

Beef Jerky

very lean flank steak, partially frozen
teriyaki sauce

1. Cut steak into thin strips, 1 1/2 to 2 inches wide.
2. Dip the strips in teriyaki sauce.
3. Dry the strips, using one of the following methods:

OVEN-DRIED

1. Arrange the seasoned strips in a single layer on wire racks.
2. Place a piece of aluminum foil on the bottom of the oven to catch drippings.
3. Preheat the oven to 150 degrees F., and then turn the heat back to 120 degrees F.
4. Place the meat in the oven, leaving the oven door open at the first stop.
5. After five or six hours, turn the strips over.
6. Continue drying at the same temperature for four hours more.
7. Jerky is ready when it is shriveled and black. When cooled, the jerky should be brittle.

MICROWAVE-DRIED

1. Arrange the seasoned strips flat and close together on a microwave-safe bacon rack. Cover with waxed paper.
2. Microwave at medium low.
3. Turn the strips over, placing the drier strips in the center of the rack.
4. Rotate the rack 1/2 turn, and continue microwaving at medium low for 21 minutes, until the strips are dry but slightly pliable.
5. Remove to the paper towels
6. Repeat with remaining strips.
7. Cover the strips with paper towels, and let them stand for 24 hours.

Drying was a major technique used by early American colonists to preserve apples, peaches, pears and apricots; some vegetables; meat and fish. Nets woven of hair were used to support the fruit or fish and allow good air circulation. The food had to be turned frequently and protected from insects, bird droppings and blowing dirt. The tribes of the American Great Plains developed their own method for drying bison meat so they would have a safe food supply through the long periods between hunting seasons. After eating their fill of the fresh bison meat, the Indians would take the remaining meat and make pemmican. They would slice the meat thin and hang it on scaffolds. They hung streamers along with the meat, so they would blow in the wind and keep wolves away. Once the meat was dry they pounded it and placed it in buffalo rawhide bags about the size of a pillow case. Sometimes they added dried berries for flavor. The sugar from the berries also helped with preservation. They poured hot melted marrow in so that it surrounded each particle of meat. Then they sewed the bag shut. Before the contents became hard from cooling, they walked on it to flatten it. A single sack weighed close to 90 pounds and could be placed across small logs or rocks to keep them off the damp.

Storage: Wrap the sticks of jerky in plastic wrap, and put them in a container with a tight-fitting lid. Store in the refrigerator or freezer.

ESTIMATE/MEASUREMENT ACTIVITY

1. Students use food scales to weigh the beef before and after drying.
2. Students guess (or estimate) what the weight difference will be after drying.
3. Students compare weights before and after drying.

P.A.S.S. Math—Grade 3: 3.1; 4.2; Grade 4: 4.1; Grade 5: 4.1

Oklahoma Ag in the Classroom is a program of the Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service, the Oklahoma Department of Agriculture, Food and Forestry and the Oklahoma State Department of Education.

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Pizza Facts

- The modern precursor to what we call pizza occurred in pre-Renaissance Naples. Poor housewives had only flour, olive oil, lard, cheese and herbs with which to feed their families, so combining them in a tasty and delicious manner became the goal. All of Italy proclaimed the Neapolitan pies to be the best.
- The most famous experiment of all was by a pizza maker named Raffaele Esposito, who received a royal summons to prepare a special pizza for Queen Margherita. He decided to salute the colors of the Italian flag by adding white mozzarella to red tomato and green basil. It became so popular that it's still sold today.
- In 1945 soldiers returning from WWII in Europe brought with them a taste for certain foods. Pizza was at the top of their list.
- Americans eat around 350 slices of pizza each second, or 100 acres per day.
- Children ages 3-11 prefer pizza over all other foods for lunch and dinner, according to a recent Gallup Poll.
- America's favorite pizza topping is pepperoni. The least favorite is anchovies.
- We consume around 251,770,000 pounds of pepperonis every year.
- Americans prefer meat toppings to veggie toppings by a ratio of 62 to 100.
- Some popular pizza toppings in Japan are squid and Mayo Jaga (mayonaise, potato and bacon). In India they like pickled ginger, minced mutton and tofu. The people of Brazil prefer green peas. Russians serve pizza covered in mockba (a mix of sardines, tuna, mackeral, salmon and onions).