

Homemade Fruit Leather Recipe

for the oven or dehydrator • by Laurie Neverman • commonsensehome.com • January 5, 2023

We love this homemade fruit leather (fruit rolls) recipe. It's easy to make, uses a simple tip that saves money and gives more reliable results. I'll also share some things to avoid and which fruits work best.

The “secret” to great fruit leather is pectin. Some fruits are naturally high in pectin, while others don't have much. By combining applesauce with another fruit, you get the signature “leather” texture instead of brittle fruit jerky. Adding applesauce also mellows out the flavors and adds sweetness to tart fruits. (Drying tart fruit intensifies the tartness.) Fruits like raspberries and blueberries are usually more expensive than apples, so adding applesauce saves money. The finished fruit leather still tastes like berries. You can also save money by using fruit that would otherwise go to waste. I hate it when I stock up on something, only to have the family stop eating it. This is a great way to turn those overripe pears or bananas into a whole new snack. Waste not, want not.

To make an 11×17” baking sheet of fruit leather or two Excalibur dehydrator trays, combine:

- 2 cups applesauce
- 2 cups fresh fruit puree (about one pound of fruit)
- optional: lemon juice, spices, sweetener

Homemade applesauce works best. If you don't have any applesauce on hand, just core and chop a pound of apples and puree them. Add the fruit mixture (applesauce and favorite fruit) to a medium stock pot. Simmer the fruit over low heat to thicken, stirring occasionally. If you'd like to add sweetener or spices (like pumpkin pie spice), this is the time to do it. Cooking the fruit activates the gelling characteristics of the pectin. Acid helps to activate the pectin, too, so adding lemon juice is helpful for low acid fruits. Once the puree thickens, remove from heat and cool completely. Now you're ready for drying the fruit leather recipe.



This homemade fruit leather recipe was made with Ruby Red McIntosh apples, which have a beautiful deep red color.

Oven Drying

Line your baking sheet with parchment paper or a silicone mat. Spread the cooked puree into a thin, even layer. Place the fruit filled baking sheet in a low temperature oven. Around 140°F (60°C) is great if you can set the oven that low. If your oven is hotter, you'll need to reduce drying time. Bake at 140°F (60°C) until barely tacky, about 8-9 hours.

Dehydrator Drying

To make it easier to get your finished fruit leather off, oil the fruit roll sheets lightly. Use an oil without a strong flavor, such as refined coconut oil. Spread the room temperature puree evenly over the sheet in a ¼-inch thick layer.

