

Robber's Roost Rawhide

Black Pepper Semi-Dry Cured Meat Stick

I've put together a snack stick over a period of time, that closely imitates Polish kabanosy but is more chewy in texture and is flavored with salt, garlic, and black pepper only. It's made of pork and is an emulsified sausage, containing more than the average amount of coarsely-ground fresh black pepper to give it a snappy bite. To keep the texture lubricated, it contains about 25% fat.

The primary bind is cased in 19 m.m. collagen casings in a rope coil. Don't bother to tie the ends off; just snip the stuff into one-foot lengths with a pair of scissors after it sets up in the casing about twenty minutes. Next, they go onto sausage racks for the smoker where they are smoke-cooked about twenty minutes at 225° F., until they reach 150° F. IMT. When they have returned to room temperature, they go into the dry-cooler for three days of drying.

I like the stuff more than jerky and can't even think anymore without a "chaw" in my mouth! Here's the recipe:

- 9-1/2 lbs. pork butt
- ½ lb. pork backfat
- 4-1/2 tbsps. kosher salt
- 2 tspns. cure #1 (U.S.strength)
- 1 tbspn. sugar
- 2 tbsps. granulated garlic
- 2 tbsps. coarse black pepper

Cut the meat into cubes, 2 inch or less, removing as much fat as possible. Freeze the fat then mix the meat with all the remaining ingredients. Pack the mixture tightly into a container to eliminate air and cover the meat with a clean cloth. Place it in a cooler at 3-6° C. (38-42° F) for 72 hours.

Grind the meat using a 3/8" plate, then refrigerate it for half an hour while you grind the frozen fat using a 1/8" plate. After placing the fat back into the freezer twenty minutes, mix it with the ground pork. Place 2 pound batches of the mixture into a food processor and emulsify the meat using just enough water to lubricate the mixture and keep the motor from loading up. (Beginners: don't use too much water in the mixture as the collagen casings will fail).

Be careful not to overly develop the actomyocin at this point by allowing too much time in the processor. It is not necessary to blend the mixture further to develop the actin and myosin proteins. Stuff the emulsified meat into 19 mm collagen casing, making a continuous coil.

After cleaning your equipment, snip the sausage into 12" lengths and place them on a smoking rack. Smoke-cook the "snack-stix" at just over 200° F. until the IMT reaches 150°. Careful now... it only takes about 20 minutes.

Finally, dry the sticks 3 days at 75 % humidity at cooler temperatures. Around 50° F. is ideal although they may be refrigerated conveniently at 38° if preferred. Keep your immediate stash in a paper lunch bag and vacuum package the rest. If mold develops on your "cache", simply wipe it off. The yield is about 55% (a moisture loss of 45% by weight). I hope you enjoy this stuff as much as I do.

Best Wishes,
Chuckwagon