

## "Buffalo Bend Beef"

(Dried Beef Rounds)

(by Chuckwagon)

Don't confuse dried beef with dried beef jerky. Dried beef is a large, fat-free, injection pumped, brine-cured, smoked, fully cooked, beef round, containing only fifty percent of its original moisture. It's sliced paper-thin and is used for all sorts of recipes and great sandwiches.

Use beef "rounds" and trim away any excess fat. The beef and brine should be kept near 38 degrees Fahrenheit as possible and the curing solution should not exceed eight percent of the round's weight. If the brine is much below 38°F., the meat will not pick up the cure readily. If it is much above 38° F., the meat may begin to spoil. Following injection pumping, allow the rounds to soak in leftover brine for ten days at this temperature for proper curing. Finally, remove the meat and soak it in fresh ice water eight hours, changing the water every few hours.

Remove the rounds and allow them to drain and dry, packing them tightly into a cloth stockinette bag. Hang the stockinette in a pre-heated smokehouse for twelve hours at 100 degrees F. with the draft wide open. Raise the temperature to 125 degrees for another twelve hours with thin hickory smoke being introduced. Reduce the heat to 115 degrees and terminate the smoke. Allow the meat to shrink up to forty percent of its weight (not size) at this point, ideally in an atmosphere of 75% humidity at about 55°F. When the moisture drops below 85 Aw it will be safe to consume. Use a very sharp knife and slice it paper-thin as you use it.

### 1. Making A Brining Solution

How much salinity is recommended? A favorite 40° SAL brine in many recipes is made by adding a pound of salt to one gallon of water (see brining chart). Thus the formula for ten pounds of beef rounds in ½ gallon of liquid requires ½ pound of salt.

How much brine should you make? Again, "The amount of brine should equal about forty or fifty percent of the weight of the meat being cured". You don't need a barrel-full of brine to cure one chicken. Simply use enough brine to equal one and a half times the chicken's weight.

How strong does it have to be? The FSIS limits the in-going nitrite limit in immersion, pumped, or massaged products to 200 parts per million. This is achieved when 120 grams (4.2 ounces) of Cure #1 is added to one gallon of water. One gallon of brine (according to the ol' timers adage) will accommodate 20 pounds of meat. This means that ½ gallon of brine will be sufficient for 10 pounds of beef round.

Here's the arithmetic:

One gallon of brine cure (with 120 grams of Cure #1) is enough liquid to treat 20 pounds of meat. So, if you are brining 10 lbs. of meat, you need to only use about half a gallon of brine.

$0.40 \times 10 = 4$  lbs of water (1/2 gallon)

[1 gallon weighs 8.33 lbs.]

Therefore, one half gallon of brine will sufficiently brine 10 lbs. of meat in the proper container.

## 2. Making A Curing Solution

### Recipe #1 "Buffalo Bend Beef Curing Solution"

(Curing-Brine For 10 lbs. Beef Rounds)

- 4.17 lbs of water (1/2 gallon)
- 60 grams (2.1 ounces) Cure #1
- 227 grams (8 oz. or ½ lb.) salt
- 90 grams (3.2 oz.) sugar

### ***Making Larger Amounts Of Dried Beef:***

On our ranch, we made a lot of dried beef and we did so in huge batches because tucked far back in the mountains, we couldn't run to a grocery store for a couple of pounds of meat. We butchered an entire steer and much of it was preserved as dried beef, sausages, etc. for use later on. Consequently we made 5 gallons of brining cure at a time.

### Recipe #2 "Buffalo Bend Beef Curing Solution"

(Pickling Brine For Making 100 lbs. Of Dried Beef)

- 5 gallons water @ 38 degrees F.
- 595 grams (1.3 pounds or 21 ounces) Cure #1
- 2.27 kilograms (5 lbs. or 80 ounces) un-iodized salt
- 1 pound sugar

**Notes:** While injecting the brine, remove the perforated needle slowly. Don't use too much heat in the smokehouse or a hardened pellicle will form, not allowing moisture to escape. You must not hurry the process using more heat. Dried beef shrinks up to 40% yet retains 50% of its moisture. Keep it refrigerated.

Best Wishes,  
Chuckwagon