

Rehydration/Reconstitution Tips

Contributed By: Laura Shepard

Wondering what to do with all the delicious food you are freeze drying?

When it comes to reconstituting, *thought and patience are key*. You cannot just dump in hot water and hope for the best. You will be disappointed. You can always add more, but you can't just take it back (with one exception below). Here are some tips after almost 6 years of reconstituting.

1. Soups and most stews are very forgiving. Add very hot/boiling water a little at a time until it is the consistency that you want. Let it sit for 5-10 minutes to rehydrate bigger pieces like ham or beef, or simmer in a pot. The pic below is split pea soup with bigger ham chunks. I simmered for 10 minutes, then let it sit for 10 minutes so the ham wasn't "crunchy" in the middle.
2. For items like lasagna slices or a casserole, wrap in a damp paper towel and microwave on a very low setting, steam, or let sit in the refrigerator for several hours.
3. For seafood, use cool water or it will be rubbery or overcooked.
4. Meat, raw or cooked, is forgiving and will only take up what it needs. Use water or broth or add marinade. Too much soaking though can dilute your flavor or seasoning. Taste to see if you need more. It often benefits from time in the refrigerator if the pieces are larger. Shredded cooked meat reconstitutes quickly.
5. Things that are powdered or crushed, like mashed potatoes or mashed squash, or fruit/veggie powders, or tomato powder tend to reconstitute quickly. Add water slowly to avoid over diluting.
6. Most dairy benefits from slower reconstituting in the refrigerator. Milk, sour cream, cream cheese do better with some blending before and after sitting. Cheeses do better grated or shredded with cool water sprinkles, not soaking.
7. Eggs, raw scrambled, do best using cool water and sitting for a few minutes before cooking. There are many posts on the subject for ratios to reconstitute. (Retired at 40's Freeze Drying Group on Facebook and MeWe)
8. Some things are "gourmet" NOT reconstituted. Cake slices? Just like biscotti. Feta and blue cheese crumbles? Heavenly just crunchy on soups and salads. Desserts and ice cream? Novelty crunchy sweetness.
9. Delicate items like leaves, herbs, spinach, or kale ribbons reconstitute just by adding them directly to what you are cooking, like soup or scrambled eggs.



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10. Again, give your food some thought. Pasta and rice should be al dente or it will be mushy by reconstituting. Some things do better by steaming.
11. Final suggestion: When you want to reconstitute, search the group (Retired at 40's Freeze Drying Group on Facebook and MeWe) for your specific food item. You will almost always find someone who did it and got a great result. Try their method until you become comfortable.

FD food isn't just tolerable; it's delicious!



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