FRUITS, DRIED OR EVAPORATED

Apples

The apples should be dead ripe and tart for the best results. Peel and core, slice across so the slices form rings, or cut in eighths. If many apples are to be dried, an apple peeler saves time. There is also on the market a cutter that, pressed down on the apple, cores it and at the same time cuts it into eighths. Both are inexpensive.

Sun-dried. Have some arrangement for hanging the strings of apples on the sunny side of the house and protect them from flies with cheesecloth or netting. They are ready to pack away when they are free from moisture but are not hard. Apples that have been hanging in the open air should be dipped quickly in boiling water and allowed to dry before putting away.

Oven-dried. Slice the apples, spread on shallow plates and put in a fairly warm oven;
as they begin to dry reduce the heat. Turn occasionally. One clever woman dries her apples over the register of a hot-air furnace, and the work is done in two hours. Another puts them in cheesecloth on the radiator. They will also dry well on the wire shelves of the homemade evaporator.

With these methods no apple need go to waste and you will appreciate in March what you disdained in October.

*French Method of Drying Apples and Pears*

Wash carefully, and boil with stems on till tender; then carefully peel, saving all the juice. Dry in oven hot enough to bake bread. When cold dip in its own juice. Pack in stone jar.

*Berries*

All berries can be dried either in the sun or in the oven.

*Candied Cherries*

Boil 2 cups of sugar and 1 cup of water till it thickens, then drop in as many pitted
cherries as it will hold; boil three minutes, take out cherries and drain on hair sieve or on a circle of cheesecloth with rattan run in the hem to fit over kettle. Add one cup of sugar to the syrup and boil again; when thick, add cherries and boil three minutes. Drain thoroughly and dry in the sun. Use syrup for spiced fruit.

*Citron Melons*

Peel, core and slice. Weigh and allow three-quarters pound of sugar to each pound of fruit. Put in layers in deep jars overnight with weight on top to press out the juice. Next day drain liquid and boil five minutes, add citron with one sliced lemon and a half teaspoonful of ginger to each pound. Simmer till syrup is thick and fruit transparent. Place on buttered dishes to dry in hot sun for three days. Store in wide-mouthed jars, covered.

*Cherries*

Cherries can be dried with the pits left in or they can be pitted. They are easily done
either in the sun or in the oven, and there is no fruit that keeps so much of its richness.

**Greengages**

These may be dead ripe and should be dried like peaches.

**Peaches**

Scald, then plunge into cold water and peel, or simply rub off the fuzz with a towel. Cut in halves and take out the stone. If the flavor of the pit is liked, crack a few of the stones and slice the pits over the peaches. The fruit should be ripe and started in a slow oven and as the peaches begin to dry the heat should be increased. Be careful not to have the heat strong enough to start the juice. They must be turned from time to time. They should be finished in one day. The quicker the better for the flavor.

**Pears**

The pears should be ripe but not too soft. They should be peeled and quartered if large,
if small, cutting in halves will be sufficient. Begin with moderate heat so as not to start the juice; when they begin to dry increase the heat but remember that 212°F spoils the fruit. Turn occasionally as they dry.

There is a famous French method of drying pears. They are peeled and quartered, then boiled for five minutes in a syrup made in the proportion of one cup of water to one of sugar. Drain off the syrup and put the pears in a moderately warm oven for twelve hours. After they are thoroughly cool put them in the oven again and keep them there until sufficiently dry to keep.

**Plums**

Stone the plums and lay cut side up; fill cavity with sugar and dry in the sun; add sugar as long as there is juice to take it up. When half dry press flat with plates and finish in the sun or oven.

Plums can also be dried with the stems on and stones in.
Rhubarb

Wash the stalks and cut in strips without peeling. Spread on plates and put in a fairly warm oven. The oven must not be so hot that it will start the juice flowing. Turn the rhubarb occasionally so that it will dry evenly. To use, soak overnight and cook slowly the next day. It has a fine flavor, but not as good a color as the canned rhubarb.

Peach Leather

Dip the peaches in boiling water and then in cold; peel them, take the pits out, and mash through a coarse sieve. To each quart of pulp add half a cup of sugar and mix well: cook for two or three minutes and then spread on plates and dry either in the sun or a warm oven. When it looks like leather and can be lifted from the plate with a knife it is done. Dust with white sugar and roll it up. Keep in a dry place.