



SUGAR BRINE RECIPE

FOR CURING TURKEY, CHICKEN, BACON & HAM

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Ingredients for Brine/Curing Solution - You can brine as much product as you can submerge in your brine but you may not reuse the brine. Brine can only be used once. Try one of the 3 different ratios below

For 5 Gallons Water

1 Lb. Canning Salt
1 Lb. Cure #1
1-1/2 Lb. Dextrose

For 2-1/2 Gallons Water

8 Oz. Canning Salt
8 Oz. Cure #1
12 Oz. Dextrose

For 1-1/4 Gallons Water

4 Oz. Canning Salt
4 Oz. Cure #1
6 Oz. Dextrose

The Dextrose (which is a sugar that is not as sweet as cane sugar and dissolves easily), may be reduced if you want to add brown or maple sugar for a different flavor. Some people add brown sugar when doing ham while others add maple when curing bacon. However, you must maintain the above ratios of salt, cure and sugar)

Equipment Needed

- Plastic, Crock or Stainless Steel Container (large enough to hold the brine solution plus the meat)
- Meat Pump (If you intend to inject the meat & you should, especially on large pieces of meat)

Chill the water to 38 degrees F. and dissolve all ingredients in the water to make the brine/curing solution. Wash the turkey, chicken, bacon, ham or brisket with cold water keeping the meat chilled to 38 degrees F. Submerge in the brine solution for 4-5 days at 38-40 degrees F. Larger turkeys or hams should be submerged for 5 days.

• If time is short you may inject (pump) the turkey, chicken, bacon, ham or brisket with the brine/curing solution using an amount equal to 10% of its weight (a 10 lb. ham would require pumping with 1 lb. of brine). Use a meat pump to do this. When pumping hams inject the brine close to the bone. After pumping place the product in ice-cold water for 3-4 hours, keeping the water ice cold by refrigeration or adding ice as needed.. Remove from the water and place in the brine solution and keep refrigerated for at least 48 hours at 38-40 degrees.

After curing is complete wash in cold water and place in a smoking bag or hang with hooks. (Pre-soak the smoking bag in vinegar to prevent the bag from sticking and for easy removal after smoking.) Place in a smoke house pre-heated to 130 degrees F. and heat at this temperature for 1 hour with the damper open. Close damper and apply smoke for 4 hours at 130 degrees F. Raise temperature to 150 degrees and hold for 4 hours. For bacon remove when internal temperature reaches 135 degrees F. For ham, turkey or chicken continue by raising temperature to 180 - 185 degrees F. and hold until internal temperature reaches 160 degrees F. Measure the internal temperature of the turkey or chicken with a baby dial thermometer by inserting the thermometer into the breast or the ball and socket joint of the thigh. Be sure not to touch the bone. Measure the internal temperature of your ham in the thickest part. Remove from the smokehouse and let it cool until the internal temperature drops to 100 degrees F.

This procedure (using cure) will cause the meat to turn pink in color. If this color is not desired you may omit the cure from the above ingredients. If you omit the cure you MUST preheat the smoke house to 180 degrees F. and hold the product at this temperature for 1 hour. Raise the smoke house temperature to 200 degrees F. and COOK the meat until the internal temperature reaches 170 degrees F. Without cure you must cook the meat at these higher temperatures to prevent food poisoning.

We recommend using the cure, as this will enhance the flavor of the meat as well as doing a better job of smoking. Smoking at the lower temperatures prevents shrinkage and allows the finished product to retain more of its natural juices.

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