

## Salt Curing Class - Lesson Plan

### \*Please do your own due diligence\*

A. Overview. The objective of this class is to learn the quickest and simplest ways that salt can be used to convert raw meat into a shelf-stable condition quickly in case of the loss of power needed for freezers and refrigerators.

B. Review steps I through V that'll be discussed.

C. Summarize what you have covered.

I. Notes on Salt - a little background. During my early searches into salt curing meat to a 'shelf-stable' state, I researched: the use of salt used over the centuries; which salt *not* to use; and a couple ways to "clean" salt to removes not-salt minerals.

Salt is obtained primarily from either sea water through evaporation, or through salt mining ancient deposits created by dried up seas. My information for the class comes from the internet, and from an number of very good books on the subject.

Non-iodized salt is a must - never use iodized salt for curing. The closest you can get to 100% pure sodium chloride, the better. I would avoid buying salts with fancy names, and high prices. Buy the lower cost "food grade" sodium chloride you can find.

Salt can be obtained in 25 lb and 50 lb bags in bulk at about \$2.00 per pound - if you're lucky. Many vendors charge much higher prices than that for bulk salt; shipping cost can be prohibitive. I found 25 lb bags of non-iodized salt on Amazon with free shipping; that's the best. Azure Standards offers 25 lb bags for around \$35.00, with pick-up at the store with advance orders. I's between Pendleton and Hood River. One more source on Page 9.

Live stock salt, rock salt, water softening salt, are not recommended for human consumption. The main issue seems to be in the processing methods mandated for use in foods. These types might have "dirt" or other materials in the mix. Extra processing to reduce non-salt materials can be costly.

Farm stores sell "livestock grade" salt in 25 and 50 lb bags, but most are not recommended for human consumption. I bought a 25 lb bag locally of white non-iodized salt that stated "100 % sodium chloride". I'm still debating on whether to use in for curing. Also bought a 50 lb bag of Redmond live stock grade salt. I plan to discuss with Redmond how they process this vs the small spendy containers sold in stores. If its a matter of filtering out small grit and rocks, I'll find that out & pass it along.

Himalayan salt actually comes from Pakistan, is mined using heavy equipment, un-specified production methods, and comes from a foreign country. I would opt for Redmond for these reasons alone.

Much “food grade” salt is produced from sea water evaporation. Primitive societies used this method all over the world for many centuries. Not quite sure how they “purified” it, but apparently the methods served them well enough.

Several videos are included on evaporation salt; sifting out particles from salt; and a comparison of several different sources of salt. Review them and make your own decision on the type and source of the salt you decide to use. Salt naturally creates an environment where pathogens can't survive, so any foreign materials probably will not be “biological”. Keep in mind that for the vast majority of time that salt has been used for curing meats, the methods and standards for processing were pretty simple prior to the industrial revolution.

\* Do not use “tap water” to make brines & clean salt unless you have a good filter. Use either distilled water, filtered water, or spring water. A free source for spring water is noted on Page 9.

## II. The Curing & Drying Process (this class is dry cure only).

The purpose of the initial cure is to create an environment where pathogens cannot survive. The salt will permeate the outer surfaces of the meat, and prevent pathogens from entering during the drying phase. Use a minimum of 2.5% of the weight of the meat being cured to coat it during the initial cure. IE: if the meat is 5 lbs, (80 oz), use 2 oz of salt to coat the meat (pretty sure my math is correct ;-). Refer to the vids & references..

Coat the meat completely with salt, top, bottom, sides, ends. Place in a non-reactive container (stainless, glass, crockery, etc.) in the fridge for 3-5 days minimum. Drain the liquid drawn from the meat in the container daily. Turn the meat daily and re-coat as needed; use the initial measure of salt - do not add more salt.

After the initial curing period, remove the meat from the vessel and wash off the salt with clean water. Pat dry, and prepare the meat for drying by using butcher string, or stainless steel metal hooks. The drying process can take place outside the fridge where the temp is generally between 38 and 60 degrees. Avoid sun exposure - drying too fast might leave too much moisture inside the meat. Garages, mud rooms, root cellars work well. Circulated air regularly. Opening and closing doors is sufficient. Keep the curing meat dry at all times - no rain exposure. The fridge will work if the room or outside temps are above 60 degrees.

**Before hanging to dry, weight the meat and record it for each piece that will be hanging to dry - make a label and attach it to each piece.** Drying time varies with size and conditions; could take several weeks to complete, longer for larger sizes. **When the weight has been reduced to 35% of the starting weight, it is shelf stable.** 30% reduction is safe for “tasking”. When it reaches 35%, it is safe to eat ‘raw’, and shelf-stable for storage.

Mold might occur depending on drying conditions. **White and yellow mold are good for the curing process, and for protection against molds other pathogens. Black and green mold are toxic.** Both types can be killed by spritzing it with vinegar. Some sources advise discarding if black or green mold occur. Use your own judgement; do your own research. If seen advice both ways.

Commercially produced “good mold” preparations are available to use if you choose. Check the internet for sources.

### III. Bonus Section - Storing Meat in Lard

As I did my research, I found that regular lard is “shelf stable”, and has been used for eons to store all types of cooked meat” at room temperature. As long as the meat is kept totally submerged in the lard, it will keep almost indefinitely! See vids below on the subject. Merri’s Father told her of days when her late Grandmother used this method.

#### 1. Lard storage - jars:



#### 2. Lard storage - Crock:



### IV. References

#### a. Books - three great books to add to your reference library:

1. **Salted and Cured** - Not the best DIY book, but possibly the best read on the history of salt in meat preservation.

2. **The Joy of Smoking and Salt Curing** - Monte Burch. Great source of much detailed and very useful information.

3. **Salt Curing and Smoking Cookbook** - Julie Stonewall. Great book for detailed instructions and lots of recipes. Freebie on Kindle Unlimited.

b. Videos:

1. Salt Vids

a. Redmond Salt - Sifting.



b. Cleaning-evaporating - Sea salt.



c. Which salt is best vid.



## 2. Some Salt Sources:

a. Amazon. 25 lb bag, free shipping  
<https://www.amazon.com/dp/B007SNJ98G?ascsubtag=1731395157425-16-1731395157425&linkCode=osi&psc=1&th=1&SubscriptionId=AKIAINII3XBB4YWNS5LQ&tag=comparaboo1-20>

b. Azure Standards. Local pickup with pre-order. <https://www.azurestandard.com/shop/product/food/baking-pantry/salt/sea/sea-salt/10607?package=BP067>

**c. The Chef's Store, 820 Port Drive, Clarkston carries 25 & 50 pound bags of non-iodized salt.**

## 3. Curing vids.

### **a. HV (The Polska Guy) Salt Curing Pork**

#### 1. Salt Pork Curing



#### 2. Salt Pork - Bigger Pieces



#### 3. Salt Curing Q & A



4. HV Homepage: <https://www.youtube.com/hashtag/homeverthomesteader> . All of his vids; very informative step - by - step info.

**b. Salt Curing Prosciutto - Hams & larger blocks of meats**

1. Guide to drying:



2. Salt Curing Meat



3. Drying Guide - very good technical information



4. American Homestead - Venison



5. Deer Prosciutto - Part 1



6. Deer Prosciutto Part 2



7. Venison Prosciutto - American Homestead



**c. Salt curing Chicken & Ducks**

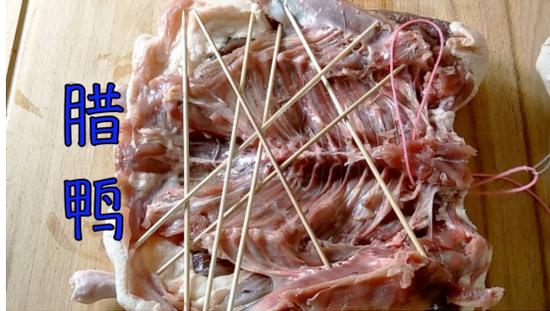
1. Chicken.



2. Ducks - a



### 3. Ducks - b



### c. Articles

#### 1. Venison Prosciutto:

<https://thebigfatmushroomhunter.wordpress.com/2014/09/19/venison-prosciutto/>

#### 2. Deer Prosciutto: <https://www.instructables.com/Deer-Prosciutto/>

#### 3. Venison Prosciutto:

<https://elevatedwild.com/elevatedwildblog/venison-prosciutto-recipe>

#### 4. Beef Bresaola: <https://wurstcircle.com/recipes/bresaola/>

5. Beef Prosciutto: <https://www.emerils.com/122841/beef-prosciutto-dry-cured>

### V. Water

1. If you have a personal or community 'septic system' vs a 'municipal sewer service', **DO NOT rinse excess salt off any meats in your sink if the waste water will go into the septic tank.** Salt will kill helpful bacteria needed in the septic tank to digest waste. In that case, rinse the excess salt in a separate container and dispose of that water elsewhere.

2. Tap water - **Do not use tap water from a municipal water source in any part of the salt curing process if you suspect it have fluoridation in the water.** Florida will compromise taste and color. If you have a municipal water source, **use only distilled water, spring water, of well water.**

3. The Glenwood Road spring is located 1.8 miles up Glenwood Rd from the transfer station at Woodland and Glenwood Rd. It's located on the left side - there's usually a 5 Gal bucket sitting below the pipe. Here are a couple pics;



2

Pic 1



Pic

Pic 3



**Thank you all very much for your enthusiastic participation. You all helped make this a great class!**

\*This class can be repeated for the who missed. All I'll need is a time & place that fits my schedule.

\*\*Working on another segment for salt curing fish - stay tuned.

Best regards, IdahoJoe

Misc - discussion, Q&A

**\*Please do your own due diligence\***