

Homemade Yogurt

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Yogurt can be a delicious way to enjoy milk. It contains milk nutrients yet has a flavor that can be adjusted to individual tastes. This milk product is very popular in Europe and is gaining popularity in the United States. Metchnikoff, a famous Russian-born French scientist, attributed the long life of some Eastern Europeans to daily consumption of large amounts of yogurt. While it is not possible to guarantee long life simply by eating yogurt, it is one home project that can be fun to make and eat.

Yogurt is made by fermentating the sugar of milk (lactose) to lactic acid through the action of certain bacteria usually Streptococcus thermophilis and Lactobacillus bulgaricus. The milk that is used contains higher solids than normal milk. The solid content of milk is increased by adding nonfat dry milk (NFDM), evaporated milk, or by boiling milk to remove some of the water. The easiest at-home method would be adding NFDM to milk.

After the milk has been mixed, heated, and cooled, the fermentation is started by adding a culture of the 2 micro-organisms to the milk at a temperature of 110° F. This temperature is maintained (110° F. \pm 5°) for 3-4 hours until a firm coagulation has developed. When the yogurt is ready it should be cooled immediately and kept cold until consumed. Yogurt can be eaten plain, mixed with fresh or sugared fruit, used in cooking and in salads.

Starter culture

Dry cultures for making yogurt can be purchased in some health food stores, but they are usually expensive. Follow directions obtained with dry culture to start it growing. Dried cultures may also be purchased directly from the manufacturer.* The easiest and least expensive way of obtaining a starter culture is to purchase plain yogurt at a grocery store. It must be plain—no fruit or sugar added. This provides a starter culture.

After the first batch of yogurt has been made, a portion of your home-made yogurt may be kept to be used as a starter culture for the next batch.

Note on powdered skim milk

Powdered milk or nonfat dry milk (NFDM) will vary in its bulk density, that is, the ratio of volume to weight. The recipes in this fact sheet have been developed to give approxi-

mately 15 percent total milk solids on a weight basis. Ideally, the milk powder should be weighed to obtain the desired solids content. Since this might not be possible in all home kitchens, approximate cup measurements are also given. If the yogurt is too thick, then reduce the amount of powdered skim milk added, if it is too thin add more powdered milk.

In the following recipes the amount of NFDM to add is given 3 ways: ounces, cups of instant NFDM, or cups of regular NFDM. Use only one of the three measures given.

Equipment

A 4 or 5 quart saucepan

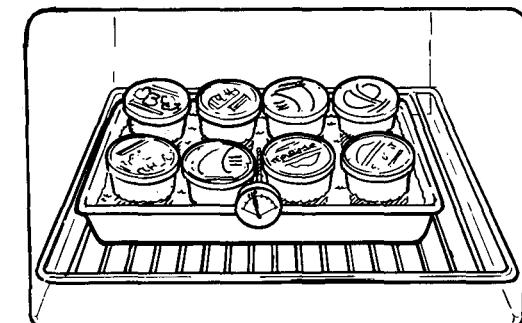
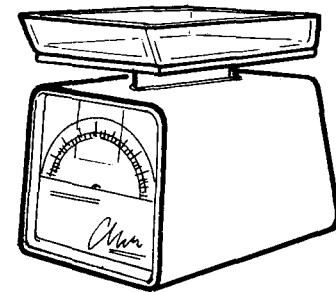
Thermometer **, preferably stainless steel, temperature range 50-220° F. (a glass thermometer can be used but breaks easily)

Containers for yogurt

8, pint jars or plastic containers or 16, ½-pint jars or plastic containers with covers

Setting pans to hold water for yogurt containers to be incubated

** Good stainless steel thermometers are available from Weston Instruments, Inc., 614 Frelinghuysen Ave., Newark, N.J. 07114 Model 2292, Temperature range 0-220° F. Approximate cost: \$12.



* Dri-vac cultures for making yogurt are available from Chr. Hansen's Laboratory, Inc., 9015 West Maple Street, Milwaukee, Wis. 53214.

Ingredients

Recipe 1—Yogurt using only nonfat dry milk

21.6 oz. NFDM
or 8 1/3 cups instant NFDM
or 4 3/4 cups regular NFDM^t

1 gallon water at 110° F.

Recipe 2—Yogurt using skim milk and NFDM

1 gallon skim milk
10.4 oz. NFDM
or 4 cups instant NFDM
or 2 1/4 cups regular NFDM

Recipe 3—Yogurt using 2% milk and NFDM

1 gallon 2% milk
7.2 oz. NFDM
or 2 1/2 cups instant NFDM
or 1 1/2 cups regular NFDM

Recipe 4—Yogurt using regular milk

1 gallon regular milk
4.8 oz. NFDM
or 1 1/4 cups instant NFDM
or 1 cup regular NFDM

Method for making yogurt

1. Heat the milk in saucepan or double boiler to 180° F. and maintain this temperature for 15-20 minutes. This step is necessary to kill any undesirable bacteria that might be present and also changes the properties of the milk protein that gives yogurt a firmer more custard-like body and texture in the finished product.
2. Cool the heated milk to 110° F.
3. Adjust temperature of water in setting pans to 110° F. Set oven temperature at lowest point to maintain water temperature at 110° F. Alternately use commercially available yogurt maker or insulated container that will keep the yogurt mixture warm during the required time.
4. Add to the milk at 110° F. 1 cup (8 oz.) yogurt starter culture. Mix well but gently. Do not incorporate too much air.
5. Pour into yogurt containers and cover with lid.
6. Put filled containers into setting pans in oven. Maintain temperature at 110° F. If water temperature in pan is 110° F., temperature in container should also be 110° F.
7. Check temperature frequently. Do not exceed 115° F. as this temperature will kill the culture.
8. Maintain this temperature for 3-4 hours.
9. When firm coagulation has formed, remove from oven and cool immediately in ice bath or refrigerator.
10. Save unopened container in the refrigerator to use as starter for next batch.

^tSupermarkets generally sell instant NFDM; health food stores often sell regular NFDM. Know which you are using.

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