

Curing with Salt

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Why Cure with Salt?

- **Preservation:** Prevents spoilage by dehydrating food and killing harmful bacteria [1](#).
 - **Flavor:** Concentrates taste (e.g., cured meats) [2](#).
 - **Texture:** Breaks down proteins, tenderizing meats [3](#).
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1. What is Salt Curing?

Salt curing uses salt ($\pm$ sugar/nitrates) to draw moisture from food, inhibiting bacterial growth through **osmosis** and creating an inhospitable environment for pathogens like *Clostridium botulinum* [4](#).

Key Uses:

- **Meats:** Bacon, prosciutto [5](#).
- **Fish:** Salted cod [6](#).
- **Vegetables:** Sauerkraut [7](#).
- **Other:** Preserved lemons [8](#).

2. UGA-Approved Methods

A. Dry Curing (Meats)

- Use **plain salt** or **USDA-approved mixes**
- Cure at **36-40°F (2-4°C)**
- Ratio: 1 oz salt per 3 lbs meat minimum [9](#).

B. Brine Curing

- Standard brine: **1 gal water + 1 cup salt + ½ cup sugar** [10](#).

C. Fermentation (Vegetables)

- Requires **2-3% salt by weight** [11](#).

3. Safety & Storage

- **Never use iodized salt** - causes discoloration [12](#).
- **Store dry-cured meats** at **<60°F** [13](#).
- **Discard if soft/smelly** [14](#).

6. Resources

- **USDA Curing Guide:** [15](#).