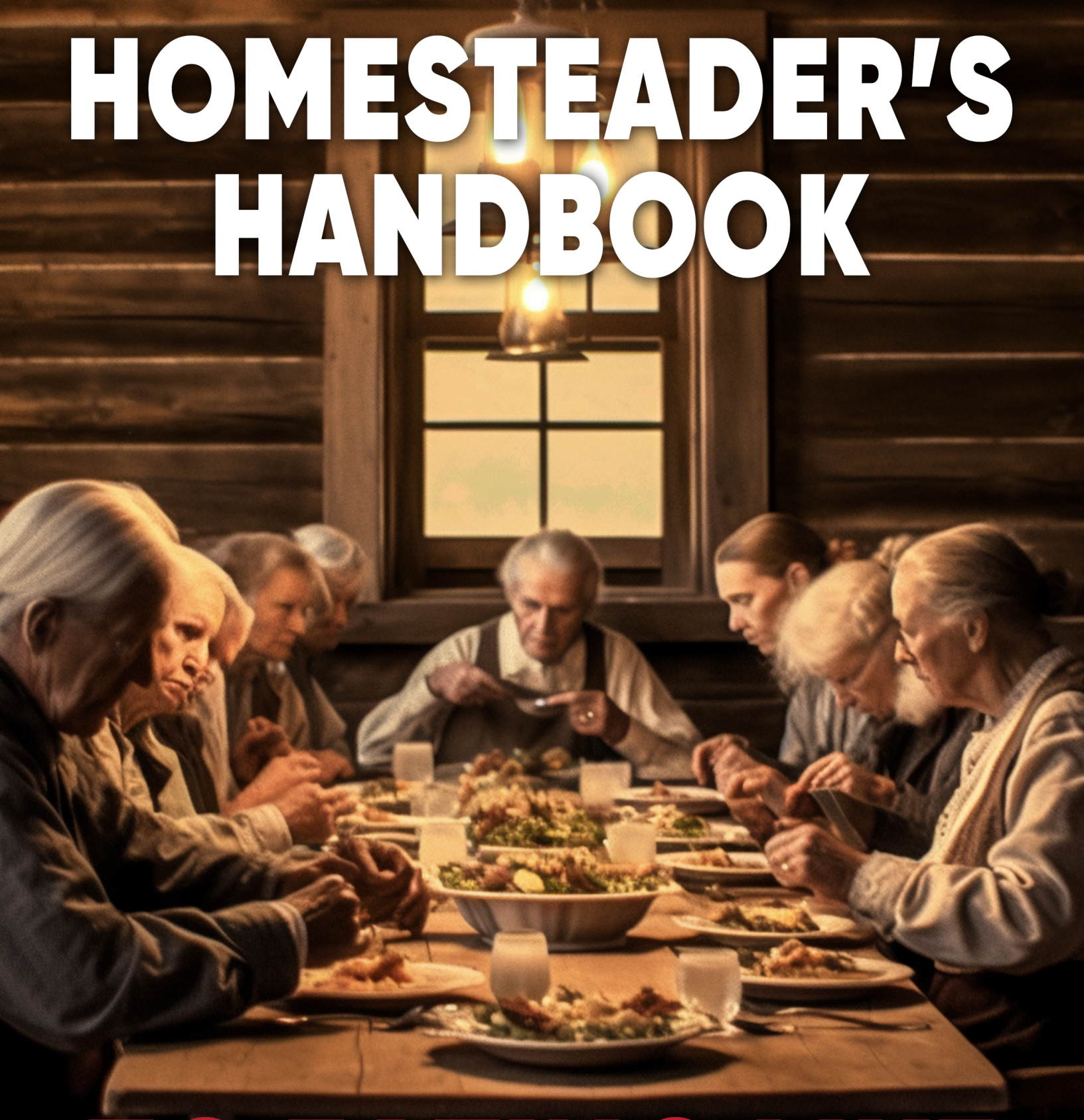
HOMESTEADER'S HANDBOOK



TO EATING LIKE PIONEERS ATE

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Pioneer Baking Tips for Delicious Baked Goods

If there's one thing that I absolutely take pride in, it's my baking. I was raised eating biscuits. Baking and cooking skills were a source of pride, and insulting somebody's pie crust was akin to fighting words. It was scandalous if you showed up to a gathering with a store-bought pie or cookies; I'll even go so far as to say that a girl would be bake-shamed if she had the nerve to do that.

So I admit that I was socially conditioned to keep my kitchen skills honed, but it's always been way more than that for me. I love it when somebody groans when they bite into my apple pie, or ask for the recipe to my key lime-pie cupcakes. It's just what I do.

I was blessed enough to be raised by women who had mad kitchen skills, and I've honed my own over the years, picking up lots of tips and tricks of my own along the way. Now I want to share them with you!

Flour Substitutes

First, you need to understand the difference in flours and how to make substitutions. If you have all-purpose flour, you can seriously make anything that calls for bread flour, self-rising flour, or cake flour. It's just a matter of taking a few extra steps.

- 1 cup self-rising flour = 1 cup all-purpose flour + 1 ½ tsp. baking powder + ¼ tsp. salt
- Cake flour = 1 cup all-purpose flour minus 2 tbsp. + 2 tbsp. corn starch. Sift them together well
- Bread flour = 1 cup all-purpose flour + 1 tsp. vital gluten

Let me tell you, though, I've never used bread flour in my life. I've found that it's expensive and, for the results, not worth it. I mean, you do get a lighter bread, but not by much. I've lived 40 years without it, so I probably won't start now. If you'd like, though, go right ahead.

Common Substitutions

How often have you been half-way through pulling out everything to make cookies or a cake just to find out that you didn't have any baking powder, cornstarch, or even eggs? Well, the next time that happens to you, pull up this article, or just print it out now and put it in your kitchen!

- 1 tsp. baking powder = ¼ tsp. baking soda + ½ tsp. cream of tartar + ¼ tsp cornstarch
- 1/2 tsp. baking soda = 2 tsp. baking powder
- Buttermilk = 1 cup milk + 1 tbsp. lemon juice or white vinegar. Let it stand for 5 minutes
- Buttermilk = 1 cup plain unsweetened yogurt
- 1 oz. chocolate = 3 tbsp. cocoa powder + 1 tbsp. butter, veg oil, or Crisco
- 1 egg = ¼ cup applesauce (not exact, recipe will be a bit crumbly)

- 1 egg – 1 tbsp. flaxseed + 3 tbsp. water
- 1 cup sour cream = 1 cup plain yogurt
- 1 tsp pumpkin pie spice = ½ tsp. cinnamon + ¼ tsp. ground ginger + 1/8 tsp. ground allspice + 1/8 tsp. nutmeg
- 1 vanilla bean = 2 ½ tsp. vanilla extract
- 1 cup vegetable oil = 1 cup applesauce
- 1 cup margarine … wait, what's margarine? Butter. Always butter. Seriously though, margarine usually responds more like oil than butter in baking.

Remember that when you're baking, it's not like when you're cooking – measurements matter. Let's break down the science of what goes into things.

- Eggs add structure. They're the glue of the recipe.
- Baking soda and baking powder are leavening agents. They increase the bubbles present in the batter or dough.
- Oils and butters give baked goods their texture and moisture.
- Oil adds moisture, but not flavor, so expect a soft cookie or a light brownie or cake
- Butter adds flavor but is denser, so expect a crispy cookie, a fudgy brownie, and a dense but buttery cake
- Shortening is all hydrogenated fat and has a higher melting point. Suitable for use in cookies and pie crusts. Cookies won't spread and will be softer instead of flatter and crispy.
- Yeast makes bread rise by infusing air via consuming sugar and excreting carbon dioxide and alcohol.
- Fruits will always add baking time to any product, whether it's fruit juice, puree, or whole fruit pieces.
- Chilling dough made with butter will make it spread less and will add more buttery flavor.

OK, now that you understand the basic physics, let's get down to some tips.

Pie Crusts

There are a couple of secrets to making a crispy, flakey crust. First, use SUPER cold water. Second, add a teaspoon of apple cider vinegar per crust to inhibit the formation of gluten; gluten makes your crust tough.

Finally, use butter. Shortening will make it crispy and it'll hold form a bit better, but it won't be nearly as flakey.

Cakes

To add an exotic flavor to white or yellow cakes, use almond extract instead of vanilla. It was always the secret ingredient in my wedding cakes and people just went nuts for it. Let your batter sit for 5 minutes or so before you pour it in the pan and it'll be lighter. It's kind of like a pre-rise. With cakes, the more you whip them, the lighter they'll be.

Cookies

As we've already discussed, butter makes them crispy, margarine or shortening makes them cakier. Don't ever use oil. Chill the dough if you don't want the cookies to spread as much. Always cream together the butter and eggs. It makes the texture smooth and easier to incorporate with the flour, and it adds air to make your cookies lighter.

Biscuits vs Bread

Use cold butter and cut it into your flour until you have pea-sized crumbles.

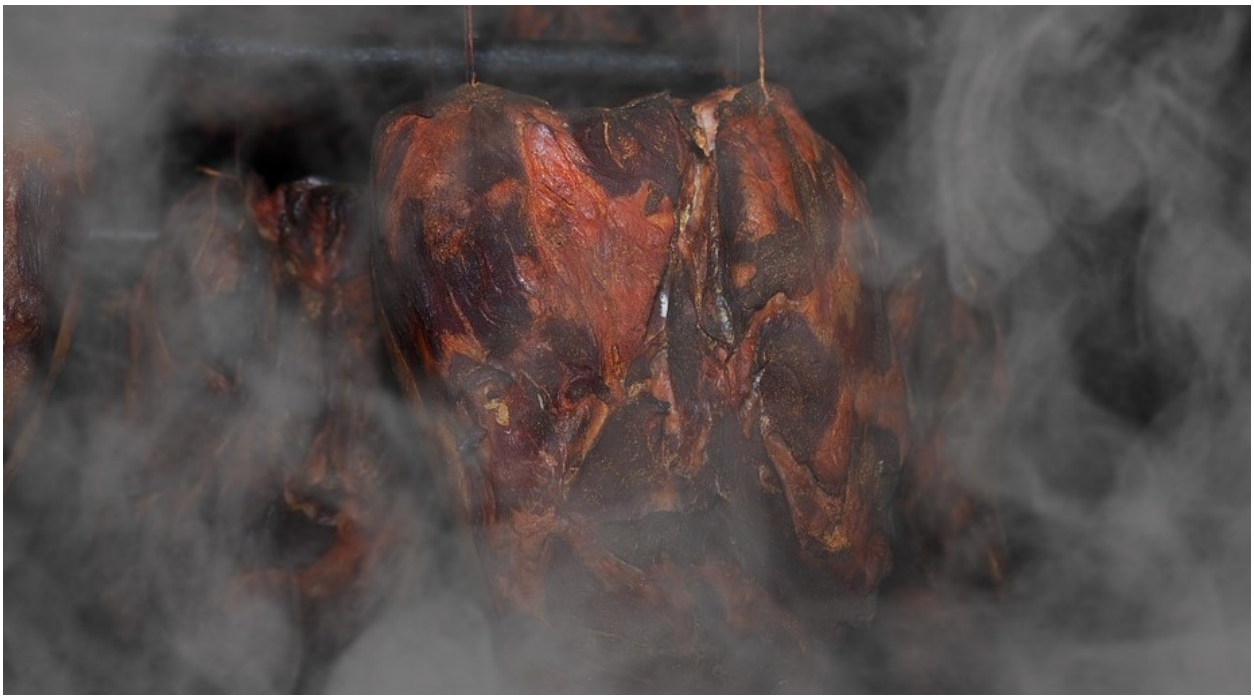
Don't add the liquid until last and don't mix it any more than you have to in order to make a dough. The more you mix biscuits, the tougher they get.

The same thing goes for cornbread. Bread, on the other hand, should be kneaded for a while, until the dough is glossy and elastic. Kneading makes bread lighter.

Use lard or butter in your biscuits, or shortening is fine, but adds less flavor, so using at least a little butter is a must. Vinegar is a must in them, too.

Baking is one of my greatest pleasures, and I really hope that these tips were helpful to you. If you have any tips to share, please do so in the comments section below – it's great learning new things!

If you've enjoyed these tips and would like to learn more of the skills that were passed down to me from my ancestors, take a look at my book, Forgotten Lessons of Yesterday. It comes with a ton of handy, useful skills that I break down in easy-to-follow steps and it comes with five free manuals that are incredible all on their own!



The Secret Art of Ageing and Preserving Meat

One of the biggest challenges for our ancestors was meat preservation. They had killing and butchering it down pat, but the preservation was a bit trickier. Of course, there's always the option to can it, but what if you want to make some of your beef into perfect steaks and roasts?

Aging beef is critical to developing flavor, but, regardless of some common belief, aging is not preserving. It's simply a method used to improve the quality and taste of the meat.

There are two different methods of aging beef – dry aging and wet aging. Both processes are tough to do at home because they require refrigeration.

The problem is - what happens if you have no refrigeration? Every method that you probably know for long-term meat storage requires refrigeration except for canning. You

can salt-cure pork, but for beef, your options are limited. That's only because you're not connected to your roots anymore.

Our ancestors had several methods of preserving meat, including smoking, curing, drying, and fermenting. Often, two or more of these methods were used in conjunction. For instance, bacon is smoked and salted. Hams were often smoked, salted, and dried.

Should you ever find yourself without electricity for the long-term, say in a SHTF, collapse situation, it's a good idea to have live sources of protein so that you don't have to worry so much about preserving large quantities of meat. This is called preserving the meat "on the hoof."

Of course, if you butcher a cow, you'll want to preserve it. If you live in an area that has a solid winter, you can freeze your meat during that period. You also have the option of smoking and curing.

Let's talk about aging first, since it deals with handling fresh meat, even though it's not a method of preservation.

Aging Beef

Aging gives beef a depth of flavor that you just don't get if you cook it fresh off the hoof.

The problem is that aging requires refrigeration and constant airflow, so aging isn't particularly realistic in a survival situation.

The process of aging is actually promoting enzymes naturally present in the meat to break down the tissue so that the meat tastes better and has a better texture. Wet-aged beef is vacuum sealed, then refrigerated or left on a shelf for several weeks so that the enzymes work on the meat. That's basically all

there is to it, but it's just not the same. The flavor profiles just don't change and deepen as much, and since there's no way for the juices to drain, it often tastes sour.

Dry-aging, however, is a bit more … traditional. Now, this still requires refrigeration. Lots of refrigeration. But it does improve the taste and texture of your meat. The longer you age it, the stronger the flavor gets.

Aging for less than a couple of weeks at home doesn't really make that much of a difference, but beyond that, it does. Also, aging individual steaks at home isn't a doable thing. It'll go bad. You have to age large chunks of meat that are around 80 pounds or so. Rib sections are the best, and they come in different forms, designated with numbers.

Cut 103 is the chunk of meat that is most intact. It's the whole rib section (ribs 6-12), and a good portion of the short ribs. Now before you think we're aging ribs, we're not. This cut still has all of the steaks attached.

You'll probably have to settle for a smaller cut, which will be better anyway, because you won't need as much space. Shoot for an untrimmed prime rib, bone in, with the chine bone attached and the complete fat cap attached.

What you DO need is a fan so that there's constant airflow. That's critical. You'll have a lot of moisture loss on the outer layers, which is sort of the point.

So, here's how it goes:

- Place the meat on a rack in the fridge. You can use a mini-fridge if you want, so that you're not taking up space in your primary fridge.
- Place a small fan inside and set it on low. Cut a small notch in the lining on the door so the cord can fit through.
- Let it age. Anything less than two weeks doesn't make that much of a difference. Shoot for 30-60 days. Don't be worried when it starts to smell; that's natural.
- Trim the fat off, and any outer dried out pieces.
- Cook it up.

The main benefit to aging your own beef is that it costs a ton less than buying aged meat. First, it'll likely be cheaper to buy the entire chunk than to buy it already cut. Then aged beef costs as much as twice as much as un-aged beef.

If you're aging your own slaughtered cow, the advantage is the depth of flavor that you'll get from the aging process.

Smoking

Now, let's talk about smoking. There are two methods – hot smoking and cold smoking.

Hot smoking occurs either over an open fire or inside of a smokehouse and the meat is cooked and smoked at the same time.

Cold smoking is done over a smoldering fire and the meat is in the danger zone, so the danger of microbial growth is there. That just means that you shouldn't cold-smoke meat unless it's been preserved in some other way – salted, cured, or fermented.

Curing

There are two types of curing – dry curing and wet curing, also known as brining. Brining isn't just for meat, either. Many vegetables are brined, too. For that matter, even the hides are brined, in a manner.

Dry curing is the process of rubbing the meat in a mixture of salt and other ingredients, depending upon what you're curing, so that the moisture is pulled out of the meat and the environment is rendered unsuitable for bacterial growth.

Brining can be as simple as using heavily salted water, or you can add spices to add flavor as well as preservation to the process.

Either way, you'll have to soak the meat and rinse it aggressively to get enough salt off of and out of the meat for it to be edible. The longer it soaks or sits, the harder it will be to make it edible.

Preserving meat safely and effectively isn't a new process. As a matter of fact, it's becoming a lost art, and that just kills me. Even if you were to hand somebody a cow on a lead rope, they'd starve to death before they figured out how to eat it. And if they did figure out how to get a meal out of it, the rest of the meat and the hide would likely be wasted.

This is one of the lost skills that I share in my book, Forgotten Lessons of Yesterday, and I urge you to take a look at it. The cost is reasonable and there are several free bonus manuals that come with it.

Butchering and preserving meat is just one of the survival areas that are all but forgotten, and should you ever need to know, it's not something that will be easy to figure out on your own.

The Science of Turning Milk to Butter and Cheese

When it comes right down to it, everything in life revolves around science, and making butter, cheese, and yogurt isn't any different. Milk is composed of proteins, sugars, and fats, along with a fair amount of water. It's how these components react when you treat them in specific ways that causes the transformation.

Don't worry – I'm not going to get into the big-hitting stuff like triglycerides, hydrophobic tails, or phospholipids.

Frankly, that would get a bit boring, so I'll keep it simple. We're talking butter, not brain surgery. The important thing to remember is that fat and water don't like each other.

Raw Milk vs Pasteurized Milk

While pasteurizing milk kills any harmful bacteria, it also kills the good bacteria that you need to make crème fraiche, sour cream, and buttermilk.

If you leave raw cream out, the healthy, beneficial enzymes and bacteria will go to work and make the luxurious, smooth products that we all know and love, but if you try to use pasteurized milk, the lack of enzymes will cause the milk to go rancid, which will make you sick.

If you want to make a sour product from pasteurized cream, you can add a couple of tablespoons of buttermilk before you leave it out, which has the cultures that you need.

The Science of Butter

Though it seems like magic, turning milk into butter is fairly simple to explain. First, you start by letting the milk settle and separate, or separate them using a milk/cream separator. Unlike store-bought milk, fresh milk will settle into its separate parts, namely fat and milk. The fat and most of the protein will rise to the top in the form of cream, and cream is an extremely versatile substance.

Just in case you're not milking your own cow, you can also make butter or whipped cream from heavy whipping cream that you buy at the store. Heavy whipping cream is at least 36 percent fat.

For butter, the cream is all that you use, and you can either choose to use fresh, or cultured. Fresh, which makes a delicious, sweet butter, is made from fresh cream that hasn't soured yet.

Crème Fraiche

Cultured cream, aka crème fraiche, is made by leaving the cream out for 12-24 hours, allowing cultures to start to grow. This butter will have a much tangier flavor and will be thicker.

Sour Cream

If you leave the crème fraiche out for another 12 to 24 hours, it will thicken even more into sour cream.

Butter

To make butter, you put it in the churn, or in a jar with a lid, and you shake the liquid around. For a long time!

What's actually happening is that little molecules of fat are bumping into each other, causing the walls to burst. The fat globules then stick together, and the more you shake it, the more molecules cling to each other.

That's why when you're finished making butter, there's always liquid left – because the fat separates from the liquid. If you're using fresh cream, that's just water that you dump. If you're using cultured cream, that's buttermilk, and it makes amazing biscuits, pancakes, and tangy cakes.

Tip though: you can't make crème fraiche from pasteurized milk just by leaving it out. You have to add a couple of tablespoons of buttermilk because pasteurizing kills some of the necessary enzymes and the milk will just go rancid.

The Science behind Whipped Cream and Ice Cream

Whipped cream and ice cream are similar creatures. Ice cream has other ingredients, but the milk fats behave similarly. To make both, you'll use fresh cream, not cultured cream.

Whipped Cream

You have your choice of light and fluffy whipped cream or stiff and peaky whipped cream. The difference between the two is the fat content of the cream. We already know that heavy cream is at least 36 percent milk fat and will make the heavy whipped cream. Whipping cream is lighter, with only 30-35 percent milk fat, and will make lighter, fluffier whipped cream.

Regardless of which you use, you'll need to whip it. You can do this by hand, or you can use your stand mixture. Whipped cream is simply foam made when the milk fats are suspended in air. Or vice versa. The important part to remember here is that fat hates water.

When you're whipping the cream with your whisk, or your mixer, you're integrating air into it. At first, the surface tension of the cream just isn't rigid enough to trap the air, but the longer you whip it, the more you break open the walls of those fat molecules, just like when you're making butter.

The difference is that you're whipping this and as the walls are damaged, they're going to start to bind together, but some of them will have parts that are exposed to air. Since they avoid water at all costs, they latch onto the air, and it's integrated into the cream, making it fluffy.

Now, here's the important part – don't whip it too long, or you'll have butter. When it holds its form and forms peaks, it's done. Stop whipping. Now, you may have added sugar, which is just fine, too. The process is the same, but the fat molecules will also have sugar molecules to bind to.

Ice Cream

The process of making ice cream is extremely similar to making whipped cream. The fat molecules are suspended in a water, sugar, ice, and air structure. Many ice creams also call for eggs to stabilize and emulsify the mixture.

Just as with cream, you need to stop churning it when it reaches the correct, creamy, frozen texture because if you churn it too long, it'll turn to iced butter!

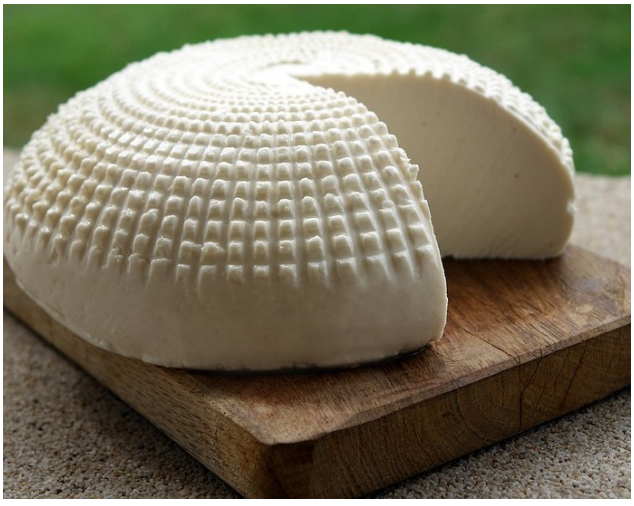
The Science of Cheese

Cheese is one of the greatest accidental discoveries ever, and here's how it happened, or at least how it MAY have happened. A common way of carrying liquids used to be in animal stomachs. Well, there's an enzyme called rennet made in the stomach of calves, lambs, or goats before they consume anything other than milk.

Rennet converts the milk sugars into lactic acid, then acts on the proteins in the milk, causing it to curd, and separate from the water – the whey. So, it could be that somebody was carrying milk in his little calf-stomach canteen and left it in there for a little long and discovered that it had turned to a delicious curd.

And now rennet is what medium and hard cheeses are made with. Yogurt, too. For that matter, yogurt happens before the milk actually curds. It's the creamy, sour stage before curding happens. So to make real yogurt, you need rennet and then you make it similarly to sour cream.

Soft cheeses such as mozzarella, ricotta, and cottage cheeses can be made using lemon juice or vinegar, but to get that ripe flavor and firm texture of other cheeses, you need rennet. It's now available in vegetarian forms too.



Back to making cheese. We're going to get a little molecular for a minute. You know that all molecules have a charge, either negative or positive.

Milk protein, called casein, has a negative charge, and they clump together in little clumps called micelles, which are held together by calcium, which acts as a sort of glue.

Now, this is the difference between rennet and an acid. They both remove the negative charge, but acid breaks down some of the calcium bond, so that they can't bond together, and much of the calcium "glue" is lost in the whey. This also makes for a very mild cheese because the acid inhibits many of the flavor-boosting enzymes. Rennet doesn't break down the calcium bond, so the micelles can clump together into firm curds.

After the rennet causes the curding, the curds are broken apart, allowing the whey to separate. The more whey is removed, the firmer the cheese. The curds are sometimes then cooked in the whey, which causes the proteins to solidify and get rubbery, sort of like when you cook an egg.

Salt is added both for flavor and to draw out more water and prohibit the growth of spoilage microbes. At this point, spores can also be added in a variety of ways, depending upon what type of cheese you're making.

Next, the curd is broken up even more, then drained so that the whey is removed. If you want a really hard cheese, you need to cheddar it, or break the curds into extremely small curds, then press it, removing as much of the whey as possible.

For softer cheeses, more of the whey is left in. This is good for cheeses that are going to be ripened with mold, such as Roquefort, because the cheese is lighter and airier, allowing mold to grow. The downside is that the cheese will spoil faster.

Finally, the cheese is matured, or ripened. If the milk is unpasteurized, there's growth at every stage from milk to finished cheese. At the end, though, is the final product. It's literally a decaying process, and as they decay, they develop flavor and characteristics specific to the type of cheese you made.

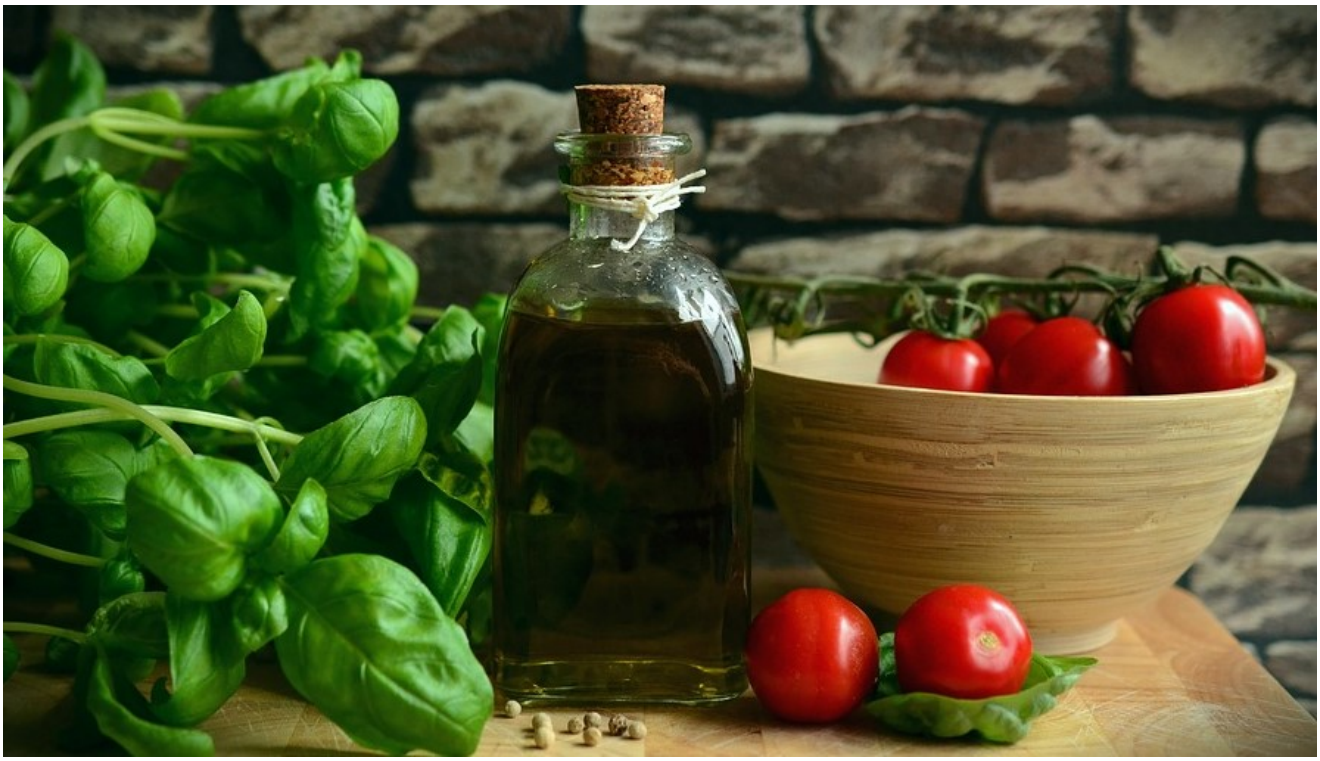
Just as with all things with milk, know when is enough, because if it over-ripens, the cheese will become coarse or harsh-tasting.

Now you know the science of milk! I hope that you learned something, and that it helps you to understand what happens at each step. The idea is that if you know how it

happens, then you'll be better able to avoid mistakes, of if you make them, you'll know why and can more easily correct it the next time!

I share how to make and preserve cream, butter, and several different cheeses in my book, Forgotten Lessons of Yesterday. I tried to include a wide range of skills so that you can learn how to get back to your roots and preserve, prepare, and cook delicious foods the old-fashioned, healthy way.

Check it out – there are also five awesome bonus manuals, so it's worth taking a peek!



Growing the Magic Formula to Tasty Food

There are hundreds, if not thousands, of culinary and medicinal herbs out there that you can grow, so how do you decide which ones you should grow in in your survival garden in the space that you have?

Well, as with everything else that we do, I recommend shooting for the absolute essentials that you need in order to meet specific needs, then choosing multi-purpose plants for the rest of it.

Remember that culinary and medicinal herbs aren't exclusive. They can – and often are – used for both. Just about every herb that you cook with has some medicinal value, and some of them are highly effective.

One of the best things about growing medicinal herbs is that many of them make wonderful ornamentals that look like wildflowers, so you don't have to limit them to just your garden space – you can use them to make the rest of the yard look beautiful, or to propagate your permaculture environment.

For example, lavender, Korean mint (hyssop), poppies, Navajo Tea plants, Feverfew and sweet violets are just a few of powerful yet pretty plants. As a matter of fact, with any of these plants, nobody would even know it was an herb garden!

So, it would seem that organizing your culinary and medicinal herbs just depends on how much space you have and what specific health issues you need to address. Let's start with the essentials, then you can research plants that treat conditions specific to your needs. They'll fit right in with your garden.

Culinary Herbs

Most culinary herbs grow wonderfully with very little care. You can grow them in individually in 6-inch pots indoors or on the patio, or in larger pots with several different types of plants.

Most herbs grow well together, though there are a few that you should keep separate. As a general rule, grow onions and garlic by themselves. Growing nettle near most herbs will increase the plant's oil.

Basil

Even if you've never boiled an egg, you likely know what basil is.

It's used almost universally as a flavoring herb. It's rich in polyphenols, which are powerful antioxidants.

It's also a powerful anti-inflammatory, and is particularly good for arthritis and irritable bowel

syndrome. That's not a wives' tale, that's scientific fact, according to numerous reputable universities and medical research facilities.

Finally, basil has proven topical antibacterial properties and inhibits the growth of the big bads that cause serious illness, including Listeria, Staphylococcus aureus, E coli, Yerinia enterocolitica, and Pseudomonas aeruginosa.

Rosemary

Not only is this absolutely delicious with chicken and pot roast, this plant that resembles a pine tree finger is also rich in rosmarinic acid and several different essential oils that have anti-inflammatory, antifungal, antibacterial, and antiseptic properties.

There's plenty of research that shows that it helps fight cancer and improves memory.

Thyme

Thyme is commonly used in stews and soups and several uses that are backed by science, including acting as such a strong antimicrobial that it actually helps preserve food and extend the stability of cooking oils, kill the Candida fungus that causes yeast infections and thrush, and kill the bacteria and fungi that cause acne and eczema.

Studies also show that thyme causes cell death in breast cancer and may help prevent colon cancer. Hypocrites recommended it for respiratory issues, and it was used to treat depression, too.

Oregano

Oregano is also used almost universally, but is probably recognized as an Italian seasoning the most. Oregano oil is often taken orally to help soothe and heal digestive issues, urinary tract problems, menstrual cramps, and skin conditions such as dandruff and acne. This is all because of its antibacterial properties.

Nutritionally, it's packed with vitamin K, and a ton of antioxidants that protect you from a wide array of diseases. It also has vitamin E, iron, calcium, omega fatty acids, tryptophan, and manganese.

Mint

As in peppermint. It's great for nausea, upset stomach, and proper digestion.

It's also great when crushed between your hands and inhaled for a headache, asthma, and other respiratory problems. It boosts mood and has been shown to help heal and prevent cracked nipples in nursing women.

Also: repelling bugs, clearing pimples, and helping with memory loss. Finally, mint is a stimulant and also stimulates enzymes in your digestive tract that absorb nutrients and turn fat into usable energy, so adding mint to your diet may help with weight loss.

Parsley

Great to add flavor to Italian dishes and potatoes, and is also a good digestive and mouth cleanser because of its antibacterial properties. Pregnant women shouldn't eat parsley because it can cause miscarriage. Rich in antioxidants, vitamin C, and minerals.

Cilantro

Contains chemicals that can help foods stay fresh longer and also has antibacterial properties that are good for skin conditions. Its antioxidants can help protect your from cancer and other conditions caused by free radicals.

It has also been shown to reduce heterocyclic amine (HCA), a chemical produced when meat is cooked at high temperatures. It's linked to cancer, but meats cooked with cilantro have significantly lower levels.

It tastes great in salsa, too!

Other culinary herbs with medicinal benefits include:

- **Sage** – digestive problems, increasing appetite, gas relief, diarrhea, heartburn, overproduction of perspiration, depression, memory loss, Alzheimer's disease
- **Clove** – awesome for toothaches. Just rub it on, or rub it in your palm and sniff
- **Anise** – perennial plant with pretty white flower clusters. Good for asthma and other respiratory issues, gas and upset stomach, increase milk production
- **Horseradish** – though most people only eat the root of the horseradish plant, all of it is useful. Expectorant, powerful antimicrobial, tonsillitis, UTI, analgesic, headache relief, and many others.
- **Fennel** – rich in vitamins and minerals, can help lower blood pressure and keep your heart healthy, and is rich in selenium, which boosts immunity and protects from cancer. Choline helps improve sleep, cognitive abilities, and memory
- **Dill** – anti-inflammatory, antiviral, may help reduce menstrual cramps, depression, cholesterol, helps with digestion because of its fatty acids, may help treat epilepsy, and many people report that it's a good bug repellent.

Medicinal Herbs

Now, combine these with the beautiful medicinal flowers that you can use to make your property look pretty, while having useful medicinal plants available right at your fingertips.

Echinacea aka Purple Coneflower

You've likely heard that Echinacea is great for preventing a cold or helping you get better faster from one. It's a perennial plant that grows 1-2 feet in height and has pretty purple flowers with orange centers.

Calendula

You may better recognize this as marigolds. It's good to plant around your garden because many animals don't like the smell of it.

It's also good for rashes, allergies, eczema, dermatitis, pain and swelling of muscle cramps or injuries, athlete's foot, and a host of other conditions.

Do your research and make sure that you get the proper kind of calendula – calendula officinalis, aka pot marigold. It's edible, so you can make teas and tinctures as well as ointments and creams.

Feverfew

As its name indicates, it's long been used to lower fever, but it's also great for relieving a wide variety of aches and agues.

Headaches, stomachaches, toothaches, bug bites, menstruation pain, rheumatoid arthritis, psoriasis, allergies, asthma, tinnitus, dizziness, nausea, and vomiting.

Studies show that they may even be more effective than NSAIDs!

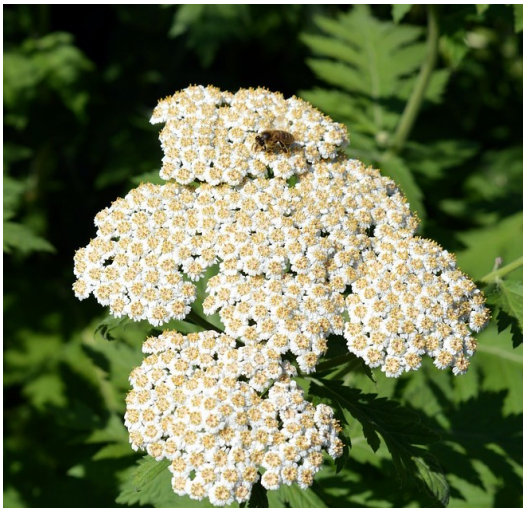
The look like daisies, with white petals and a yellow center, so they look wonderful around trees or in part of a natural flower garden.

Lavender

As the name suggests, lavender is purple, and the flowers grow in tall, slender clusters. They're great in tea for relaxation and sleep, relieving tension, boosting mood and for

mild pain relief. It has a pleasant, clean, floral taste and scent. These grow tall and would be a great addition to a wildflower garden or contained in smaller areas.

Yarrow



Grows in clusters of pink, white, red, or yellow and has green, feathery leaves. Good for growth in about the same circumstances as lavender and feverfew.

Flowers and leaves are good for fevers, cold relief, hay fever, promoting menstruation, dysentery, gastric conditions such as diarrhea, appetite loss, and to induce sweating. You can also chew the leaves to relieve a toothache.

Borage

Tastes like cucumber, thorny with pretty lavender-blue flowers. Great for a fence because it's so prickly. Its 20 percent gamma linolenic acid (GLA) is great for treating skin conditions, diabetic neuropathy, breast pain and other menstrual symptoms, high blood pressure, rheumatoid arthritis and inflammation.

Because many herbs are self-sowing and can spread rapidly if you don't keep them in check, pinch them off before they go to seed. Keep the seeds if you'd like to start them somewhere else or sell them, but if you want to keep control of your garden, manage it well.

All of these herbs are hardy and grow well together, and they're pretty. In a SHTF situation, your yard may look a little wild and overgrown if that's the look you go for, which may help deter people from your property.

In the meanwhile, you'll have medicinal herbs right at your fingertips whenever you need them.