

**DRYING OF VEGETABLES AND FRUITS FOR HOME USE**

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**M**ANY vegetables and fruits which often go to waste can very easily be conserved for home use by a simple process of drying, which can be done in the average home. Dried products require no outlay for expensive containers and can be stored almost indefinitely under proper conditions in relatively small space. One hundred pounds of fresh vegetables will average ten pounds of the dried product. Vegetables and fruits, if properly dried, retain their natural flavor and food value and when properly cooked can be made into most attractive and wholesome dishes.

**Driers and Evaporators**

**V**EGETABLES and fruits can be dried in an oven, in trays or racks over the kitchen stove, or in a specially constructed drier. There are small driers on the market which give satisfactory results. The small cookstove driers or evaporators are small oven-like structures, usually made of galvanized sheet iron, or of wood and galvanized iron. They are of such size that they can be placed on the top of an ordinary wood or coal range, or a kerosene stove. These driers hold a series of small trays on which fruits or vegetables are placed after being prepared for drying. Portable outdoor evaporators are especially convenient when it is desired to dry as much as ten bushels of fruit or vegetables per day. They are usually constructed of wood except the parts in direct contact with the heater. The home-made dry kiln used in some sections of the country can be cheaply and easily made of brick and stone.

**Home-made Cookstove Drier.**

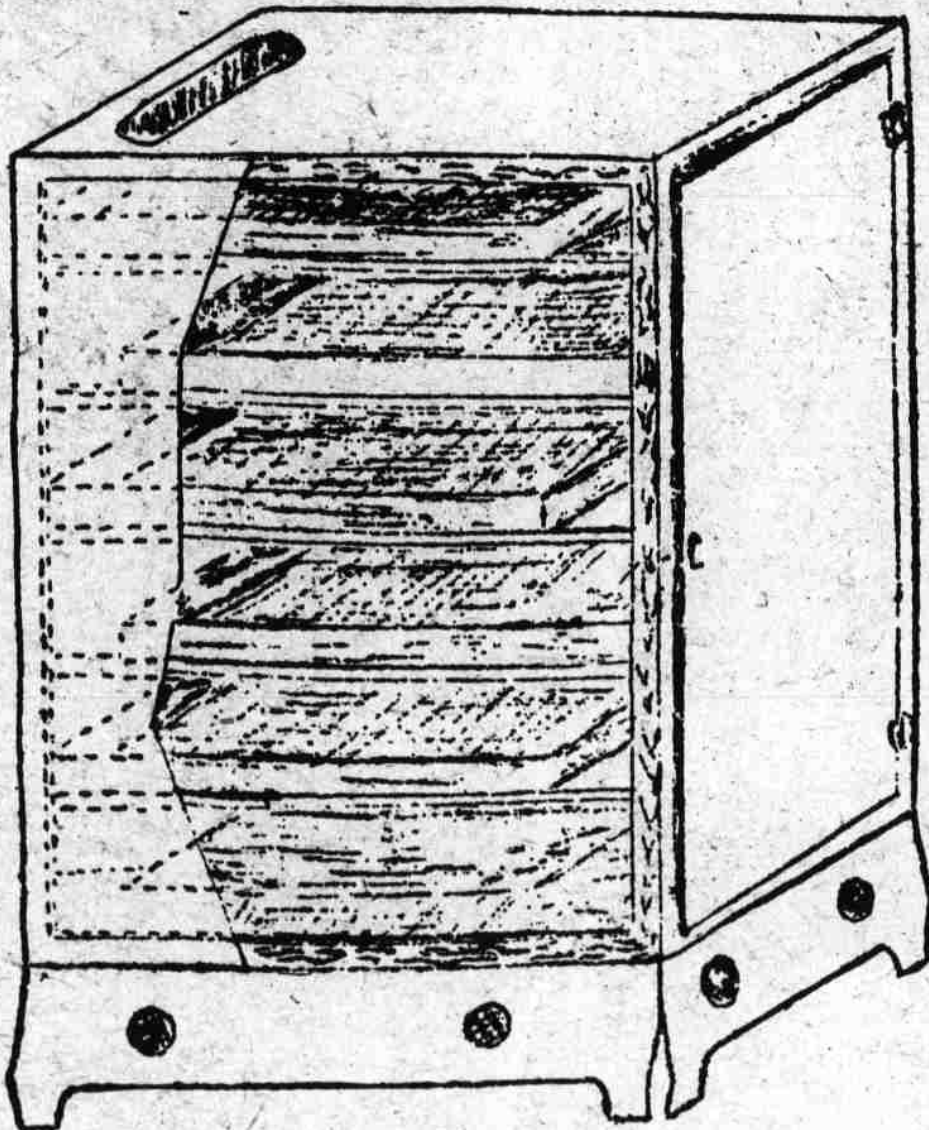
A drier that can be used on a wood or coal range or a kerosene stove can be easily and cheaply made. Dimensions: Base, 24x16 inches; height, 36 inches. A base 6 inches high is made of galvanized sheet iron. This base slightly flares toward the bottom and has two small openings for ventilation in each of the four sides. On the base rests a box-like frame made of 1 or 1½ inch strips of wood. The two sides are braced with 1¼ inch strips which serve as cleats on which the trays in the drier rest. These are placed at intervals of 3 inches. The frame is covered with tin or galvanized sheet iron, which is tacked to the wooden strips of the frame. Thin strips of wood may be used instead of tin or sheet iron. The door is fitted on small hinges and fastened with a thumb latch. It opens wide so that the trays can be easily removed. The bottom in the drier is made of a piece of perforated galvanized sheet iron. Two inches above the bottom is placed a solid sheet of galvanized iron, three inches less in length and width than the bottom. This sheet rests on two wires fastened to the sides of the drier. This prevents the direct heat from coming in contact with the product and serves as a radiator to more evenly spread the heat.

The first tray is placed three inches above the radiator. The trays rest on the cleats 3 inches apart. A drier of the given dimensions will hold eight trays. The frame of the tray is made

of one inch strips on which is tacked galvanized screen wire, which forms the bottom of the tray. The tray is 21 x15 inches, making it 3 inches less in depth than the drier. The lowest tray when placed in the drier is pushed to the back, leaving the 3 inch space in front. The next tray is placed even with the front leaving a 3 inch space in the back. The other trays alternate in the same way. A ventilator opening is left in the top of the drier through which the moist air may pass away.

The principle of construction is that currents of heated air pass over the product as well as up through it, gathering the moisture and passing away. The movement of the current of air induces a more rapid and uniform drying. The upper trays can be shifted to the lower part of the drier and the lower trays to the upper part as drying proceeds, so as to dry product uniformly throughout.

If drying is done in a cookstove oven, leave oven door ajar. Note temperature of oven often. Trays for use in the oven can be made by using a convenient sized piece of galvanized wire screen and bending up the edge 1 or 2 inches.



A GOOD HOME-MADE DRIER

**Dried Vegetables**

**E**QUALLY as great care should be given to the selection and preparation of vegetables for drying as for canning. To secure a fine quality of dried products much depends upon having the vegetables absolutely fresh, young, tender and perfectly clean. Wash all vegetables and clean well. If steel knives are used in paring and cutting, have them clean and bright so as not to discolor the vegetable.

After vegetables are prepared properly they are blanched. The blanch gives a more thorough cleaning, removes the strong odor and flavor from certain kinds of vegetables and softens and loosens the fiber. This allows the moisture in the vegetable to evaporate more quickly and uniformly. It also quickly coagulates the albuminous matter in the vegetables which helps to hold in the natural flavors. Blanching consists of plunging the vegetable into boiling water for a short time. Use a wire basket or cheese cloth bag for this. After blanching, the required number of minutes, drain well and remove surface moisture by placing vegetables between two towels or by exposing to the sun and air for a short time.

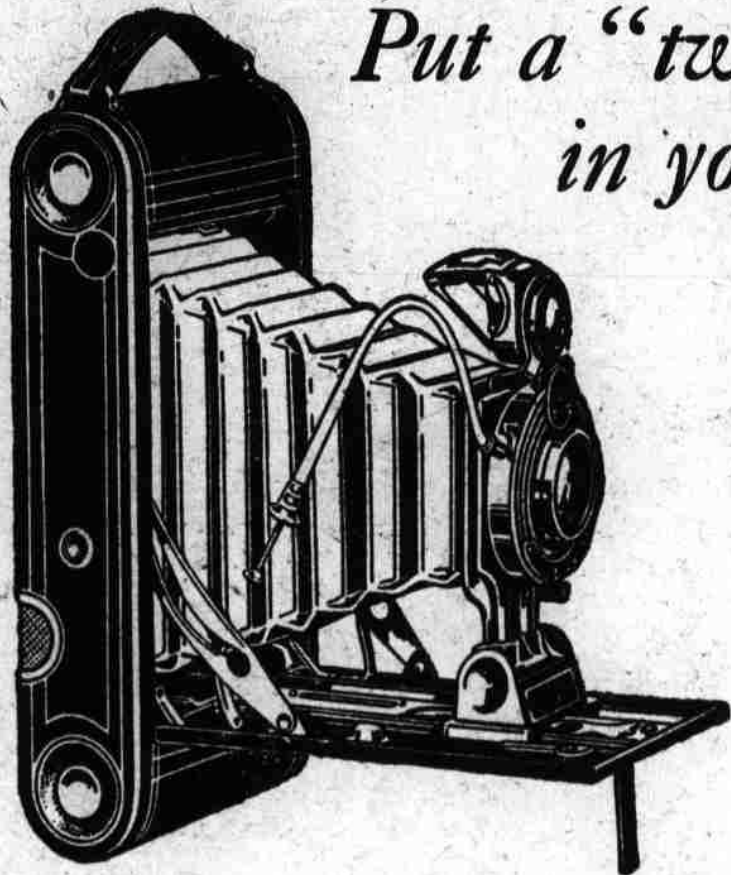
(Concluded on page 23, column 4)



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