

- Lay in the bottom of the barrel a layer of solar salt, one and a half inch thick; pack the meat edgewise as compact as possible, cover it with a layer of salt as thick as the bottom layer, then pack another layer of meat and the same quantity of salt, etc., until the whole is packed, finishing with a layer of salt. Make a brine as strong as possible of solar salt, put a weight on the meat, and pour on the brine, until it is covered several inches.

Brine Solution

1. Make up 24 hours prior to using.
2. Boil 5/8 cup non-iodized table salt & 3/8 cup curing salt per 2 gallons hot water, and a bit of vinegar. Add 1/8 cup white or brown sugar for taste.
3. Cool overnight or in a refrigerator at or about 40 degrees.
4. Use a CLEAN crock or bucket, place 1/2 inch of solar salt at the bottom, lay your meat down, add 1/4 inch of solar salt on top and so on.
5. I used a sanitized stone (boiled for over 10 minutes) to keep the meat down.
6. Pour your cooled brine in the crock or bucket and make sure the meat is well covered. 3-4 inches would be fine, I did more. Put the crock or bucket cover back on. Place the crock or bucket in a very cool location – 50 degrees is the ideal temperature (I assume you're doing this in the winter time) - do not keep the crock or bucket in your kitchen at room temperature.





Note that the original recipe asked for the meat to be placed edgewise. This was very important so that no bubbles/oxygen would get trapped in the meat and thus spoil it.

Because I only used a few pieces of meat, I placed it facewise. So using sanitary gloves (or very clean hands), I had to reach inside and move the meat a bit to make sure there was no bubbles (and there was quite a bunch in fact).

This preservation method was mostly used during the winter.

How long does the meat preserve that way?

Meat preserved that way was usually used during the cold months but there are records that salted pork was sometimes used after 1-2 years. Honestly, I would use this meat within the next 6 months. During spring and when the temperature was higher, the brine was closely watched and if suspicious (smell, particules on top), the meat was removed, a new brine made and the meat placed again in the brine per the method explained above.

The meat would later on be used in stews and soups. The boiling would kill any potential bacterias, pasteurizing it. To remove the salt, the meat could be boiled in another container and the water removed sometimes more than once. Another option would be to place the meat in cold water and outside if the temperature is very low (like a fridge) and change the water until the meat is no longer salty. Do not place the meat in somewhat cold water and room temperature to remove the salt, you're inviting bacterias and spoiling...

This is definitely not a modern method nor USDA approved but your ancestors went through rough winters using this method.



Using a brine tester is best
Solutions for different meats
Cornish game hen or this size bird 21% - 2 hours
chicken pieces 21% - 4 hours
whole chicken 21% - 24 hours
turkey breast 21% - 8 hours
whole turkey (under 10 lbs.) 21% - 48 hours
whole turkey (over 10 lbs.) 21% - 72 - 96 hours
bacon 50 – 65 % - 1 ½ days per pound
spareribs 50 – 55 % - 1 week
loins 55 - 65 % - 3 weeks
ham, shoulders 65 – 75% - 4 days per pound
fish 80 % - 2 hours
small wild game parts 50% - 8 hours
whole squirrel or chipmunk 50% - 24 hours

rabbit 50% - 36 hours

large wild game (bear, deer, moose cougar, etc.) cut and prepared as loins

other meats – 70 - 75% - 3 days per pounds

Duck and goose are more fatty. Follow procedures and times for turkey smoking.

Turkey and other meats more than 4" thick should be injected with brine solution of up to 10%.

Best fish brine recipe: = for 4 lbs. of fish

1 gallon water

4 cups table salt

2 cups brown sugar

2 Tbs. curing salt

1/3 cup lemon juice

1 Tbs. garlic powder or 2 Tbs. fresh minced garlic

1 Tbs. onion powder or 2 Tbs. fresh minced onion