RECIPE

Strawberry Apple Fruit Leather

A snack for the trail: strawberries and unsweetened applesauce dried into chewy strips with no added sugar, packed to carry all day.

MAKES

6 servings US Metric

TOTAL

6 h 30 min

Ingredients

- [ ] 1 lb strawberries, hulled
- [ ] 1 cup unsweetened applesauce
- [ ] 1 tbsp lemon juice

Method

1. Wash the strawberries and cut off the green tops. Set up the dryer first. For the oven, line two rimmed half-sheet pans with parchment paper (not wax paper, it sticks). For the dehydrator, use two solid fruit-leather trays or two parchment-lined trays.

2. Blend the strawberries, applesauce and lemon juice until completely smooth. Pour the purée into a medium saucepan and simmer over medium heat for 10 minutes, stirring often, to cook off some water so it dries faster. Let it cool 5 minutes.

3. Divide the purée between the two pans or trays and spread it to an even ⅛-inch layer all the way to the edges. Thin spots dry first and crack, thick spots stay sticky, so keep it level.

4. Oven method: set the oven to its lowest setting, 170 °F. Bake 4 to 5 hours (the 170 °F oven times in the versions we read were 3 to 4 hours for a 1 lb batch of fruit; ours is thicker). Check from 3 hours.

5. Dehydrator method: set the dehydrator to 140 °F. Dry 6 to 12 hours, and start checking at 6 hours. A lower setting of 125 °F works too but takes about 12 hours.

6. It is done when the center is dry to the touch, no longer sticky, and matte rather than shiny. Press the middle with a clean finger; no purée should come away. If it is tacky, dry 30 minutes more and check again.

7. Cool completely on the pan or tray; it firms up as it cools. Slide the parchment onto a board and cut the leather, parchment and all, into 6 strips with a pizza cutter or scissors.

8. Roll each strip in its parchment. Pack in an airtight container or bag.