

NESCO®

Your Key Ingredient™

Dehydrator

Instructions

“Recipe book not included”

IMPORTANT SAFEGUARDS

This product is designed for household use only.

When using electrical appliances, basic safety precautions should always be followed, including the following:

1. Read all instructions.

2. Do not touch hot surfaces.

3. To protect against electrical hazards, do not immerse power unit or any part of the dehydrator cord or plug in water or other liquid.

4. Close supervision is necessary when any appliance is used by or near children.

5. Unplug from outlet when not in use and before cleaning. Allow the unit to cool before putting on or taking off parts.

6. Do not operate any appliance with a damaged cord or plug, or after the appliance malfunctions, or has been damaged in any manner.

7. The use of accessory attachments not recommended by the appliance manufacturer may cause hazards.

8. Sharp utensils should not be used inside the dehydrator.

9. Do not let cord hang over edge of table or counter, or touch hot surfaces.

10. Do not use outdoors. Always dehydrate indoors on a flat surface to allow sufficient airflow. Never place base on carpet, towel, newspaper, etc., which can block airflow to the bottom of base and cause failure. Never cover entire unit with anything, as that will cause failure. The dehydrator needs an open, breathable space to function properly.

11. Do not place on or near a hot gas or electric burner or in a heated oven.

12. Do not use this appliance for other than its intended use.

SAVE THESE INSTRUCTIONS

Polarized Plug Instructions: This appliance has a polarized plug (one blade wider than the other). As a safety feature, this plug will fit on a polarized outlet only one way. If the plug does not fit fully into the outlet, reverse the plug. If it still does not fit, contact a qualified electrician. Do not attempt to defeat this safety feature.

Short Cord Instructions: A short power supply cord is provided to reduce the risk resulting from becoming entangled in or tripping over a longer cord. Extension cords may be used if care is exercised in their use. If an extension cord is used, the marked electrical rating of the cord should be at least as great as the electrical rating of the appliance. The longer cord should be arranged so that it will not drape over the tabletop where it can be pulled on by children or tripped over unintentionally.

BEFORE FIRST USE

Before using your dehydrator for the first time, wash the trays and top cover in warm, soapy water, or in the dishwasher on the top rack (remove before drying cycle). Caution: Do not put the powerhead/blower in water or in the dishwasher. Wipe with a damp cloth.

Trays/Base

Your dehydrator trays are easy to clean. Simply soak in warm water with a mild detergent for several minutes. A soft-bristle brush will loosen food particles that resist softening by soaking. Do not clean with any metal objects or scouring pads, as they tend to damage the surface.

Trays/base can be washed on top rack of dishwasher, but remove before drying cycle.

Powerhead Unit

It is important that the air vents on power head remain clean and unobstructed. **UNPLUG POWERHEAD UNIT BEFORE CLEANING.** Use a damp cloth or towel to remove dried food particles from power head unit. Do not use scouring pads, abrasive cleaners or sharp utensils. Avoid dripping any liquid into electrical parts. Do not operate power head unit alone, or use in any capacity other than the intended use. **DO NOT OPERATE NEAR OR IMMERSE POWER HEAD UNIT IN WATER OR OTHER LIQUID.**

Dehydrator Care and Use

Digital Food Dehydrators

The digital dehydrator is the superior garden preserver. It is ideal for people who dehydrate on a regular basis.

◆ The digital dehydrator is expandable to 12 trays using the Add-A-Tray® accessories.

◆ 2,400 rpm motor, provides air flow to evenly dry your items.

◆ Digital control adjustable thermostat offers precise temperature control between 90°F - 160°F. (32°C - 71°C).

To use your digital food dehydrator:

1. Set the base on a sturdy countertop or table, six inches away from walls and other electronic devices.

2. Stack trays on base. **ALWAYS USE AT LEAST 4 TRAYS, EVEN IF EMPTY.**

3. Place the top mounted power unit on top tray.

4. Plug cord into 120V electrical outlet.

5. Press “Time” button and use arrow keys to set time (15 minute increments only). Unit will turn off when time reaches zero.

6. Press “Temp” button and use arrow keys to set drying temperature. (5°F increments only) between 90°F - 160°F (32°C - 71°C).

7. Press start to begin dehydrating.

8. Press stop to pause or press and hold to reset time to “0:00”.

A diagram of a digital food dehydrator. It shows a stack of four circular trays. The top tray has a powerhead unit mounted on it. Above the powerhead is a digital temperature control knob. The bottom tray is the base. Labels with arrows point to each component: Digital Temperature Control, Powerhead, Regular Trays, and Base.

Analog Food Dehydrators

A diagram of an analog food dehydrator. It shows a stack of four circular trays. The top tray has a powerhead unit mounted on it. Above the powerhead is a temperature control knob. The bottom tray is the base. Labels with arrows point to each component: Cover, Temperature Control Knob, Powerhead, Regular Trays, and Base.

Powerhead Unit — Contains the motor, heater and controls. **DO NOT IMMERSE IN WATER OR OTHER LIQUIDS!** Wipe with clean, soft, damp dish towel or sponge with light cleaning solution.

Temperature Control Knob — Turn to set desired drying temperature between 90°F - 160°F. (32°C - 71°C).

Regular Tray — Made of durable, BPA free material.

Base — Made of durable, BPA free material.

To use your analog food dehydrator:

1. Place base on flat, dry and stable surface, six inches away from walls and other electronic devices.

2. Prepare foods or crafts and load onto trays. Keep items from center air hole and allow space between items for best results.

3. Stack loaded trays onto base keeping edges of trays properly aligned. Place powerhead on top tray. Note: Always use a minimum of four trays when operating.

4. With dry hands, plug power cord into 120V, 15A, 60Hz electrical outlet.

5. Set desired drying temperature using temperature control knob.

The images shown in this manual are for illustrative purposes only and may be subject to change.

Nonadjustable Food Dehydrators

1. Set the base tray on a sturdy countertop or table, away from sinks or any source of water.

2. Stack additional trays on the base tray. Your dehydrator requires a minimum of 5 trays to operate properly. The base tray is included as one of your 5 trays. (You may expand your dehydrator to 7 total trays with the use of Add-A-Tray® accessories).

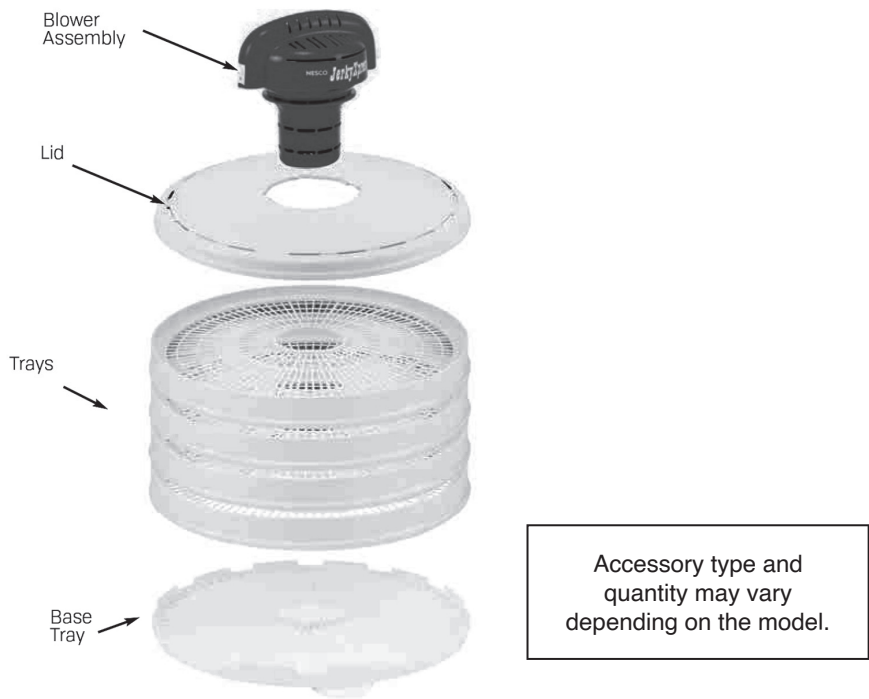
3. Place the top cover on the top tray, insert the blower into the trays and rotate to lock in place.

4. Plug the cord into an electrical outlet, switch power to ON and you’re ready to dehydrate!

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Precautions

Follow these safety rules when dehydrating food:

- ◆ When drying liquids, sauces or purees, use a Fruit Roll sheet, available from NESCO®.
- ◆ When drying jerky with a Powerhead located on bottom, place a Fruit Roll sheet on the bottom tray. The Fruit Roll sheet will catch drips and make cleaning easier.
- ◆ Wash hands thoroughly prior to handling food.
- ◆ Clean all utensils and containers with a mild solution of detergent, bleach and water before using.
- ◆ Make sure all countertops and cutting boards are thoroughly cleaned in the manner above before using. Wooden or plastic cutting boards should be thoroughly disinfected.
- ◆ Keep foods in the refrigerator before preparing for drying. Store dried foods in refrigerator or freezer.
- ◆ After opening sealed containers of dried food, use food as soon as possible.
- ◆ Store opened containers of dried food tightly sealed in the refrigerator to maintain freshness and quality.
- ◆ Do not spray vegetable oil directly onto surface of trays.
- ◆ Do not dehydrate foods that have been prepared with or marinated in alcohol.
- ◆ Trays are only intended to be used with your NESCO® food dehydrator. Do not use trays either in a conventional oven or with any other appliance.
- ◆ Always use at least 4 trays when drying in your dehydrator, even if tray(s) are empty.
- ◆ When drying meat and dairy products, blot frequently with a paper towel to absorb excess oils.

Service

Should you experience any problems with your dehydrator, contact a service center.

General Drying Guidelines

There are no absolutes and quite a few variables in food dehydration. The only way to become proficient is to dry, dry and dry some more! Certain varieties of produce, the humidity in the air and even methods of food handling make quite a difference in the drying time and quality of the dried product.

- ◆ Experiment with different drying temperatures, thickness of produce, pre-treatment versus no pre-treatment and different re-hydration methods. You will determine what works best for your particular needs and preferences
- ◆ To save nutrients and produce a quality product, it is necessary to work fast preparing foods to dry. When placed in your dehydrator, they need to dry continuously at the recommended temperatures and times. Do not turn off your dehydrator or leave partially dried food on the trays as it may spoil or develop "off" flavors.
- ◆ Spread all foods evenly to dry in single layers. Do not overlap.
- ◆ Do not add fresh produce to a partially dried batch. It will slow the rate of drying for both products. It is possible, however, to combine partially dried foods on to fewer trays.
- ◆ Many people have more than one NESCO® dehydrator. If you have two, it's easy to combine a load from both dehydratcrs after a few hours and start a new batch in your second dehydrator using the remaining trays.

Selecting Foods To Dry

Select the best quality produce at the peak of ripeness and flavor. Wash carefully to remove debris, dust and insects. Cut away bruised or damaged sections.

Loading Trays

Lay food pieces evenly on trays. Don't overlap food pieces, as this will inhibit drying time. As each tray is loaded, place it on the dehydrator to begin drying.

Drying Time

Because of the unique design of the patented Converga-Flow® system of your NESCO® dehydrator, you'll be surprised at how quickly most foods dry.

Drying times may vary, depending on the type and amount of food, thickness and evenness of the slices, percentages of water in the food, humidity, temperature of air, altitude and the model of NESCO® dehydrator you are using. Drying times may also vary greatly from one area to another and from day to day, depending on the climatic conditions. Keep records to help you predict drying times for specific foods.

Drying Temperature

Fruits, fruit rolls and vegetables should be dried at 130°F to 140°F (55°C to 60°C). By drying foods in this temperature range you will minimize the loss of heat-sensitive vitamins A and C. All foods sweat when they begin to dry, the temperature may be set higher than 140°F (60°C) during the first couple of hours of drying. The actual temperature of the food will remain 15°F to 20°F (6°C to 8°C) lower than the air temperature for the first couple of hours.

These temperatures also keep bacteria and other spoilage micro-organisms, common to meat and fish, to a minimum during the first stages of drying.

Nuts and seeds are high in oil, and if higher temperatures are used, they will tend to become rancid, developing off flavors. The best temperature is from 90°F to 100°F (30° C to 40°C).

Herbs and spices are most flavorful when they first open and should be harvested while very fresh, before they begin to blossom. Because the aromatic oils are very sensitive, temperatures should be 90°F to 100°F (30°C to 40°C) for drying. Take care not to load trays too heavily as this will prolong the drying time.

Dried flowers, herbs and spices used for potpourri should be dried at temperatures ranging from 90°F to 100°F (30°C to 40°C) to maintain aroma and color.

Packaging

Some pieces may dry in a shorter time than others. The dried food should be removed and placed in an airtight container while allowing the rest of the pieces to remain in the dehydrator until sufficiently dry.

Package all dried foods promptly to prevent stickiness and re-hydration caused by humidity. Store dried foods in airtight, moisture proof containers. NESCO® vacuum sealers are ideal for packaging dried foods. They extend the shelf life of dried foods 3 to 4 times.

Since most packaging materials are transparent, store packaged dried foods in a plastic or metal container that will not allow the light to penetrate. Do not store fruits and vegetables together in the same storage container because flavor and moisture may transfer.

Fruit rolls are best if removed while still warm. Wrap in plastic wrap and place in airtight moisture-proof containers for storage.

Testing for Dryness

Food must be monitored during the final stages of dehydrating to prevent over-drying. Over-dried foods lose quality in texture, nutrition and taste. To test for dryness, remove a piece of food, let it cool and feel with your fingers for dryness.

- ◆ Fruits are pliable and leathery with no spots of moisture. Tear in half, pinch and watch for moisture drops along tear. If no moisture then it is sufficiently dry for long term storage.
- ◆ Fruit rolls should be leathery with no sticky spots
- ◆ Jerky should be tough, but not brittle
- ◆ Dried fish should be tough, but not brittle. If the fish is high in fat it may appear moist due to the high oil content.
- ◆ Vegetables should be tough or crisp

If foods are insufficiently dried, or are exposed to moisture from faulty packaging, they can lose quality and nutrition, and can even mold during storage.

Labeling and Record Keeping

All dehydrated foods should be labeled with the name of the product, date dried and quantity or weight. Clear labeling allows you to rotate foods to minimize waste and nutrient loss. Record the date dried, quantity, weight before and after, drying time, size of containers, storage temperature and length of time before use.

Storage

The storage area should be cool, dry and as dark as possible. The darker and cooler the storage area, the longer the dried foods will last with good quality and nutritive value.

The ideal storage temperature for dehydrated foods is 60°F (15°C) to below freezing. The ideal storage place is your freezer or refrigerator, particularly for storing low acid foods such as meats, fish and vegetables.

Pre-Treatment

Pre-treatment minimizes oxidation, and gives you a superior quality, better tasting product with less vitamin loss. Apples, pears, peaches, and apricots are better when pre-treated. They are more appetizing, have a longer shelf life and higher nutritional value. Place cut fruits that tend to brown in a holding solution of ascorbic acid to reduce browning during preparation. Do not keep cut fruit in a holding solution for more than one hour.

Pre-treatment can vary from soaking in fruit juice, ascorbic acid mixtures, syrup blanching, steaming, to sulfating. The results of these methods also vary. Experiment and decide for yourself which one you like best.