

DRYING BY ARTIFICIAL HEAT.—Products may be dried in the oven, on the top of the stove, in trays suspended over the top of the range, or in a commercial or home-made drier. In this way the heat of the stove or the oven is utilised.

In using artificial heat the drying should be started at a comparatively low temperature and gradually increased; for this reason it is necessary to use a thermometer. The temperature at which most vegetables should begin drying is from 110° to 120° Fahrenheit. The temperature may be gradually increased to 145° or 150° Fahrenheit. When the temperature is too high at first, the surface of the vegetable becomes hard, while the inside is still juicy.

DRYING BY AIR-BLAST.—This method is perhaps the quickest and cheapest. It consists of allowing a current of air to pass over the product, using an electric fan, either with or without artificial heat.

The disadvantage of this method is that it is very difficult to regulate the drying process and the material is apt to dry out too quickly, a hard crust forming on the outside and thus preventing the moisture in the centre from escaping.

The Condition of Products when Sufficiently Dried.—The product should be leathery and pliable; not so dry that it will snap when broken. When the pieces are cut or broken open the cut ends should not show any moisture when pressed between the fingers. If the products become hard when dried they will not resume their original shape when soaked.

After the products are sufficiently dried it is important that they be "conditioned." This means that they must be placed in containers, preferably boxes, and poured from one box to another at least once a day for three or four days to mix thoroughly. If any part of the product is found not to be sufficiently dried it can be returned to the drier for a short time.

Proper Storage for Dried Products.—Proper storage is absolutely essential. In the present high price of glass jars it is recommended that other containers be used for the storage of dried products. Cans, such as baking powder cans, coffee cans, etc., with tight fitting covers, also strong paper bags and paraffin lined paper boxes may be used successfully.

If a paper bag is used the top should be twisted, doubled over and tied with a string. If the bag is coated with melted paraffin wax the moisture will be kept out.

It is a good plan to use small containers so that it may not be necessary to leave the contents exposed after opening and before using.

The products should be stored in a cool, dry place, well ventilated and protected from rats, mice and insects.

Preparation of Dried Products for the Table.—The water which has evaporated must be restored. This is done by soaking for a long time, using three to four cups of water to one cup of dried material. Care must be taken that too much water is not used, as the object is to restore the amount which has evaporated. After soaking for several hours, and in some cases over-night, the dried products should be cooked in a covered utensil at a low temperature for a long time. They should be cooked in the water in which they were soaked. In serving dried products great care must be taken that they are well seasoned.

DIRECTIONS FOR DRYING.

BEANS.—Beans must be in perfect condition. Wash carefully and string. Blanch from 5 to 10 minutes, adding $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon soda to each gallon of boiling water; cold dip and remove surface moisture. Spread thinly on trays to dry. Dry slowly, increasing the temperature from 120° Fahrenheit to 145° Fahrenheit.