

FOR RELEASE September 4, 2012

CONTACT: Carole M. Cancler, 206-999-7292, Carole@CaroleCancler.com

New book about preserving food explains 8 essential methods you can do at home

Seattle, WA – August 15, 2012 – A new book about preserving food is a practical guide that details the techniques for eight essential methods that have been used throughout history by people around the world. With over 300 recipes, it is one of the most comprehensive books about food preservation among popular canning and preserving books of today. Canning, freezing, and drying foods are perhaps the most common modern ways to “put foods by”. However, other methods may be easier and less expensive to do.

The Home Preserving Bible, (\$21.00 Alpha Books) is available nationwide beginning September 4, 2012 from booksellers and canning supply retailers. Author Carole Cancler brought together her education in food science, a love of food history, a lifetime of meal preparation and home entertaining, experience in the food industry, and an interest in sustainability, to write this comprehensive book about food preservation with a broad historical context.

For each preserving method, *The Home Preserving Bible* provides the latest information on procedures, equipment, and safety issues, giving the reader a range of preservation options, whether she likes the do-it-yourself approach or is interested in the latest in modern technology. Here are the eight essential methods anyone can try at home:

- **Canning** in a boiling water bath (high-acid foods) or pressure canner (for low-acid foods)
- **Freezing** foods, including packaging, preparation, and freezer management
- **Drying** foods by any of six different methods
- **Fermenting** foods from cider and vinegar to bread, yogurt, vegetables, and more
- **Pickling** foods using acid, salt, or alcohol, as they do in countries around the world
- **Curing** meats and fish from beef to bacon, poultry and salmon
- **Sealing** foods in fat, as well as several other traditional and modern methods
- **Cellaring** foods to extend the fresh shelf life without refrigeration

Each recipe was carefully chosen to demonstrate one or more of these essential techniques. Many of the 300 recipes are simple to prepare. In some cases, they feature common, everyday foods in uncommon and tasty recipes from cultures around the world. Consider treats like salty Hawaiian dried fruit (known as *crack seed*), Thai-style beef jerky, Haitian “pikliz” salad, and Mexican barbecue sauce. There are also plenty of delicious recipes for preserving everyday foods such as yeasted breads, yogurt and fresh cheese, pickles of all kinds, sauerkraut and other salted foods, tomato products, jam and jellies, sauces and relishes, cider and wine, cured bacon, duck prosciutto, smoked salmon, and more. In the canning section, the recipes are scaled for small, medium, and large batches.

“People around the world have been preserving food for centuries because they had to; unlike today, they lacked a year-round supply of fresh food and mechanical refrigeration. The diversity and cleverness of the methods they used is astonishing. A few of the techniques might surprise

you.” says author Carole Cancler. “I want people to learn some of the history and practice food preservation—even if it’s just one method and one food.”

The author, Carole Cancler holds a degree in Food Science and Nutrition from the University of Washington. In addition to her experience as a professional in the food industry, Chef Carole has decades of practice in home canning and preserving. Currently, she focuses on consulting and writing for the food and technology industries. In her spare time, she teaches cooking and preserving classes, and volunteers at local farmers markets in Seattle.

Alpha Books introduced the successful Complete Idiot's Guide® series, which quickly expanded into other categories. Within its mission of "knowledge for life," Alpha brings other original non-fiction and how-to titles to adults who seek to learn new skills or enrich their lives. Alpha joined Penguin Group (USA) in 2003.

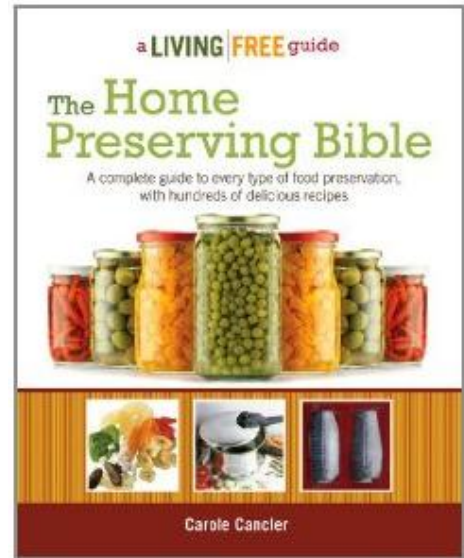
The Home Preserving Bible by Carole Cancler, New York: Alpha Books, 2012, Paperback, 464 pages, ISBN-13: 978-1615641925 is available nationwide beginning September 4, 21012 from booksellers and canning supply retailers with a suggested retail price of \$21.

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Fact Sheet

The Home Preserving Bible is a practical guide that describes the techniques for eight essential methods for preserving foods and provides over 300 recipes. It is the most comprehensive book about food preservation among popular canning and preserving books of today. Many people preserve foods because they want good tasting and safe foods. Still others like the economic benefit of buying produce in season, when it is cheap and abundant, and then “putting by” some of this locally grown food for use throughout the year. These days, canning, freezing, and drying foods are the most common methods for preserving foods at home. However, other methods may be easier and less expensive to do.



Part 1 describes the techniques for canning, freezing, drying, fermenting, pickling, curing, sealing, and cellaring all types of foods. For each method, *The Home Preserving Bible* provides the latest information on procedures, equipment, and safety issues, giving the reader a range of preservation options, whether she likes the do-it-yourself approach or is interested in the latest in modern technology.

Part 2 features over 300 recipes, including many that are simple to prepare. In some cases, they feature common, everyday foods in uncommon and tasty recipes from cultures around the world. There are treats like salty Hawaiian dried fruit (known as *crack seed*), Thai-style beef jerky, Haitian “pikliz” salad, and Mexican barbecue sauce. There are also plenty of delicious recipes for preserving everyday foods such as yeasted breads, yogurt and fresh cheese, pickles of all kinds, sauerkraut and other salted foods, tomato products, jam and jellies, sauces and relishes, cider and wine, cured bacon, duck prosciutto, smoked salmon, and more. In the canning section, the recipes are scaled for small, medium, and large batches. Each recipe was carefully chosen to demonstrate one or more of the essential techniques in Part 1.

The author, Carole Cancler, is a chef and owned Private Chef Natural Gourmet in Seattle, Washington, for 14 years. Her company specialized in frozen gourmet meals. Carole holds a degree in Food Science and Nutrition from the University of Washington. Currently, she consults, writes about food, and teaches cooking classes—among them canning and preserving, where students learn firsthand the best ways to can, freeze, and dry seasonal fruits and vegetables. In addition to her experience as a professional in the food industry, Chef Carole has decades of practice in home canning and preserving.

The Home Preserving Bible by Carole Cancler, New York: Alpha Books, 2012 (paperback, 464 pages, ISBN-13: 978-1615641925) is available nationwide beginning September 4, 21012 from booksellers and canning supply retailers with a suggested retail price of \$21. Within its mission of "knowledge for life," Alpha Books brings original non-fiction and how-to titles to adults who seek to learn new skills or enrich their lives.

Chapter Summary – The Home Preserving Bible

The Home Preserving Bible by Carole Cancler, New York: Alpha Books, 2012, Paperback, 464 pages, ISBN-13: 978-1615641925 is available nationwide beginning September 4, 21012 from booksellers and canning supply retailers with a suggested retail price of \$21.

Part 1 – Essential Concepts

Part 1 explains the essential steps and available equipment for eight different methods of food preservation. Some methods have many more than one technique or procedure, from the do-it-yourself approach to the latest modern gadget.

Chapter 1 - Overview of Food Preservation (10 pages)

The introductory chapter provides lessons about how food spoils, safe food-handling practices, and how to avoid food poisoning. The eight fundamental methods of food preservation are described briefly. The methods are: drying, fermenting, pickling, curing, sealing, canning, cellaring, and freezing. The remaining chapters in Part 1 describe each of these methods in detail. Most of the methods have more than one technique, often they range from the do-it-yourself approach to the use of modern tools and appliances.

Chapter 2 - Drying Foods (16 pages)

The drying chapter describes the technique for six different methods to dry foods of all kinds, and how to properly package and store dried foods to maximize storage life. The six drying methods include warm shade or air, sun, solar, conventional ovens (gas or electric), food dehydrators, and pit-ovens. A comparison chart helps the reader decide which method to use, based on climate and other conditions. In addition, pretreatments and handling for different types of foods are thoroughly discussed, including methods to prevent browning in fruits and vegetables, special techniques for fruits with thick skins, inactivating spoilage enzymes, inhibiting harmful bacteria, and considerations when drying meats.

Chapter 3 - Fermenting Foods (20 pages)

The fermenting methods chapter discusses four types of food fermentation, lists common foods for each type, and how to successfully control the fermentation process. The four types are: alcohol fermentation (used for cider, wine, beer, and breads), acetic fermentation (for vinegar), lactic fermentation (for dairy products, breads, and vegetables, including brined pickles and salted sauerkraut), and alkaline fermentation (for vanilla beans and other foods). In this chapter, vegetables are treated with low concentration of salt to allow natural fermentation to take place.

Chapter 4 - Pickling Foods (12 pages)

The pickling chapter discusses several methods for making non-fermented foods using acid, salt, or alcohol. Pickling can extend the shelf life of fresh food from a few days to several months, depending on the specific method used. The most common acids used in pickling are vinegar and lemon juice, however many other types of acids are effective pickling agents, including citrus juices, pomegranate

juice, tamarind liquid, verjuice (underripe grape juice), whey (drained from yogurt), soy sauce, and miso (a fermented soybean product). Contrary to salt-fermented foods in the previous chapter, which use a low salt concentration, salt-pickled foods use a very high amount of salt.

Chapter 5 - Curing Meat and Fish (20 pages)

The curing chapter provides an overview of meat and fish curing methods used the world over. The methods include drying with acid or salt, using modern cures that contain quick-curing sodium nitrites, and slow-curing sodium nitrates. Cures may be applied wet or dry. A brief discussion of supplemental curing techniques describes aging (a drying technique), fermenting, and smoking which are used to extend the shelf life and/or enhance the flavor of cured meats and fish.

Chapter 6 - Sealing Foods (8 pages)

The sealing methods chapter discusses primarily the age-old method of fat sealing and the modern technique of vacuum sealing. However, there is also a brief discussion on other techniques, including wax, paraffin, and pastry sealing, as well as preserving foods by immersing in oil or burying it in the ground.

Chapter 7 - Canning Foods (44 pages)

The largest chapter, canning includes a complete tutorial on processing food in specially designed jars. Every aspect of the canning process is detailed and includes safety measures, planning a project, equipment, ingredients, choosing tested recipes, and when to use the boiling water bath (BWB) canning process versus pressure canning. Step-by-step instructions for each of these processes are included.

Chapter 8 - Cellaring Foods (14 pages)

The cellaring methods chapter discusses climate-controlled storage of food in cold, humid conditions without the use of a refrigerator. The techniques include traditional farmhouse root cellars, solving the problems of modern basement cold rooms, makeshift cellars and buried containers, foods suited for the dry pantry, and techniques for the gardener such as mulching, trenches, pits, cold frames, and hotbeds.

Chapter 9 - Freezing Foods (16 pages)

The freezing methods chapter includes a primer on preparing, packaging, and storing frozen food, with notes for special handling of fruits, vegetables, meats, and seafood. Included are guidelines for efficiently managing the use of frozen food, dealing with a power outage, and cleaning the appliance.

Part 2 - Recipes

Each recipe in Part 2 was chosen to demonstrate one or more of the methods and techniques that are explained in Part 1. Many of the recipes include one or more variations in order to showcase the variety of preserved foods used around the world.

Chapter 10 - Dried Foods (22 pages, 50 total recipes including variations)

The recipes for dried foods include dried fruits, vegetables, herbs, meats, fish, nuts, and seeds.

Chapter 11 - Fermented Foods (24 pages, 29 recipes)

The recipes for fermented foods include cider, wine, vinegar, yeast starters and flatbreads, fresh cheese, yogurt, cream cheese, and lacto-fermented vegetable pickles using salt, brine, and whey.

Chapter 12 - Pickled Foods (24 pages, 35 recipes)

The recipes for pickled foods include salted vegetables and eggs; vinegared vegetables, poultry, and fish; and foods pickled or macerated in other acids, including fruit juices, soy sauce, and alcohol.

Chapter 13 - Cured Meat and Fish (12 pages, 14 recipes)

The recipes for cured meat and fish include dry-cured and wet-cured meat, poultry, and seafood.

Chapter 14 - Sealed Foods (6 pages, 7 recipes)

The recipes for sealed foods focus on traditional methods for fat-sealing and include rillettes, confit, potted salmon, and pemmican—a native American food.

Chapter 15 - Canned Fruits (30 pages, 43 recipes)

The recipes for canned fruits include preserving methods for fruits, whether whole, halves, slices, purées, sauces, syrups, or juice. The sauces section includes pie filling, ice cream sauces, and cranberry sauce.

Chapter 16 - Canned Tomatoes (32 pages, 42 recipes)

The recipes for canned tomatoes include instructions for whole, cut, crushed, puréed, sauced, and juiced tomatoes. The sauces section includes Italian-style pizza and pasta sauces, American and Mexican barbecue sauces, ketchups, and salsas.

Chapter 17 - Canned Pickled Vegetables (16 pages, 16 recipes)

The recipes for canned pickles include traditional dill and bread-and-butter cucumber pickles, plus recipes for many other favorite vegetable pickles in a range of styles, including sweet, savory, spiced, and hot flavors.

Chapter 18 - Canned Savory Sauces, Relishes, and Chutneys (14 pages, 17 recipes)

The recipes for canned savory sauce include everything-but-tomatoes in chunky, thick and thin, pickled and spiced preparations that are traditionally served with savory foods.

Chapter 19 - Canned Jam and Other Sweet Sauces (28 pages, 42 recipes)

The recipes for canned jam and sweet sauces include many old-fashioned spreads prepared without commercial pectin, including a section on making homemade pectin from apples or citrus. A few more recipes provide examples using powdered and liquid pectin, as well as low and no sugar jams and jellies.

Chapter 20 - Canned Low-Acid Foods (32 pages, 28 recipes)

The recipes for low acid foods include pressure canning meats, poultry, seafood, and vegetables, plus mixtures of these foods as soups and sauces.

Appendix A - Glossary (8 pages, 94 definitions)

The glossary defines many common terms used in home food preservation, such as *Acetobacter*, anaerobic, citric acid, food-borne illness, GRAS, *Leuconostoc*, nitrites (NO₂), pickling salt, relative humidity (RH), tallow, wort, and many more.

Appendix B – Produce Guides (10 pages)

The produce guides include handy charts that define fruits and vegetables by type, estimates their yields, and recommends preservation methods.

Appendix C - Resources (4 pages)

The resource list includes books, journals, and websites where readers can learn more about some methods of preserving foods or where to buy supplies and equipment.

Author Bio

Carole Cancler has a background in food science, product development, software applications, and technical writing. As a chef, Carole owned and operated Private Chef Natural Gourmet in Seattle, Washington, for 14 years. Her company made custom frozen gourmet meals. Prior to that, Carole spent 11 years at Microsoft as a test engineer and program manager.

Currently, she focuses on consulting and writing for the food and technology industries. Her first book, *The Home Preserving Bible* describes the techniques for eight essential methods to preserve foods, and provides over 300 recipes. Find more articles and recipes from Carole online at homepreservingbible.com, examiner.com/user-caroleca, and livingonthecheap.com. She also teaches cooking classes—among them canning and preserving, where students learn firsthand the best ways to can, freeze, and dry seasonal fruits and vegetables. In her spare time, Carole volunteers at local farmers markets in Seattle.



Photo by Ingrid Pape-Sheldon

Carole has enjoyed a lifelong love affair with cooking. Her Midwestern mother and Slovenian grandmother instilled in her a love of good food. In 1990, she began traveling internationally, most often to attend cooking schools, explore food markets, and taste the cuisines of the places she visits. She has traveled by jet, train, and ship to over 20 countries, including Portugal, Italy, Croatia, Turkey, Japan, and Thailand. Still on her list of places to see (but not limited to!) are India, Greece, Argentina, and Tahiti.

A Seattle native, Carole holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Food Science and Nutrition from the University of Washington. She also studied at several culinary schools in France, including Le Cordon Bleu in Paris. She loves studying about the anthropology of food—particularly how indigenous foods have traveled and been integrated throughout the world. In addition to her experience as a professional in the food industry, Chef Carole has decades of practice in home canning and preserving.

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6 ways to preserve fruits or vegetables besides canning and freezing

Seattle, WA – August 15, 2012 – Canning and freezing are the most popular home preservation methods today. However, there are many other ways to preserve foods, and most are easier and less expensive than these modern methods. In addition to her experience as a professional in the food industry, Chef Carole Cancler has decades of practice in preserving food at home, which she shares in her new book, **The Home Preserving Bible**.

“In the past, people preserved food because they didn’t have any other choice. Unlike today, they lacked a year-round supply of fresh food and mechanical refrigeration.” says cookbook author and chef, Carole Cancler. “In times of pestilence, war, famine, tsunamis, and earthquakes, people wanted to make sure they had some food ‘put by.’ Preserving methods go well beyond freezing food in an electric appliance or canning it with special equipment.”

Here are Carole’s suggestions for 6 more ways you can preserve local produce for use throughout the year, besides canning and freezing:

- **Pickle vegetables quickly and simply by soaking in an acidic liquid.** The simplest way you can pickle vegetables is to toss or immerse shreds, slices, or chunks in an acidic liquid such as vinegar or lemon juice. Other mildly acidic ingredients that you can use for pickling, include whey (drained from yogurt), pomegranate juice, verjuice (underripe grape juice), soy sauce, and miso. Acid-pickled foods are a great alternative to fresh salads and can add a lot of interest to your meals. Think of them as crunchy, mouthwatering fast food.
- **Ferment fruits or vegetables into wine or vinegar.** When you have a bumper crop of fruits or vegetables, that’s the time to make wine. Ferment almost any type of fresh or dried fruit to make a delicious “country” wine. Popular fruit choices include pears, peaches, or plums, and even vegetables with a sweet nature, such as beets, carrots, corn, sweet potatoes, tomatoes, or winter squash. To make vinegar, reclaim fruit and vegetable peels before you discard them in the compost bin. Exploit apple peelings left over after making applesauce, and other refuse that is normally discarded, such as orange peels, pineapple peels, and potato peels. Wine or vinegar making is also a good method to make use of culls, seconds, overripe, or fallen fruit. Just make sure that any of the produce you use is free of any mold, trimmed of any bruises, and thoroughly washed.
- **Pickle or ferment vegetables with dry salt.** Easy, practical, and inexpensive, you can use dry salt either to pickle or ferment a wide variety of vegetables. High salt concentration prevents fermentation and preserves vegetables in a near-fresh state. Use this method for cauliflower, cooking greens (spinach, kale, chard), shelled fresh peas, and snap beans. People familiar with this method consider dry-salted vegetables to be far superior in taste and texture to canned or frozen ones. In contrast, using a low salt concentration causes the vegetables to ferment, creating

products like sauerkraut or kimchi from cabbage. The sauerkraut method also works on turnips, rutabagas, and kohlrabies, for delicious wintertime sandwich and burger toppings or garnish for charcuterie, vegetarian meals, or roasted meats.

- **Macerate fruits with alcohol.** Macerating fruits in alcohol is a form of pickling that is very common in cultures throughout Eastern Europe. It is an easy process that you can do at home with fresh fruit and vodka. You can add spices to the soaking liquid and use other types of liquor (such as rum or brandy), as long as it is at least 80 proof. Brandied peaches or maraschino cherries are common examples of macerated fruits, and the resulting fruited liquor is a delicious beginning or end to any meal.
- **Cellar root vegetables.** Cellaring is any form of storage that holds food in optimum condition for an extended period. Today's modern "root cellar" is the refrigerator. However, a cold food cellar can be accomplished by using something as simple as a cool basement closet or fashioned using a clean metal or plastic, food-safe container that is partially buried in the ground. Root crops are the ideal cold cellar inhabitant, such as beets, carrots, turnips, and parsnips. Use these cellared vegetables throughout winter as a roasted side dish, shredded for latkes, simmered in soups and stews, or baked into muffins and breads.
- **Dry fruits and vegetables** as people have done for centuries. Drying is easy to do and makes shelf-stable foods (nonperishables that you can store at room temperature). Pliable dried fruits may be eaten as is for snacks. Vegetables dried crisp may be ground into powder to make sauces or soups. Dried foods may also be rehydrated before using in recipes. Many people find dried foods more useful and flavorful than canned ones. Oven drying is a good choice if you are drying for the first time. There is little or no investment in equipment and you don't have to depend on the weather like some other methods do.

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6 essential concepts you need to know to get started with canning food

Seattle, WA – August 15, 2012 – Canning is a relatively new form of food preservation that many people are afraid to try because it seems complex and overwhelming. However, the basic process involves just a few essential concepts. The fundamentals of canning have not changed since Frenchman Nicolas Appert invented the process in the early 1800s. Once you learn how, canning is a great way to turn fresh food into shelf-stable products that are safe for storage at room temperature.

“People have the most trouble with canning when they don’t understand why a step is necessary.” says author and chef, Carole Cancler “Sometimes inadvertently, they take shortcuts. There are only a few essential concepts that you need to understand and practice in order to can foods successfully. It’s about the same skill level as baking a pie or cake from scratch.”

In addition to her experience as a professional in the food industry, Chef Carole has decades of practice in home canning and preserving, which she shares in preserving classes in Seattle, and in her new book, **The Home Preserving Bible**.

Here are six essential concepts that can get anyone started with the canning method of food preservation:

1. **Use tempered, threaded glass canning jars.** Don’t be tempted to re-use jars from commercially prepared products such as peanut butter or mayonnaise for canning because they are not tempered, can easily crack during processing, and are not designed to accept the two-piece canning lid. Likewise, old jar designs with zinc lids or wire bails, while attractive for food storage, have increased seal failure rates when used for canning. Whether you purchase new jars or scour garage sales for used jars, make sure they are made from tempered glass, have a threaded top that accepts the two-piece closures, and contain no nicks or cracks.
2. **Purchase new flat metal lids for each use.** To ensure a successful, tight, safe, jar seal, you must use new, flat lids every time, which average about \$3 per dozen. However, you can reuse the screw bands year after year, provided they are not bent or rusted and still screw easily onto the canning jar. Since you may remove the screw bands after jars have cooled, most people need only 1 or 2 dozen screw bands.
3. **Can only foods that are high in acid.** Because *C. botulinum* do not become active in high-acid environments, canning only high acid foods eliminates the primary concern about botulism poisoning that may be cause by this bacteria. High acid foods include most fruits, fruit products, and acidified vegetables such as tomatoes, quick-process pickles, and relishes.
4. **Prepare the food according to a tested recipe.** Use tested canning recipes published after 2009. Find tested canning recipes online on the National Center for Home Food Preservation website at nchfp.uga.edu, a federally funded source for

current recommendations for most methods of home food preservation. You will find canning recipes from extension agencies across the country, along with free publications such as the downloadable booklet, the *USDA Complete Guide to Home Canning*. Canning recipe books written after 2009 that are based on the latest research and guidelines, such as **The Home Preserving Bible**, are also good sources for tested recipes.

5. **Process canned foods correctly.** A tested recipe gives you the necessary details for processing the food correctly. These details include the type of pack (raw vs. hot), jar size, headspace, and processing time. You must follow these procedures according to each recipe; they are not interchangeable from one recipe to another, even if the products seem similar.
6. **Follow all procedures accurately.** The few recent food botulism cases in home canned foods were caused by improperly home canned low acid foods such as vegetables and fish, and canned tomato sauces using untested recipes. Never use untested recipes or take any shortcuts that may increase the rate of seal failure or create unsafe canned foods.

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Guidelines for precooking meats when making dried beef jerky

Seattle, WA – August 15, 2012 – If you precook meat to a minimum safe temperature of 160°F before drying to make beef jerky, you will kill any harmful bacteria that may be present. This safety step also shortens the drying time and tenderizes the meat. However, precooked dried meat is not acceptable to everyone, because the product has a different color and texture than the traditional process, which dries raw meat without precooking.

“Some experts stress safety and recommend that all dried meats such as beef jerky be precooked to a safe internal temperature before drying.” says author and chef, Carole Cancler. “How can you decide if you should heed or ignore the recommendation?”

In addition to her experience as a professional in the food industry, Chef Carole has decades of practice in home canning and preserving, which she shares in preserving classes in Seattle, and in her new book, **The Home Preserving Bible**.

Here, Carole offers considerations that can help you decide whether to use a precooking step when making beef jerky and other dried meats:

- **High-risk individuals** susceptible to food poisoning are strongly advised to consume only dried meat that has been prepared using a precooking step. People at risk for food poisoning include persons with weakened immune systems, persons with certain diseases such as cancer and diabetes, pregnant women and their unborn children, and older adults.
- **Aged meats** are preferred by connoisseurs for cooking and eating. However, aged meats naturally contain higher levels of bacteria. Therefore, aged meats are not recommended for jerkies without a precooking step.
- **Ground meat jerkies** inherently contain higher bacterial counts than whole cuts, and therefore justify a precooking step.
- **Wild game meat that is not sound** is not a good choice for making jerky. An animal that has a wounded intestinal tract, or is not well-chilled immediately after slaughter, or receives careless field dressing should be preserved by some other method such as freezing, and used for dishes that are thoroughly cooked, such as stews or soups.
- **Game meats that contain certain parasites.** Meats including bear, boar, cougar, fox, dog, wolf, horse, seal, and walrus may contain different species of Trichinella and tapeworm that are not killed by freezing. These game meats are best suited for thoroughly cooked dishes, such as stews or soups.
- **Drying temperatures below 160°F**, especially if the dried meat is being prepared as a snack food that will be consumed without another safety step, such as the use of high salt, nitrites, or pasteurization.

When precooking meat, it's best to use a moist heat method to prevent case-hardening. Meat becomes case-hardened when the surface dries prematurely and traps moisture inside, making it difficult to dry the interior meat thoroughly.

Here are the basic steps for precooking meat before drying:

1. **Prepare a cooking liquid**, which can be plain water or a marinade. If using a marinade, complete the marinating step before precooking.
2. **Boil the meat** for 5 minutes in the cooking liquid.
3. **Test several meat strips** for an internal temperature of 160°F. Check the temperature by wrapping a strip around a thermometer.
4. **Drain the strips and place in a dryer immediately**, using your preferred method (such as an oven, dehydrator, or smoker).

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