

Lesson Preparation - Dehydrating Fruits, Vegetables and Herbs

Overview:

Students will take part in hands-on learning to turn fresh produce into dehydrated food. This is a great way to preserve seasonal produce.

Use this lesson plan with any of the dehydration recipes on the website. Use whichever fruit, veggies or herbs you have in abundance.



Ingredients and Equipment

- Fruit, vegetables or herbs of choice
- Food dehydrator or oven
- Knives
- Cutting boards
- Blender or immersion blender (recipe dependent)
- Airtight storage containers



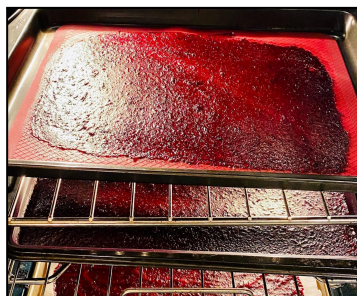
Teacher Background

1. Check out the BC Agriculture in the Classroom website to find a [Fresh Story](#) about the fruit or vegetable you're dehydrating. Resources are available for both primary and intermediate grades. **Tip** - if your school participates, use produce from your BC School Fruit and Vegetable Nutritional Program.
2. Dehydration is among the oldest methods of food preservation. Moisture is removed from food through evaporation. This preserves the food by inhibiting the growth of bacteria, yeast and mould.
3. Dehydrated foods have many uses including in backpacking/camping since they weigh much less than non-dried foods. Dried fruit can be added to cereal, granola, muffins, or trail mix (check out the 'Cook it' section of the website for a recipe and lesson plan). Dried veggies and herbs can be added to soups, breads, baked goods, and dips.
4. Review [food safety](#) and proper [knife handling](#).

Before Class

- Print the recipe or dehydration method instructions as needed
- Wash produce
- Set up workstations

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Learning Outcomes

- Learn how to preserve fresh produce using dehydration
- Explore where and how different fruits and vegetables are grown
- Develop an understanding of the benefit of preserving locally grown food

Lesson

1. Introduction

- Talk about the produce you will be dehydrating.
 - Where does it grow?
 - How does it grow (e.g. on a tree, a bush or plant)?
- Discuss different ways to use dried fruits and vegetables
 - E.g. Fruit in baked goods, herbs for seasoning, dried vegetables can be rehydrated in soups and stews.
- Discuss what dehydration is and the benefits of using this method to preserve seasonal fruits.
 - Being able to continue to eat local fruits past their growing season
 - Eating local food reduces our environmental impact (imported foods use a lot of resources being shipped from other countries)

2. Stations

- Each student should get a chance to be involved in food preparation.
- Students can work in small groups and take turns sharing equipment.
- Save some samples of the chopped fresh fruit/vegetable for the students to have the option to taste and compare to the dehydrated version.

3. Reflections

- Ask students to share their thoughts on the look, feel, smell, colour, and/or taste of fresh vs dried fruit.
- ★ Students should **not** be pressured to taste food. Valuable learning happens by participating in preparation and discussion.