

SEASONED HUNTERS

INSTRUCTIONS FOR MAKING & COOKING SNACK STICKS

Each Seasoned Hunters seasoning blend pouch and cure pack seasons/cures 12.5 lbs meat. For making 25 lbs sausage, use 2 seasoning pouches and 2 cure packs.

Meat required: For a 12.5 lb batch, use 7.5 lbs base meat and 5 lbs pork shoulder or butt roast. For a 25 lb batch, use 15 lbs base meat and 10 lbs pork shoulder or butt roast.

- 1. Cube the “base meat”** (lean beef, venison, goose, pheasant, etc.) and the pork into 1” cubes. Weigh out the required amount of meat according to batch size. Add all the meat to a large mixing container and combine the two meats together by hand-mixing.
- 2. Add seasoning blend:** Pour the contents of the seasoning pouch and the cure pack into a mixing bowl and mix well. **Note:** If using natural powdered smoke (optional) and/or meat binder (optional but recommended), add this to the seasoning and cure and mix well, then add the seasoning/cure to the cubed meat and mix well by hand until well distributed.
- 3. Grind the meat - 1st grind:** Grind the cubed and seasoned meat mixture once through a 3/8” plate.
- 4. Add water:** After the first grind, add cold, clean water to the ground meat and mix by hand until all water is absorbed into the meat. For **12.5 lb batch**, add 2 cups water. For **25 lb batch**, add 4 cups.
- 5. Grind the meat - 2nd grind:** Grind the meat mixture one more time through a 3/16” or 1/4” plate.
- 6. Add cheese (optional):** If you choose to add high temperature cheese, add and mix by hand. Add cheese at a 5% to 10% ratio. **Example:** a 12.5 lb batch would require 0.65-1.25 lbs cheese.
- 7. Stuff casings:** Put meat in meat stuffer and carefully fill the natural or collagen casings with meat. **Do not soak** the collagen casings in water as they get harder to handle and delicate when wet. Push as much dry casing as possible onto the stuffing tube (then lube casing with water), pinch off the end as casing starts to fill, then release, and with some hold-back pressure of casing coming off the tube, slowly fill casing.
- 8. Load smoker/cooker:** Hang or lay sausages in smoker. Make sure no snack sticks are touching. Insert a temperature probe meat thermometer into middle/center of one or two sausages for monitoring.
- 9. Cook/dry sausages:** Set cooking temperature to 100° for 1 hour to dry casings.
- 10. Smoke sausages:** After drying, add wood chips or sawdust to smoke for 1.5 hours, keeping the temperature at or near 100-110° or as low as possible.
- 11. After smoking:** Set cooking temperature to 130° and cook for 3 hours.
- 12. Finish cooking:** Increase the cooking temperature to 180°. Cook until the internal temperature of the snack sticks reaches a finish temp of 158°.
- 13. Shut off smoker/cooker** heat source and allow snack sticks to hang until cool enough to handle. Then, cut to size and put in refrigerator to dry, if desired.
- 14. Dry snack sticks** in cooler. Usually takes one day or less. They dry quickly due to their small diameter. Test product for desired moisture, then vacuum seal and keep refrigerated.

Oven cooking instructions: If you do not have a smoker, snack sticks can easily be cooked in a home oven. Position oven grills on uppermost level in oven. Lay sticks horizontally on oven grills. Insert a temperature probe into center/middle of one of the sausages. **Set oven temperature at 170°.** Cook until internal temperature of the snack sticks reaches 158°, **then follow steps 13 and 14 above.** **Note:** For smoke flavor, liquid or powdered smoke can be added during Step 2 (above) when adding seasoning blend.

No meat grinder? Delicious sausage can be made from lean ground beef and ground pork, available from your local meat department, omitting the grinding steps. According to batch size, combine the required amount of ground beef, ground pork, water, and seasoning/cure (and optional meat binder, smoke flavor) all at once. Hand-mix until well blended, then follow the remaining steps above.