dried spaghetti leather will keep for a few weeks without refrigeration. If a longer period of time will elapse before it is used, it should be placed in a tightly sealed bag and stored in a freezer.

On the trail:

2 1/2 cups water

2 tablespoons olive oil

Crumble dried spaghetti sauce into 2 1/2 cups of cold water and heat to boiling. Add 2 tablespoons of olive oil and 4 ounces of pasta. Stir quickly for a few minutes. Simmer if your stove will permit; otherwise, remove from heat to prevent burning, keeping the contents hot as long as possible. The pasta should soak up the liquid so that there is no need to drain the pot. Add 1/4 cup of Parmesan cheese, stir, and serve.

Stew

This is a fantastic backpacking recipe. You can add any wild foods that you may find, such as dandelion greens, wild garlic or onion.

1 cup dried ground beef

1/4 cup dried onion

1/4 cup dried mushrooms

1/2 cup dried carrots

2 tablespoons dried tomato (you can dry tomato paste to create leather)

1 1/2 cups macaroni

1/4 cup dried green pepper

Instructions:

Place macaroni in a separate bag.

To cook, bring 2 cups of water to a boil in a large pot.

Add the macaroni and cook five minutes.

Add the package with the meat and vegetables in it.

Simmer for 10 minutes. Cover and let stand for 10 to 15 minutes.

Serves four.

Shepherd's Pie

Packet One:

*1 1/3 cups dried ground beef
1/2 cup dried onion
1/2 cup dried carrots*

Packet Two:

*1 1/3 cups dehydrated potato flakes
2 tablespoons dry milk
1 tablespoon butter buds, optional
Pinch of salt*

Instructions:

*Add 1 3/4 cups of water to the meat packet in a large pot over a medium fire. Cover and bring to a boil; simmer for 10 minutes.
In another pot, bring 1 2/3 cups water to a boil.
Add contents of the potato packet and stir until the water is absorbed.
Serve the meat mixture with a spoonful of potatoes on top.
Serves four.*

Veggies, Beef & Rice

*2 cups instant rice
1/4 cup freeze dried vegetables, mixed
1/2 cup dried hamburger
2 Tsp beef bullion
1/2 tsp granulated garlic
1 tsp dried parsley
1/2 tsp dried thyme
1 oz Swiss cheese*

At home: combine all ingredients except cheese into a quart size freezer zip lock bag.

In camp: add 2 2/3 cups boiling water, stir well and put in a cozy for 10 minutes. Top with Swiss cheese.

Makes 2 servings

Four Cheese Hamburger Rice

*1 cup instant rice
1/3 cup instant milk
1 package of Four Cheese sauce blend
1/2 tsp butter powder
1/2 cup dehydrated hamburger*

At home: combine all ingredients into a quart size freezer zip lock bag.

*In camp: add 1 1/2 cups of boiling water, stir well, and put in a cozy for 10 minutes. Stir and eat.
Makes 1 serving*

Cheesy Chicken Rice Soup

1/2 cup instant rice
3 Tbsp cheese sauce powder
1 Tbsp dried powdered milk
1 Tbsp dried veggie mix or freeze dried vegetables
3-5 oz can of chicken
Salt to taste

At home: combine all ingredients into a quart sized freezer zip lock bag.

In camp: add 1 cup boiling water and chicken with liquid. Stir, put in cozy, and let sit for 5-10 minutes.

Makes 1 serving

Cheesy Bacospuds

2 1/4 cup instant potato flakes
1/2 cup instant dry milk
1 packet Butter Buds
1 1/2 Tbsp dried parsley flakes
1 1/2 Tbsp dried onions
Salt and pepper to taste
3/4 cup crumbled bacon
1 package powdered cheese spread

At home: add all ingredients into quart size freezer zip lock bag.

In camp: bring 4 1/2 cups (less if using fresh cheese) to boil. Add water to bag, and stir well. Let stand, and add more water if needed.

Makes 4 servings

Tuna Spaghetti

1 8-ounce package angel hair pasta
1 6-ounce can or packet of tuna in oil
8 sun dried tomatoes, sliced
1 tsp dried basil
1 tsp oregano
1/4 cup parmesan cheese
1/2 tsp garlic powder
4 cups water

At home: mix the basil, oregano, parmesan cheese and garlic powder in a zip lock bag. Store other items separately.

In camp: soak tomatoes in 4 cups of water for 10 minutes. Remove the tomatoes from water and bring to a boil. Break the angel hair pasta in half and add to the boiling water. Cook pasta until done, usually around 5 minutes. Drain water. Leave noodles in the pot and add tuna, tomatoes, and contents of the cheese and spice bag. Stir well.

Makes 2 servings

Beefy Noodle Bowl

- 3 Tbsp beef jerky, shredded
- 1 3-ounce package ramen noodles
- 1 1-ounce package instant onion soup
- 2 Tbsp mixed vegetables
- 1/4 tsp garlic powder
- 1/4 tsp ground ginger
- 1/2 tsp dried cilantro
- 1-2 packets soy sauce to taste

At home: discard the flavor packet from the ramen noodles, and combine all of the dry ingredients in a quart size, freezer zip lock bag.

In camp: boil about 2 cups of water. Add water to zip lock bag, then stir well until noodles are soft and vegetables are rehydrated. Season with soy sauce to taste.

Makes 2 servings

Tuna Noodle Casserole

servings: 3

- 1 (7 1/4-ounce) box macaroni and cheese (Kraft Original preferred)
- 2 (3-ounce) pouches tuna fish
- 1 (15-ounce) can baby peas, drained
- 1 (10 3/4-ounce) can condensed cream of chicken soup
- 1 (single-portion) bag potato chips

1. *In a medium-size cook pot, boil macaroni and cheese noodles until soft. Drain water.*
2. *To the noodles, add cheese powder from macaroni and cheese box, along with tuna, peas, and condensed cream of chicken soup. Stir until well mixed.*
3. *Serve, sprinkling crushed potato chips over the top.*

Campout Pasta Pizza

servings: 6-8

- 1 pound wide egg noodles
- 2 (26-ounce) jars spaghetti sauce (your choice)
- 1 (6-ounce) package sliced pepperoni
- 1 (16-ounce) package Velveeta cheese, cubed

Preparation at camp:

1. *In a medium-size pot, cook egg noodles according to package directions. Drain.*
2. *Add spaghetti sauce and sliced pepperoni. Stir and simmer until warm.*

Pizzaritos

- 1 (14 ounce) jar pizza sauce
- 8 flour tortillas
- 2 cups shredded mozzarella cheese
- 8 ounces sliced pepperoni

Preparation at camp:

1. *Spread approximately 3 tablespoons pizza sauce onto each tortilla.*
2. *Sprinkle each tortilla with 1/4 cup shredded cheese and top with pepperoni slices.*
3. *Tuck tortilla sides in and roll like burritos.*
4. *Wrap each pizzarito in two layers of heavy-duty aluminum foil, and bake over coals for approximately 10 minutes or until cheese is melted.*

Tip: Pizzaritos can also be cooked together in a covered steam table pan on a grill.

Spam-O-Rama

Servings: 4-5

1/4 cup canola oil
2 red potatoes, diced
2 carrots, diced
1 onion, diced
1 cup diced fresh green beans or 1 (15-ounce) can green beans, drained and diced
2 garlic cloves, diced
2 (12-ounce) cans Spam, cut into 1/2 inch cubes
1/4 teaspoon red pepper flakes, or to taste
1/4 teaspoon chili powder, or to taste
1 teaspoon Mrs. Dash seasoning
Salt and ground black pepper to taste

Options: Eggs can be scrambled along with the Spam. For a spice variation, use Worcestershire sauce, tomato ketchup, or steak sauces.

Preparation at camp:

1. In a large-size skillet, stir-fry potatoes, carrots, onion, green beans, and garlic in canola oil.
2. When vegetables become tender, add diced Spam and fry until browned.
3. Stir in spices and serve.

Chicken Vegetable Rice

Servings: 4-5

1 1/2 cups Minute Rice
1 tablespoon dried parsley
1 pound canned chicken
2 pounds frozen soup vegetables (such as Bird's Eye)
2 tablespoons dried onion flakes
3 cubes chicken bouillon
1/4 teaspoon ground black pepper
5 1/2 cups water

Preparation at Home:

1. package dry rice and parsley in small-size ziplock freezer bag.
2. Dehydrate chicken and vegetables.
3. Place dried chicken, dried vegetables, and remainder of ingredients, in separate gallon-size Ziploc freezer bag.

Preparation on Trail:

1. Add water to gallon-size Ziploc bag containing chicken, vegetables, and seasonings. Reseal bag and knead contents. Set aside for about 30 minutes while food rehydrates.
2. Pour rehydrated chicken and vegetable mixture into medium-size cook pot. Bring to a boil while stirring.
3. Reduce heat to a simmer then continue to cook for an additional 5 minutes or until tender.
4. Stir in rice and parsley mixture from small-size Ziploc bag. Cover and cook for an additional 5-10 minutes or until rice is tender.

Required Equipment:

Medium-size cook pot

Noodles Alfredo

2 (4.7-ounce) packages fettuccine Alfredo-flavored pasta Roni
1 pound canned chicken, dehydrated
1/2 pound frozen peas, dehydrated
1/2 pound grated carrots, dehydrated
1/4 cup low-fat powdered milk
2 tablespoons Butter Buds

6 cups water

Preparation at Home:

1. Pour fettuccine noodles in a small-size Ziploc freezer bag.
2. Place dried chicken, dried vegetables, seasoning mix from Pasta Roni packages, powdered milk, and Butter Buds, in a gallon-size Ziploc freezer bag.

Preparation on Trail:

1. Add water to the gallon-size Ziploc bag, then knead. Set aside to rehydrate for about 30 minutes.
2. Pour rehydrated chicken and vegetable mixture into a medium cook pot.
3. Bring contents to a boil, then reduce heat to a simmer. Continue to cook for an additional 5 minutes or until chicken and vegetables are tender.
4. Add noodles. Continue cooking 5-10 minutes until pasta is slightly firm, stirring frequently.
5. Do not overcook. The sauce for the noodles will be thin. Remove from heat and let stand 3-5 minutes for the sauce to thicken before serving.

Trout with mustard sauce

1 package McCormick Hollandaise sauce mix
1/4 cup butter (or 4 tablespoons olive oil)
1 tablespoon Dijon mustard
1 teaspoon dried tarragon
1 tablespoon cooking oil
1 cup water
4 trout fillets

At camp Heat oil in pan until sizzling. Cook fish until flesh is flaky. To make sauce, fork-whisk water, butter (or olive oil), and contents of sauce packet. Add mustard and tarragon and bring to a boil. Pour over trout. Serves 3.

Noodles with Spicy Peanut Sauce

1/2 cup peanut butter (creamy or chunky)
2 tablespoons tamari
4 teaspoons crushed garlic
3 tablespoons cider vinegar
2 teaspoons brown sugar
3/4 teaspoon dried crushed red pepper
1/4 cup chopped fresh cilantro or 1 tablespoon dried cilantro
salt and pepper to taste
12 ounces soba noodles or your favorite pasta

At home: Mix together all ingredients in bowl except noodles. Pack in plastic container or bottle (recipe makes 1 3/4 cups sauce). Note The sauce will keep for 2 days unrefrigerated. The vinegar in the recipe acts as a preservative.

In camp: Cook noodles or pasta; Drain 1/2 cup hot water into measuring cup and scatter the rest. Empty sauce into pot and add hot water, toss thoroughly. Serves two.

Backpackers Beef Stew

Servings: 4-6

- 1 pound stew beef
- 1 (1-ounce) package beef gravy mix
- 1 (14 1/2 ounce) can stewed tomatoes
- 1 (13 1/4 ounce) can cut mushrooms, drained
- 1/4 cup (1/2 standard stick) butter
- 4 medium potatoes 1 small onion
- 1 (1 1/2 ounce) packet powdered beef stew seasoning (use to taste)
- 1 1/2 cups water

Preparation at Home:

1. Cut beef into small pieces, roll in gravy mix powder, and seal in Ziploc freezer bags. (Putting the beef in small Ziploc bags will allow it to thaw more rapidly when cooking, and you'll find it easier to pack in an insulated bag.)
2. Pour stewed tomatoes with their juice along with the drained mushrooms into a single ziplock freezer bag. Place butter in its own Ziploc bag.
3. Freeze the Ziploc bags of meat, vegetables, and butter until solid.
4. As you leave for your backpack trip, pack your frozen ingredients in an insulated bag, filling any extra space with small Ziploc freezer bags filled with ice. (Using this method, meat can stay frozen until the second night on a two-day backpacking trip, even during summer.)
5. Pack the remainder of the items separately.

Preparation on the Trail:

1. Cut potatoes into cubes and chop onion.
2. Melt butter in a pot at least 2 1/2 quarts in size. Sauté onions in melted butter, then brown the meat.
3. Add potatoes, mushrooms, tomatoes, and beef stew seasoning to taste, add 1 1/2 cups water.
4. Bring to a boil then cover and lower heat to a simmer.
5. Stir often to keep from burning. Stew is ready to serve once potatoes soften and meat is cooked through.

Option: Refrigerated biscuits make a great addition to this recipe. They can be added to the top of the stew inside the covered pot for the last 15 minutes of cooking time, or they can be divided into dough balls and dropped into the stew to cook as dumplings.

Pasta Primavera

1 (4.3-ounce) package Lipton Alfredo Pasta Sides
2/3 cup nonfat powdered milk
1/4 teaspoon garlic salt
1/2 teaspoon dried oregano
2 cups dehydrated vegetable mix (see directions)
2 tablespoons olive oil 2 cups water
1/2 head of broccoli, cut into florets
1/2 sweet red pepper, cut into thin 1-inch strips
1/2 red onion, thinly sliced
1 medium yellow squash, sliced into thin rounds
1/2 pound fresh mushrooms, sliced

1. Empty the noodle mix into a quart-size Ziploc bag, and add the powdered milk, garlic salt, and dried oregano.
2. Store the dehydrated vegetables in a separate quart-size Ziploc bag, and place both bags inside a gallon-size freezer bag to keep the meal organized.
3. package the olive oil in a small, unbreakable plastic bottle with screw-top lid.

Three options for preparing the vegetables for this recipe

- A. Dry fresh vegetables per the ingredients list.
- B. Dehydrate a 1-pound bag of mixed vegetables, such as a California or Oriental stir-fry blend, adding 2 tablespoons of dried onion flakes once dehydrated.
- C. purchase the vegetables already dehydrated.

1. At your lunch break, begin rehydrating the vegetables by pouring the bag of dried vegetables into a wide-mouthed watertight bottle, adding water to cover. Alternatively, cover the vegetables in the Ziploc bag with water, using a double-bag to ensure it doesn't leak.
2. When ready to eat later in the day, place the vegetables and the water used for rehydration into a small-size cook pot. Add additional water to bring total to approximately 2 cups. Pour in olive oil and bring mixture to a boil.
3. Add the noodle mix, then stir well. Reduce heat to a simmer. Continue cooking for an additional 8-10 minutes, stirring frequently. The mixture should still be a little soupy.
4. Cover the pot and set aside for about 10 minutes,

If you want some meat, add some canned chicken.

Horgan's Hiking Chicken Ramen

Servings: 4-5

- 1 (10 ounce) can condensed cream of chicken soup
- 1 pound canned chicken
- 1 pound frozen green beans or peas
- 1 (1-ounce) envelope Lipton's onion soup mix
- 1/3 cup nonfat powdered milk
- 2 (3-ounce) packages ramen-style noodles (discard the seasoning packets)
- 1 tablespoon slivered almonds
- 5 cups water

Preparation at Home:

1. Dry cream of chicken soup in a food dehydrator on either parchment paper or a plastic dehydrator tray.
2. Package dehydrated soup in a small Ziploc freezer bag.
3. Dry canned chicken and vegetables in food dehydrator.
4. Package dehydrated chicken meat and vegetables along with onion soup mix and powdered milk in a gallon-size zip lock freezer bag.
5. Place ramen noodles in a separate quart-size Ziploc freezer bag.
6. Store almonds in a snack bag.

Preparation on Trail:

1. Empty the dehydrated chicken soup into the gallon-size ziplock bag containing chicken and vegetables.
2. Add water to the gallon-size bag, then knead. Set aside for about 30 minutes to rehydrate.
3. Pour the rehydrated mix into medium-size cook pot. Bring to a boil, stirring constantly.
4. Reduce heat to a simmer and continue to cook for an additional 5 minutes.
5. Add ramen noodles to the pot. Stir and cook for an additional 5 minutes or until mixture is thick and tender.
6. Garnish with slivered almonds and serve.

Chicken & Dumplings

- 1 package biscuit mix (5.5 ounces)
- 5 1/2 cups water
- 4 tablespoons cornstarch
- 3/4 cup dried carrots
- 3/4 cup dried celery
- 5 chicken bouillon cubes
- 2 bay leaves
- 1/4 teaspoon poultry seasoning
- 1 pouch chunk chicken (7 ounces)
- Salt and pepper to taste

At home: Place carrots, celery, bouillon cubes, bay leaves, and poultry seasoning in a Ziploc bag.

In camp: In a small bowl. Combine biscuit mix with 1/2 cup water; set aside. Add 5 cups water to a pot; stir in cornstarch until smooth. Add the carrot mixture. bring to a boil, and simmer for 6 minutes. Reduce heat to low, add chicken, and season with salt and pepper. Drop level tablespoonfuls of biscuit dough into stew. Cover the pot and cook for 5 minutes, or until dumplings are cooked through. Remove bay leaves. Serves 2-3.

Dessert

Bonfire Banana Boats

Servings: 1 / multiply as required

1 banana
3 tablespoons chocolate Chips
3 tablespoons mini marshmallows

Preparation at Camp:

1. Sit the banana upright like a canoe. Peel one strip of skin from the top of the "boat" without removing the peel completely.
2. Scoop out about a third of the banana along its length. Go ahead and eat that part!
3. Pour chocolate chips and marshmallows into the scooped-out hollow of the banana.
4. Replace peel and wrap banana in heavy-duty aluminum foil.
5. Toss on hot coals for 5-10 minutes, just long enough to allow chocolate and marshmallows to melt.
6. Remove from fire. Carefully unwrap foil. Pull off the top strip of banana peel and serve.

Rocky Road Pudding

1 3 oz box instant chocolate pudding
2/3 cup powdered milk
1/4 cup chopped pecans or walnuts
1/4 cup mini marshmallows

At home: combine the pudding and powdered milk in a zip lock bag. Carry the nuts and marshmallows in a second bag.

In camp: add 2 cups of water to the pudding mix. Top the pudding with the marshmallows and nuts after the pudding has set up.

Chocolate Orange Cheesecake

5 chocolate wafer cookies, crushed
2 packets True Orange
2 Tbsp mini chocolate chips
1 tsp sugar
1 2-ounce package shelf stable cream cheese

At home: combine everything in a zip lock bag. Do not open the cream cheese.

In camp: add the cream cheese to the dry ingredients. Seal the bag and smoosh until well combined. Serve.

Makes 1 serving

Cinnamon Apples

1 apple
1 teaspoon cinnamon
1 teaspoon sugar
1 tablespoon butter

Cut the center core of the apple out but try not to cut all the way through the bottom. Fill with cinnamon, sugar and butter. Wrap in foil and cook on hot coals for 15 minutes. Let cool a few minutes then open and eat.

Dehydration Techniques

Dehydrating Meat

Dehydrating meat can be as simple as slicing up some lunch meat from the deli and drying it for a few hours in a food dehydrator. Once dehydrated, strips of deli ham, turkey, and roast beef can be eaten like beef jerky, or broken into pieces for use in a backpacking meal.

With a little more effort, you can also dry ground beef, turkey, or chicken. Read on for pictures and instructions. First we'll cover deli meat, followed by ground beef, shrimp, and tuna.

Dehydrating Meat: Deli Style

Choose lean ham, turkey, roast beef, or chicken with fat content less than 10%. I prefer dehydrating meat that has not had any "solutions" injected into it, because that usually means high sodium. Ask the server to slice your deli meat thick, around 1/16 of an inch.

Cut deli meat into one inch strips and place on the dehydrator trays. Dehydrating meat takes about six hours at 125° using my Excalibur Dehydrator. If any oil droplets form on the outside of the meat, blot off with a paper towel. When the meat is completely dry, you will easily be able to break the strips into smaller pieces for use in backpacking recipes or leave as is for snacking.

Try munching a few slices of dehydrated deli ham with your oatmeal when backpacking. You can eat it cold and crunchy, or put it in your pot with a little water and heat. After a few minutes of warming and rehydrating, you'll enjoy a chewy, near bacon experience. The photo at right shows how I include dehydrated ham in my recipe for Ham and Vegetables with Rice.

The following tips on dehydrating meat came from Backpackingcef.com. Using dehydrated meats is handy with a lot of recipes

Dehydrating Meat: Ground Beef & Turkey

The one problem I encountered with dehydrated ground beef and turkey in my backpacking meals was that the meat didn't fully rehydrate. It was tough-- my teeth got a workout chewing it. With a little experimentation, I finally came up with the secret to dehydrating meat so that it turns out tender every time... bread crumbs! When you add bread crumbs to ground meat before you dehydrate it, more liquid will penetrate the meat when you cook it in your pot, resulting in tender meat.

I recommend using only lean or extra lean ground meat. Meat with high fat content produces beads of oil as it dehydrates which you have to blot off throughout the dehydration process. Also, fatty meats may spoil on the trail, so stick with the skinny stuff. Pork is not recommended for dehydrating, with the exception of lean ham, because of its high fat content. Ground turkey breast is naturally low in fat. Check the labels for ground beef and shoot for a fat content of 15% or less, even though it costs a little more. Ground beef with 15% fat content is often labeled as Ground Round. Ground Chuck and Hamburger will have higher fat content. I dehydrate grass fed beef that has only 7% fat.

You may enhance the flavor of ground beef by marinating it for a few hours prior to dehydrating, although this is not required for good results. Break the ground beef into small pieces and place in a baking dish. Pour your favorite beef marinade over it, cover with lid or plastic wrap, and refrigerate for two to three hours. I combine Worcestershire Sauce with water and a little balsamic vinegar for my marinade. After marinating, completely drain off the liquid and return the beef to

the baking dish. For each pound of beef, sprinkle ½ cup of bread crumbs evenly over the meat. Work the bread crumbs into the meat with your fingers. Unseasoned bread crumbs work well, but if you plan to use the beef in a pasta recipe, try Italian seasoned bread crumbs. I make my own bread crumbs by dehydrating bread slices in the dehydrator for a few hours and then chopping the dried bread into crumbs.

Break the meat into small pieces and stir continuously in a skillet over medium high heat until the beef turns slightly pink or brown depending on your taste. Remove from heat and blot off any remaining liquid with paper towels.

Place small pieces of ground beef on the dehydrator trays. I can fit about a pound of cooked meat on one Excalibur Food Dehydrator tray. I set the thermostat at 145° for the first two hours and then reduce the temperature to 125° for another six hours. There should be no moisture remaining in the meat when you break a piece in half.

Dehydrating meat with bread crumbs following these instructions will yield 2 ½ cups of dried meat per pound processed. Most of my backpacking recipes call for a ¼ cup of dried meat, so I get ten meals from a pound of meat.

For convenience on the trail, combine ¼ cup dehydrated meat, ¼ cup dehydrated vegetables, and ½ cup starch like instant brown rice in a zip-lock bag for a complete meal. At meal time, add the contents of your meal to a pot with one cup of water, light the stove and bring to a boil for 2 – 3 minutes. Let the meal sit for another 10 minutes with the lid on in an insulating cozy to fully rehydrate the ingredients.

Dehydrating Shrimp

To save time, I buy frozen, pre-cooked and peeled, medium shrimp. Thaw shrimp, pinch off the tails, and rinse. Slice each shrimp into four or five pieces, arrange in a single layer on dehydrator tray, and dehydrate at 145° approximately six hours until hard and firm. There should be no moisture remaining when you cut a piece in half. Store shrimp in an air-tight container or refrigerate until ready to use. Dehydrated shrimp taste great in grits.

Dehydrating Tuna

I dehydrate canned tuna for my tuna casserole backpacking recipe. Use only Solid White Albacore Tuna packed in water. Fattier varieties of tuna and tuna packed in oil may spoil. Drain off the water into your dog or cat's bowl. Break the tuna up into small pieces and spread out in a single layer on the dehydrator tray. Dehydrate at 145° for six hours until crispy. I dehydrate tuna on the front porch during the day to avoid stinking up the house. Don't try it at night or a raccoon might steal your tuna. Six ounces of tuna will weigh a little over an ounce when dry and yield about half a cup.

Dehydrating Vegetables

Your mamma wasn't kidding when she said, "Eat your vegetables." Dehydrating vegetables at home is the easy way to nourish your body on the trail. In addition to providing necessary vitamins, minerals, fiber, and complex carbohydrates, veggies brighten your backpacking meals with color and flavor. Beef and rice is okay, but it's not a real meal until you add dark green broccoli, a medley of corn, carrots, peas, and green beans, or some peppers-- red, yellow,

orange, and green peppers. So listen to Chef Glenn (and your mamma) and start dehydrating vegetables!

The drying times listed below are based on my experiences using an Excalibur Food Dehydrator. Dehydrating vegetables can take longer with some dehydrators; in fact, I threw my round stacking dehydrator away because it was so slow. Humidity also affects drying times so your results may differ from mine. Vegetables such as broccoli are done when pieces are brittle and can be snapped in half. Other vegetables having fruit-like qualities such as tomatoes and cucumbers will be pliable (bendable) when done.

Classic Mixed Vegetables: (corn, carrots, peas, green beans)

One of the big advantages of owning a high capacity food dehydrator is that you can dehydrate surplus vegetables picked in season - from your garden or from a local farmer. If you don't have any fresh produce on hand, use frozen produce. Classic Mixed Vegetables from Birds-Eye dehydrate well because they are already uniformly cut, saving you prep time in the kitchen. Place the thawed, uncooked vegetables directly on the dehydrator trays in a single layer and dehydrate at 125° for approximately six hours. I break the green beans in half first so they finish dehydrating at the same time as the corn, carrots, and peas. A one pound package weighs approximately three ounces when dry and amounts to just under one cup.

Pepper Medley:

Green peppers are the workhorses of the pepper family, but I invite the yellow, orange, and red cousins to all of my backpacking feasts. Peppers combine well with beef, beans, or shrimp and make themselves at home in pasta, rice, couscous, and grits. I cut fresh peppers into ½" pieces, trimming away the white fleshy part on the inside. Raw peppers retain their color better than cooked peppers, so I don't bother cooking them before dehydrating. Place cut peppers on dehydrator trays in single layers and dehydrate at 125° for approximately six hours.

Onions:

My favorite onions for dehydrating are Vidalia Onions from South Georgia because of their sweet and mild flavor. If you can't find them in your area, try another sweet onion variety. I tried drying whole rings, but I achieved more complete and faster drying times when I diced the onions. Spread out in a single layer on the dehydrator trays and dehydrate at 145° for two hours and reduce to 135° for approximately six hours or until pliable. Onions can smell pretty strong when dehydrating, so you might want to open a window or do as I do and set up the dehydrator on the front porch. (I especially recommend the front porch for dehydrating tuna).

Broccoli:

Don't forget the broccoli when dehydrating vegetables at home. A nutritional power food, broccoli supercharges many of my backpacking meals with extra vitamins, fiber, and minerals. After washing and soaking the broccoli for ten minutes in salt water to remove any contaminants, I rinse and cut the florets into ½" bouquets and the stems into small pieces ½" or smaller. Steam the broccoli for about five minutes to break down the fibrous walls of the stems and to bring out the dark green color. Broccoli dehydrates best when firm, not mushy. Dehydrate at 125° for approximately eight hours. Dehydrated broccoli will be brittle when done.

Mushrooms:

I prefer baby belle mushrooms for my backpacking recipes. Thoroughly wash all the dirt off in cold water and cut into 1/8 inch slices. Place pieces on the dehydrator tray in a single layer and dehydrate at 125° for six to eight hours until leathery. An eight ounce package will weigh less than an ounce when dry and amount to one cup.

Cherry Tomatoes:

Although it takes time, I cut cherry tomatoes into 1/8 inch slices using a sharp knife and place in a single layer on the dehydrator trays sprinkled with a little salt. Larger tomatoes can be sliced or diced depending on how you like them and how you plan to use them. Dehydrate at 145° for two hours and reduce to 135° for approximately six more hours until pliable. A pint of cherry tomatoes will weigh just over an ounce when dry and amount to about ¾ of a cup.

Cucumber:

Cucumber is technically a fruit like tomatoes, but since most people think of it as a vegetable, I'll include it here on the dehydrating vegetables page. I snack on dried cucumbers while I hike or as part of a salad while I'm cooking my supper. Because of the thick waxy coating, I peel cucumbers first and then cut into 1/8 inch slices. Arrange in a single layer and sprinkle with a little salt if desired. Dehydrate at 145° for two hours and reduce to 135° for another eight to ten hours.

Carrots:

When dehydrating carrots for snacking or for use in dried salads, peel large carrots and cut into 1/8 inch slices. Dehydrating sliced baby carrots will result in very small dried carrot pieces. That's fine for cooked recipes, but for snacking you'll want larger pieces you can grab with your fingers. Dehydrate at 125° for approximately six to ten hours or until leathery.

Now that you know how easy dehydrating vegetables can be, try dehydrating meat.

If you would like to learn more about dehydrating vegetables, try *Preserve It Naturally; The Complete Guide To Food Dehydration*. Written by the folks at Excalibur Food Dehydrators, this valuable resource is loaded with how-to information and outstanding photography.

Dehydrating Fruit

Dehydrating fruit is easy and fun. Cut the fruit into small, equal-sized pieces; spread in a single layer on the dehydrator trays, and crank up the dehydrator. It takes from 6 to 36 hours to dry fruit, depending on the juiciness of the fruit, but the wait is worth it when you taste the final product.

Dehydrating fruit concentrates the natural sugars so your pineapples and bananas will taste extra sweet on the trail. Choose mature, firm fruits for the highest sugar and nutritional content, but avoid bruised or overripe fruit. When dehydrating fruits such as apples with the skins on, thoroughly wash and rinse the fruit to remove any wax and pesticides.

On the trail, you'll maintain peak energy by snacking on dried fruit throughout the day. My recipes will give you simple ways to incorporate dehydrated fruit into your breakfasts, desserts, and trail mixes. Try cooking oatmeal with dried apples, raisins, and cinnamon, topped with crunchy granola for a quick-energy breakfast. I even slip pineapple and coconut into my recipe for Hawaiian Shrimp and Rice.

The range of drying times listed below for dehydrating fruit are what you could expect using an Excalibur Food Dehydrator. Factors such as humidity, the size and thickness of your fruit pieces, and the juiciness can all affect how fast fruit dries. Most fruit will be pliable or leathery when done, meaning you can bend it and it won't break. You can easily tear a piece of dried fruit in half and if no moisture beads up on the inside and there is no stickiness on the outside, it's done.

One of the features that I like about my Excalibur is its large capacity for dehydrating fruit- drying 30 pounds of Georgia peaches in one batch was no problem. I use the nine tray model which has

15 square feet of drying area. As an avid gardener, I load my Excalibur up when fruits and vegetables are in season.

Dehydrating fruit will fill your home with pleasant, fruity smells. If you are like me, you will get hungry and start snitching before the fruit is dry. Enjoy!

Dehydrating Bananas

Choose yellow bananas with some brown speckles on the peel for maximum sweetness. Peel the bananas and cut into 1/8" slices. Dehydrate at 135° until leathery and the banana slices do not stick together. (6 – 10 hours)

Dehydrating Apples

Thoroughly wash apples to remove pesticides and waxes that may be present unless you plan to peel off the skin. Because the skins contain nutrients, I leave them on.

You can core and slice apples into rings or cut them into whatever size pieces you like. I quarter the apples first and remove the core and stem with a sharp knife. I then cut the quarters into 1/8" slices.

Dehydrate at 135° until pliable (7 – 15 hours).

Because the flesh of apples turns a little brown when exposed to air (oxidation), some people dip their cut apples into a bath of water and sodium bisulfate or ascorbic acid for a couple of minutes before dehydrating. Treating apples with either of these anti-oxidants is safe and will prevent the fruit from browning. I am not bothered by the slightly darker color of my apples, so I skip the dip.

Dehydrating Pineapples

Remove the fibrous skin and core. You can cut up a pineapple any way you like, such as into 1/4" thick rings, but I like to cut the pineapple into 3/4" thick rings first and then slice the rings cross-wise into thinner 1/8" pieces. The smaller pieces dry faster than larger chunks or rings and are the perfect size to use in recipes and trail mixes.

Dehydrate at 135° until pliable (10 – 18 hours). If you are dehydrating canned pineapple, it will take up to twice as long because of the extra juices.

Dehydrating Peaches

Thoroughly wash peaches to remove any pesticides if you plan to dehydrate with the skins on. The skin can be easily removed by dipping the peaches in boiling water for one minute and then dipping in cold water. The skins will come right off. I skip the dip and cut away the skin with a sharp knife. The only reason I remove the skin is because I have a slight allergy to peach fuzz that gives me a rash around my mouth.

I cut the peaches in half, remove the pit, and then cut the halves into 1/8" slices. There is no absolute right or wrong way to slice and dice your fruit. Peel and slice one peach at a time to minimize browning.

Dehydrate at 135° until pliable (20 – 36 hours).

Dehydrating Cherries

Wash the cherries and remove the stems

Cut the cherries in half, remove the pit, and then cut the halves in two.

Place cherries on the dehydrator tray with the skin side down and begin dehydrating at 145° for two hours. Reduce temperature to 135° and dehydrate until leathery (12 – 15 hours).

Dehydrated cherries feel like raisins in your mouth.

Dehydrating Mangos

Remove the skin with a sharp knife and try to slice large chunks away from the pit. This is tricky because it's hard to tell exactly how the large, flat pit is oriented inside the flesh. Cut whatever size chunks you end up with into 1/8 inch slices.

Spread in a single layer on the dehydrator tray and begin dehydrating at 145° for two hours and then reduce the temperature to 135° until pliable (18 – 24 hours depending on the juiciness of the mangos you are working with).

Dehydrating Blueberries

Wash blueberries and remove the stems.

Place blueberries in a colander and dip in boiling water for 15 to 30 seconds to check the skins. If you are concerned that dipping the berries in boiling water may kill valuable enzymes, you can skip the dip and cut the berries in half before dehydrating. Place the berries in a single layer on the dehydrator tray with the skin side down. Your blueberries will turn out crispier using this method.

Dehydrate at 125° until leathery (12 – 18 hours).

Dehydrating Strawberries

Wash strawberries and cut off the leafy crown.

Cut into 1/8 to 1/4 inch slices.

Place sliced strawberries in a single layer on the dehydrator tray and dehydrate at 135° until leathery and crisp (8 – 12 hours).

Now that you know how easy dehydrating fruit is, try dehydrating vegetables.