



*“Teaching research-based practices of safe home food preservation to the residents of Solano and Yolo Counties.”*

### HOW TO AIR DRY HERBS INDOORS

Air drying of herbs indoors allows you to preserve them without the use of power. You simply need a well-ventilated room, garage, or screened in porch. Parsley, sage, rosemary, thyme, and other hardy herbs are the easiest to air dry. Simply tie the stems together with a rubber band or string to form a small bunch. Suspend the bunch upside down in a well-ventilated room.

For tender leaf herbs, such as basil, tarragon and lemon balm, tie the stalks together to form a bunch. Slit long vents in a clean paper lunch bag to provide air circulation. Place the bunch of herbs upside down in the bag and close the bag with a tie so that the bunch of herbs is suspended inside the bag. Then suspend the bag in a warm, well ventilated room. The paper bag is useful for helping catch any herb leaves or seeds that may fall during the drying process.



Tender leaf herbs can also be dried flat. Simply place a layer of paper towels on a tray. Lay out a single layer of herbs on top of the paper towels.

The herbs are dry when the leaves and stems are brittle and easily crumble between your fingers. It takes up to approximately ten days to air dry small bunches of herbs indoors.

Your dried herbs should be stored in an air tight container in a cool, dark, dry location. Note that crushing dried herb leaves for storage increases flavor loss. Whole dried leaves have a longer shelf life than crushed herb leaves. Crushing whole dried herb leaves right before use releases its full flavor.

The dried herbs are best when used within six months to a year.

To learn more about drying herbs and other home preserved foods, contact the UCCE Master Food Preserver Program of Solano County, *Advice to Preserve by... Ask Us!*

This information was adapted from “*Food Safety and Preservation: Drying Herbs – SP50-921*,” Oregon State University Extension Service, and “*So Easy to Preserve*,” University of Georgia Cooperative Extension. Handout developed by Kathy Low, UC Master Food Preserver, Solano and Yolo Counties, 2017.

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