

### HOME DRYING.

Home vegetable and fruit drying have been little practised for a generation or more, but during the past few years, with the high price of glass, tin, rubber, and fuel, many have found this method of preservation desirable. In the fruit districts of British Columbia, prunes, apricots, cherries, plums, peaches, and corn have been home-dried with splendid success.

The method is simple and practically all vegetables and fruits may be dried. The cost is slight, for in every home the necessary outfit in its simplest form is already at hand. Effective drying may be done on plates or dishes placed in the oven with the oven door partially open. It may be done on the back of the kitchen stove, with these same utensils, while the oven is being used for baking. It may also be done on sheets of paper or lengths of muslin spread in the sun and protected from insects and dust. A sheet of tin laid over a dripping-pan containing a small amount of hot water makes a good substitute for a certain type of commercial drier. The pan of water is kept over a slow heat sufficient to keep the water hot.

Barrel-hoops or frames made of laths may be covered with galvanized-iron netting or with cheese-cloth and suspended above the stove by a rope with a pulley arrangement, which makes it easy to adjust the trays at the proper height. Some housekeepers use window-screens on bricks as supports. Proper ventilation that allows for a free circulation of dry air is more important than heat in drying foods. For example, an electric fan placed before a dryer may accomplish excellent results without the aid of heat.

### DRYING FRUITS.

All fruits that are to be dried should be well ripened, but not overripe. Fruits that are dried with the skins on should be dipped quickly by the means of a wire basket or a piece of cheese-cloth into a boiling solution of lye made in proportion of  $\frac{1}{2}$  lb. concentrated lye to 8 gallons water. They should then be rinsed two or three times in clear water. The lye perforates the skin and thus facilitates evaporation. Moreover, it destroys micro-organisms that might cause spoilage.

Most fruits are improved by being dipped into a thin syrup before being dried. If the fruit is to be used in puddings, cakes, breads, breakfast cereals, or as a confection, it may be sprinkled with sugar before being dried; if it is to be cooked for sauce, little or no sugar should be added.