

#### 4. Dehydrating procedure

1. Fill a large kettle one-half to two-thirds full of water. Bring the water to a rolling boil.
2. Place the vegetables in a wire basket, colander or mesh bag. You can blanch up to 1 quart of vegetables at a time.
3. Submerge the vegetables in the boiling water, making sure the water covers the vegetables.
4. As soon as the water re-boils, start timing. Adjust the heat to ensure continuous boiling.
5. Heat according to the time listed in Table 1.

6. Submerge the container with the vegetables in cold water for the same amount of time as the blanching time).
7. Drain the vegetables on paper towels.

#### 5. Drying Procedure

1. Select tender healthy vegetables.
2. Washing to remove old and damaged parts
3. Chop/slice for faster drying
4. Blanch
5. Spread on trays and dry
6. Package and stored in dry, dark store.



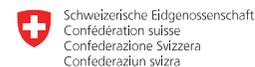
## Vegetable Drying Guide

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### 1. Description

Post-harvest losses is one of the most serious problems facing farmers. The biggest challenge is therefore how to prevent these products from spoiling and thereby becoming unfit for consumption. There are various methods of accomplishing this, such as canning or freezing which are beyond the reach of the ordinary farmers. In this guide, we look at one of the most affordable and easy to implement vegetable preserving methods - Sun drying.

## 2. Importance of Drying

### Vegetables

Drying is one of the oldest methods of preserving food. It can either be an alternative to canning or freezing or compliment these methods. Drying has the following benefits;

- Drying offers benefits for your health, the environment and your wallet.
- It's natural: Drying is one of the few methods of preserving food that allows nutrition properties to be maintained. Dried food does not undergo any chemical or mechanical manipulation, nor are preservatives or other artificial substances added.
- This method is simple, safe and easy to learn and can be done all year-round at home.



- Drying of vegetables drains water from them making them to stay longer.
- Drying lowers weights and volume of the product hence low transportation and storage costs.

### 3. Preparing Vegetables for Dehydration

Prepare vegetables for preservation immediately after picking to prevent colour, flavor, texture, sugar content and nutrient changes. Sort and discard any vegetables with decay, bruises or mould. Thoroughly rinse vegetables with running water, using a produce brush if necessary, then drain the vegetables well. Cut foods into 4-inch to ½-inch slices. The higher the water content, the larger the slice size should be. Small slices of high-moisture foods would nearly disappear when all the moisture has evaporated.

To preserve quality and color, blanch prepared vegetables in boiling water. A

solution of water and salt is prepared (varying in strength depending on products) and boiled. The vegetables for drying are dipped into the hot boiled saline solution in a piece of clean cloth (or basket). Kale, other hard leafy vegetables and cabbages should be dipped in the hot boiling solution for 3 minutes while spinach and soft leafy vegetables require only 2 minutes. To avoid overcooking, boil the blanching water before dipping the vegetables. Dip the vegetables in cold water immediately after removing them from the boiled saline solution to prevent further cooking. After blanching the vegetables are spread on trays and dried, then packed and stored in dry, dark store

