



Herbs & Spices

THE PEOPLE'S GARDEN



Harvesting

THE BEST TIME TO HARVEST HERBS FOR DRYING IS JUST BEFORE THE FLOWERS FIRST OPEN (THE BURSTING BUD STAGE). USE SCISSORS TO CUT THE STEMS JUST ABOVE A LEAF OR PAIR OF LEAVES. LEAVE 4 TO 6 INCHES OF STEM FOR LATER GROWTH.



Preparing

RINSE THE STEMS IN COOL WATER AND GENTLY SHAKE TO REMOVE EXCESS MOISTURE. THEN GENTLY PAT DRY WITH A PAPER TOWEL. REMOVE AS MUCH MOISTURE AS POSSIBLE.



Testing for Dryness

HERBS ARE SUFFICIENTLY DRY WHEN LEAVES
ARE CRISPY AND CRUMBLE EASILY BETWEEN
THE FINGERS.



Storage

AVOID EXPOSING TO AIR, HEAT, AND LIGHT.
AIRTIGHT AND VAPORPROOF CONTAINERS
WILL PREVENT HERBS FROM ABSORBING
MOISTURE FROM THE AIR. MOST DRIED
HERBS KEEP WELL FOR UP TO A YEAR.



Substituting

USE THESE AMOUNTS AS GUIDELINES FOR
SUBSTITUTING ONE FORM OF AN HERB FOR
ANOTHER:

1 TABLESPOON FRESH HERB

1 TEASPOON DRIED HERB

$\frac{1}{4}$ TEASPOON POWDERED HERB



Air Drying

HUMIDITY MUST BE LOW AND GOOD AIR CIRCULATION MUST BE AVAILABLE. STEMS OF HERBS SUCH AS MINT, SAGE, OR THYME CAN BE TIED IN A SMALL CLUSTER AND HUNG IN A DRY AREA WITH GOOD AIR CIRCULATION.



Sun Drying

THE HERBS CAN BE PLACED ON A LAYER OF PAPER TOWELS ON A TRAY TO DRY. IT WILL USUALLY TAKE 5-10 DAYS TO AIR-DRY. THIS WORKS WELL FOR DRYING LEAVES SUCH AS BAY, MINT AND SAGE LEAVES.



Microwave

PARSLEY, BASIL, AND CELERY LEAVES DRY WELL IN SOME MICROWAVE OVENS. ARRANGE WASHED AND DRIED HERBS ONE LAYER THICK BETWEEN MICROWAVE-SAFE PAPER TOWELS. MICROWAVE ON HIGH FOR 2 TO 3 MINUTES PER CUP. START WITH ONE MINUTE, MIX AFTER EVERY 30 SECONDS, AND CONTINUE CHECKING FOR DRYNESS. REMOVE FROM OVEN; COOL.



Oven

TO OVEN DRY, SET THE OVEN AT THE LOWEST TEMPERATURE (NOT ABOVE 180°F) FOR 3 TO 4 HOURS WITH THE OVEN DOOR OPEN. THE OVEN LIGHT IN SOME OVENS MAY PROVIDE ENOUGH HEAT TO DRY HERBS



Dehydrator

THE TEMPERATURE CAN BE SET BETWEEN 95 AND 110°F. PLACE STEMS ON DRYING TRAYS SO THEY DO NOT TOUCH. LARGER LEAVES CAN BE DRIED SEPARATELY. DRY 1-3 HOURS OR UNTIL THE HERBS ARE DRY AND CRUMBLE EASILY.



Uses

1. TEAS – SOAK DRIED HERBS IN HOT WATER
2. BATH SOAK – MIX DRIED HERBS WITH AN EPSOM SALT AND POUR INTO YOUR BATH
3. DRYER SHEETS – PLACE DRIED HERBS BETWEEN TWO PIECES OF FABRIC AND SEW THEM TOGETHER