



Mango Leather

- 4 cups mango purée (from about 4 large, unripe mangoes)
- 1 cup clover honey
- ½ teaspoon ground cinnamon
- ¼ teaspoon ground nutmeg
- ¼ teaspoon ground cloves

Yield: about 2 dryer trays (14 inches in diameter); 8 fruit rolls.

Procedure:

1. Preheat electric dehydrator to 140°F. (If not using electric dehydrator, see "Notes" below.)
2. Wash and peel mangoes, chop roughly into chunks. Purée in blender until smooth. Pass purée through a food mill or sieve; discard any coarse fiber extracted in food mill. Add honey and spices to the purée and mix thoroughly.
3. Lightly spray two fruit roll tray liners from an electric dehydrator with vegetable oil cooking spray. Spread mango mixture evenly to ¼-inch thickness on the trays.
4. Position fruit roll liners on dryer trays and place in dehydrator. Dry continuously for about 10 hours. *Maintain dehydrator air temperature steadily at 140°F.* (Monitor the dehydrator air temperature periodically with a thermometer.) Remove trays from dehydrator when purée is dry, with no sticky areas (about 10 hours – this will be highly dependent on the relative humidity of the drying room). Test for dryness by touching gently in several places near center of leather; no indentation should be evident.
5. Peel leather from trays while still warm. Leave the second tray on the dehydrator while you peel the first leather, or re-warm leathers slightly in the dehydrator if they cool too much prior to peeling. Cut into quarters, lay on a piece of clean plastic food storage wrap about 1 to 2 inches longer at each end of the leather and roll together into fruit leather rolls. When cool, twist the ends of the plastic wrap tightly to close.
6. Store fruit rolls in freezer-quality zippered plastic bags or airtight plastic container for short-term storage, up to about 1 month. Leathers should be stored in a cool, dark, dry place. For longer storage up to 1 year, place tightly wrapped rolls in the freezer.

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Notes:

If not using an electric dehydrator

Electric dehydrators produce the most reliable results. If you want to use an oven instead, follow the methods below. Your oven should be able to maintain a temperature as low as 140 to 145°F.

Use cookie sheets with edges (13" X 15" or 12" X 17" pans work well). Line with plastic wrap, being careful to smooth out the wrinkles, or spray with vegetable oil cooking spray. Do not use waxed paper or aluminum foil.

Fruit leathers can be poured into a single large sheet or into several smaller sizes along the cookie sheet. Avoid pouring purée too close to the edge of the cookie sheet. Set oven at the lowest setting, which should be 140 to 145°F. If your oven does not a setting this low, it may not be suitable for home drying of foods. Place the cookie sheets with purée on oven racks. Leave the oven door open about 2 to 6 inches. Check oven temperature periodically with a thermometer to keep the air temperature at about 140°F. If the temperature gets too high, the oven may have to be temporarily turned off, and then turned on again.

Drying time will be longer for the large leather than smaller ones. Drying time may also be longer in a regular oven than in an electric dehydrator, depending on temperature control during drying. For a large leather, begin checking your leather at 8 to 10 hours, however.

Variations

Reduced sugars

If you prefer less sweetness, the honey may be omitted for an unsweetened mango leather.

Color control

If you would prefer a lighter color to your leather, add 1/4 teaspoon (750 milligrams) of ascorbic acid to the mango purée (sweetened or unsweetened versions) with the spices.

For more information on making fruit leathers, read:

"Food Dehydrators" at <http://www.uga.edu/nchfp/how/dry/dehydrator.html>

"Packaging and Storing Dried Foods" at http://www.uga.edu/nchfp/how/dry/pack_store.html

"Fruit Leathers" at http://www.uga.edu/nchfp/how/dry/fruit_leathers.html