

## “Bushwhacker’s Buckboard Bacon” (25 lbs.) (Hickory Smoked Pork Butt)

“Buckboard Bacon” is made from pork butt (shoulder), rather than pork belly. Many people prefer its texture and thick-sliced portions. Note that a ham is normally pumped with 10% brining solution. Because of its composition, pork butt (shoulder) loses about 4% more solution than ham during its curing period. To compensate for the loss, pork butt is usually “stitched” with 15% solution. (e.g. pump 4 lbs. of pork with 6 ounces of brine). A typical brine for use with pork butt may be made up with the following ingredients:

- 5 quarts ice water @ 38°F.
- ¾ cup of salt
- 1 cup powdered dextrose
- 4 tblspns. Prague Powder #1
- 1 quart of ice cubes or chips
- “butcher’s grind” (coarse) black pepper

Stir the salt, dextrose, and cure, into the ice water. Add the quart of ice to bring the temperature down. Weigh the appropriate amount of brine on a scale and inject it into each shoulder. Make several injections on each side with short shots of solution. Place the butts into the remaining solution (with ice) in large zip lock type plastic bags or a deep lug. The liquid must cover the meat. Allow 4 lb. butts to cure for three days and larger butts up to six days. Following curing, rinse the butts and place them in fresh, cold water for a few hours. Finally, hang them up and pat them dry. Using plastic gloves, rub the meat with fresh, cracked, black pepper.

Preheat your smoker to 130°F. (54°C.) while you place the butts in cloth (not plastic) smoke-netting called “stockinettes”. Hang the butts in the smoker with the damper wide open, maintaining the smokehouse temperature for 3 to 3-1/2 hours without smoke. Increase the temperature to 170° F. (77° C.) and introduce hickory smoke while maintaining the smokehouse temperature until the internal meat temperature (IMT) reaches 140° F. (60° C.). Discontinue the heat and allow the meat to return to room temperature before placing it in a cooler overnight. This “prep cooking” IMT will ensure the destruction of any possible trichinella spiralis. The bacon will be “fully cooked” later as you cook it in your favorite black skillet or griddle.

Best Wishes,  
Chuckwagon