Food Drying
Drying removes water and reduces bacterial and enzyme activity in fruits and vegetables.
The Basics

- Dry at peak flavor
- Prepare to stop enzymes and kill bacteria
- Use warm, moving, dry air
- Package in tightly sealed containers, store in cool, dry place for up to a year
Why Dry Food?

- Make food last
- Keep food safe
- Provide nutrition during the winter
- Can be sold
- Can be done cheaply at home
- Low loss of vitamins compared to heating
Post-Harvest Handling

1. Sort by ripeness immediately after harvesting
2. Wash using clean water and drain
3. Pack and store
   – Use appropriate containers
   – Control temperature and humidity
Pre-treatment

- Washing with clean water
- Blanching
- Sulphuring/sulphiting
Pre-treatment: Washing

- Removes dirt, bacteria
- Wash with clean, chlorinated water
- Change water frequently
Pre-treatment: Blanching

- Inactivates enzymes, kills bacteria
- Place cut vegetables in boiling water or steam for at least 5 minutes
- Best for carrots, beans, and peas
- Not good for tomatoes, onions, peppers
Pre-treatment: Sulphuring

- Not best for home drying
- Chemicals may cause breathing, skin problems
Types of Drying

• Solar
  - Must create shade, as direct sun reduces vitamins A and C, darkens green vegetables, and fades red and orange fruits and vegetables

• Food dehydrator

• Oven
Rate of Drying

- Temperature
- Humidity
- Speed of air flow
- Type of fruit or vegetable
- Size of pieces
Drying is Product-Specific

- Check recipe for specific fruit or vegetable
- Cut into small pieces
- Check for dryness
- Determine ideal conditioning and packaging
Rehydration

• Food-specific, check recipe
• Add clean water and soak
• Determine ideal uses
  – Vegetables: soups, sauce, stews, etc.
  – Fruits: eat dried or reconstitute for any use