

## OKLAHOMA A. &amp; M. COLLEGE—EXTENSION DIVISION

Stillwater, Oklahoma

In Cooperation With the

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

STATES RELATIONS SERVICE

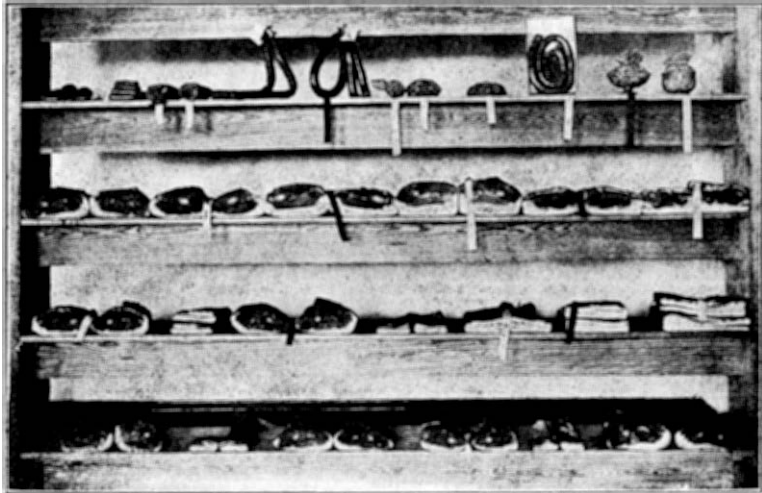
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## HOME CURED MEAT

BY C. L. CHAMBERS

Agent in Animal Husbandry



Many Oklahoma farmers know how to make good home-cured meat, as has been shown by our Home-Cured Meat Shows, held at the Winter Short Course at Stillwater. The picture of our 1916 Home-Cured Meat Show proves that farmers are capable of producing meat with the much-sought-for "streak o' fat and streak o' lean".

The purpose of this bulletin is to get more farmers interested in locating their smokehouses on their farms instead of in the North. We are sending thousands of dollars north to purchase the meat we use on our farms, and much of this is salt side, which is inferior for table use. It is possible to produce a country product that is equal to the best the packer can produce. The farmer is entitled to the best, and can produce it on his own farm.

#### Meat Curing on the Farm

Plan to butcher at the beginning of a cold spell. To do this it is necessary to study the weather forecast.

The animal should be taken off feed twenty-four to thirty-six hours before slaughtering. If this is not done, the blood is forced to the extremities of the body and the animal will not bleed well. The food in the stomach decomposes very rapidly after slaughter and the gases generated may affect the flavor of the meat where the dressing is slow. The animal should have plenty of water up to time of slaughter, as it will keep the body temperature normal.

#### Care Before Killing

The animal must not be excited in any way, and should the animal become heated, it is better that it rest over night before killing. Otherwise there is great risk of the meat spoiling, as the animal will not bleed well.

### **Killing**

Do not stun or shoot a hog. The animal will bleed much better if stuck and allowed to walk around. The animal does not suffer near as much if handled in this manner as it does from a misdirected stroke on the head. Bruises of all kinds should be avoided.

The animal should be placed on its back and held by a helper who places one foot on each side of the body, facing forward and holds front feet. Second person holds jaw of animal with left hand and inserts knife in center of throat just in front of chest cavity, the point on a line with the root of the tail. The knife is given a twist and a side motion to sever the blood vessels, but it should not enter chest cavity, as the blood there would interfere with cleaning thoroughly.

### **Scalding**

A barrel is usually set at the proper slant with open end against a table or platform. The barrel should be securely fastened to avoid accident. If the water is heated to the boiling point, it is usually cooled sufficiently when placed in a cold barrel. The best temperature is from 145° to 150°. Care must be taken not to have the water so hot as to set the hair. A small shovel of hardwood ashes, or a lump of lime, will aid materially in removing the scurf from the body.

The hog must be dead before scalding, otherwise the bloodvessels of the skin will be cooked and the body will have a reddish tinge. If it is suspected that the water is too hot, the rear end of the hog may be scalded first, as this end is least difficult to clean. The hog should be aired occasionally, but should not be allowed to cool before scraping. Scraping a cold hog is almost an impossible task, for this reason it is often advisable to complete the scraping of the portion scalded before scalding the other end. If a place is found that is hard to clean, a sack containing a little bran may be placed over this part and hot water poured over it.

### **Cutting Up**

After the entrails have been removed and all blood washed off with cold water, and the animal sponged off inside and out, it is often advisable to remove the "leaf fat" and the tenderloins; this will hasten cooling. The fat should be removed from the intestines before they get cold and put to soak in cold water. This will remove much of the strong odor, but this fat should never be put with the other fat when rendering.

Let the carcass hang where it will cool, but not freeze. It is impossible to cut the meat into shapely pieces while warm, and meat will likely spoil if cure is put on before animal heat is out, as the cure closes the outside pores and will not let the heat out.

### **Ham**

Cutting of bone should be made with saw as far as possible, as ax or cleaver leaves splintered bone, which gets into sausage meat. Ham should be cut through the joint square with the carcass. Remove all excess fat for lard, and leave ham shapely. Very fat hams may be skinned, removing a part of the fat. The shank should be cut off above the hock joint; this being removed improves the looks of the ham, and at the same time the flesh on this is most valuable in sausage.

### **Shoulder**

The shoulder may be trimmed into a shapely piece and parts cut off used for sausage and lard. The shank should also be removed from the shoulder.

### **Bacon**

In removing bacon from ribs it is best to keep the knife against the rib bone, so as to leave bacon smooth. The bacon is best cured in several pieces, as it takes a better cure and is more convenient for home use. If one edge of bacon is thick, it may be reduced by use of mallet, or flat side of cleaver.

### **Curing**

After meat has chilled thoroughly, each piece should be rubbed with salt and left for twenty-four hours for bloody serum to drain out. Care must be taken not to salt down frozen or warm meat.

### **Sugar Brine Cure**

A tight barrel should be scalded thoroughly. Sprinkle a layer of salt over the bottom and over each layer of meat as it is packed in, skin down. When full, cover meat with boards and weight down with a stone so that all will be below the brine, which is made as follows:

Weigh out for each 100 pounds of meat, 8 pounds of salt, 2 pounds of sugar (preferably brown) and 2 ounces of saltpeter. Dissolve all in 4 gallons of water. This should be boiled, and when thoroughly cooled, cover the meat. Seven days after brine is put on, meat should be repacked in another barrel in reverse order. The pieces that were on top should be placed on the bottom. The brine is poured over as before. This is repeated on the fourteenth and twenty-first days, thus giving an even cure to all pieces. Bacon should remain in the brine from four to six weeks, and hams six to eight weeks, depending on the size of the pieces. When cured, each piece should be scrubbed with tepid water and hung to drain several days before smoking, no two pieces should come in contact.

### **Dry Cure**

The brine cure is usually the most convenient for the farmer, but some prefer the dry cure. For each 100 pounds of meat, weigh 5 pounds of salt, 2 pounds of sugar and 2 ounces of saltpeter. Rub one-third of the mixture into the meat. Let stand three days and rub second third into the meat; let stand three days more and rub in the remaining one-third. Let stand ten days to two weeks and smoke.

### **Smoking**

A smokehouse 6 by 8 feet is large enough for the average farm. A stone house is preferable, though the first cost is greater. In a stone or cement house the meat may hang all summer. The house should be ventilated at the top to let out the hot air. The smoke may be made from smudges made on the floor, the meat being seven or eight feet above, but a firepot outside of the house with flue directing smoke into the building is better. Green hickory, corncobs, maple, or moist, rotten oak make the best smoke. It is better to smother fire with sawdust of same material.

If the fire is kept going constantly, twenty-four to thirty-six hours will finish a lot of meat, though, if the smoking extends over a period of six weeks with smoke each day, a much more delicate flavor will be gotten.

### **Trying Out Lard**

Remove all scraps of lean meat from fat, as it may stick to side of kettle. Cut fat into pieces from 1 to 1½ inches square. They should be the same size so that they will try out at the same time. Fill kettle three-fourths full and add one quart of water to prevent fat from burning before grease is drawn. Keep the kettle over a moderate fire until the cracklings float and are of a brown color. The fat must be stirred frequently, which keeps it from burning, and if done while it is cooling, has a tendency to make smoother and whiter lard. One-fourth pound of baking soda to 100 pounds of fat also has a tendency to whiten.

### **Sausage**

When a uniform product is made, there is always a demand for fresh and smoked country sausage, and at a price equal to that of the ham and bacon. When considering the little shrinkage of this product as compared to the smoked goods and the high price gotten for fat and seasoning, it will be seen that fresh sausage should be a source of profit for all pork not cured for home use.

In making sausage for sale, do not make conglomerates of livers, lungs, etc., but use only lean meat, mixed in the proper proportions with fat trimmed from the different cuts or the back. Do not use "leaf fat", as it will melt away and leave a small knot of hard, dry lean that will discourage the future purchase by the housewife.

The recipe given below will suit the taste of the average person, though one may increase the seasoning to suit his taste, or that of the consumer, though it must be remembered that seasoning cannot be taken out after being once put in. Some do not care for sage as a seasoning. If such is the case, the sage may be left out; and often other spices may be added to suit the taste.

The meat should be mixed in the proportion of three parts of lean meat

to one of fat. For convenience of proportions, a total of twenty-four pounds is taken as a standard:

18 pounds of lean meat	4 ounces of black pepper
6 pounds of fat	1 teaspoonful of red pepper
8 ounces of fine salt	3 ounces of pure leaf sage

The lean and fat meat should be cut into 2-inch cubes, mixed and run through the mill, using plate with large (or  $\frac{3}{4}$ ) holes. This should be mixed thoroughly and spread out on a table. The seasoning material should be well mixed and spread evenly. The whole should be kneaded thoroughly by hand and run through the mill twice, using 3-16 plate. Sausage is much better when seasoning is well mixed, and it will crumble when cooked if not ground fine.

This may be put in casings and smoked. The smoked sausage will keep for an indefinite time. Care must be taken not to pack the casings too tightly as this is the cause of the sausage bursting when cooked.

#### Baked Sausage

Pack sausage in small, flat jars ( $\frac{1}{2}$  gallon size best). Leave one-half-inch space at top. Place in a very moderate oven and bake at a low temperature. Allow twenty to twenty-five minutes to the pound. Store in a cool place when fat has solidified on top and sausage is thoroughly cooled. There will be sufficient fat in sausage to cover it completely. Tie a clean cloth and paper over top of jar to keep out dust. Sausage prepared in this manner may be sliced and served as a cold meat.

#### Scrapple

Scrapple coming on the table between its own crisp, golden-brown crusts is a delicacy that is not often forgotten.

Boil all bones, feet, scraps, etc., until all meat falls from the bones. The bones should be removed. The liver, heart, tongue, etc., should be put in a separate vessel and boiled. This will save picking the bones from the whole amount. Run all the meat through the chopper, making it very fine. Also run the cracklings through with the meat. Add one-third more water to the liquor in the boiler and bring to a boil. Have a mixture of 50% corn meal, 25% middlings and 25% buckwheat, prepared. These should be thoroughly mixed. For 15 gallons, add  $\frac{3}{4}$ -pound of salt and  $\frac{1}{4}$  pound of black pepper. Thicken with the grain mixture until paddle will stand unsupported and cook for fifteen or twenty minutes, or until material appears smooth. Work in the chopped meat until thoroughly mixed. Dip into shallow pans and allow to cool.

### NAMES OF PRIZE-WINNERS OF HOME-CURED MEAT SHOW, DECEMBER 27, 1916, TO JANUARY 4, 1917

#### Home-Cured Country Ham

First, D. H. Lewis, Mehan, Oklahoma.....	\$ 15.00
Second, Ben Colbert, Tishomingo, Oklahoma.....	10.00
Third, E. W. Parks, Stillwater, Oklahoma.....	6.00
Fourth, S. F. Peters, Glencoe, Oklahoma.....	5.00

#### Home-Cured Country Bacon

First, D. H. Lewis, Mehan, Oklahoma.....	\$ 15.00
Second, E. W. Parks, Stillwater, Oklahoma.....	10.00
Third, S. F. Peters, Glencoe, Oklahoma.....	6.00

#### Home-Cured Country Shoulder

First, Ben Colbert, Tishomingo, Oklahoma.....	\$ 12.00
Second, E. W. Parks, Stillwater, Oklahoma.....	8.00

#### Fresh Country Sausage

First, Mrs. J. W. Allison, Stillwater, Oklahoma.....	\$ 10.00
Second, Grace Allison, Stillwater, Oklahoma.....	7.00
Third, H. E. Overholt, Stillwater, Oklahoma.....	5.00
Fourth, Mrs. E. W. Parks, Stillwater, Oklahoma.....	3.00
Fifth, Mrs. Corinne Parks, Stillwater, Oklahoma.....	2.00

#### Smoked Country Sausage

First, D. H. Lewis, Mehan, Oklahoma.....	\$ 10.00
Second, J. A. Lindow, Enid, Oklahoma.....	7.00
Third, John Framme, Antlers, Oklahoma.....	5.00
Fourth, Mrs. E. W. Parks, Stillwater, Oklahoma.....	3.00
Fifth, Mrs. Corinne Parks, Stillwater, Oklahoma.....	2.00