

Low Heating Grains Tonya Judd, M.H.

Here at the School of Natural Healing we teach and talk about low heating grains. This, at times, is foreign as many of us did not learn to cook in this manner. The purpose of low heating is to ensure that the nutrients and enzymes remain intact and retain the nutrients that are in the plants/foods that we are consuming so that they remain as close to their whole state as possible. Also, when the enzymes are not destroyed, absorption and digestion are at their optimum. We need the enzymes in food in order for our foods to digest. In simple terms, live food gives life!

This article will focus on grains; however, the concept is the same for other foods.

The first important step in low heating your grains is to begin by rinsing them well and soaking them for at least 8 hours. Once you have completed this step, you will proceed with one of the low heating methods below.

I have listed 5 methods for low heating foods. These include: the dehydrator method, the crockpot method, the thermos method, the Wonderbox or Wonderbag method and the cooler method.

In each of these methods the grain is rinsed and then soaked in water for at least 8 hours and can be soaked for up to 20 hours. Once your grain has been soaked, rinse it again and then place it in a jar or glass container. I find that canning jars with lids work wonderfully and are my container of choice for the low-heating methods below, with the exception of the thermos method. Fill your jar, thermos or container 1/3 - 1/2 full with the grain that you have soaked. Finish filling the thermos or jar/container with water that has been brought almost to a boil and place the lid on the jar or container.

The Dehydrator Method:

You will need a dehydrator wherein you can remove all of the trays in order to accommodate the container in which you will be low heating. In this case you would need a glass jar with a lid or a glass container with a lid. When low heating in the dehydrator you can start with a much higher initial temperature and then lower the temperature as needed. The reasoning behind this is that the air temperature is going to be different than the food temperature. As a general rule, food temperature is usually around 20 degrees cooler than air temperature. You will initially begin by starting your dehydrator temperature around 145 degrees and then after 1 hour you will lower the temperature to around 115 - 119 degrees.

The Crockpot Method:

To low heat using a crockpot you will turn the crockpot to the lowest setting and then pour about 2-3 inches of water into the crockpot. Place the pre-soaked grain into a glass jar or



bowl and add the proper amount of hot liquid and cover with a lid. Cook on low until the grain is at the desired softness.

The Thermos Method:

Fill the thermos 1/3-1/2 full of the pre-soaked grain. Pour water that has been heated to almost boiling into the thermos to fill it. You can do this prior to going to bed and in the morning the grain will be ready to eat.

The Wonderbox/Wonderbag Method:

The Wonderbox/Wonderbag method involves using a Wonderbox or a Wonderbag. These “bags” are filled with styrofoam beans that are used to fill bean bags. These can be made quite easily and inexpensively. The principle here is that the Wonderbox or Wonderbag insulates the jar or pot and keeps the food at a consistent temperature. You can use a jar (my preference) or a glass casserole dish with a lid for this method. Fill your container 1/3 - 1/2 full of the pre-soaked grain. Fill with water that has been brought to a boil. Place the lid on and put it in the Wonderbox/Wonderbag and leave for 5-8 hours.

Cooler Method:

For the cooler method you will use an (ice chest) and a couple fleece blankets to wrap the jar(s), casserole dish or pot that you are using to “cook” your grain in. Fill your container 1/3 - 1/2 full of the pre-soaked grain. Fill with water that has been brought to a boil. Place the lid on and wrap the jar with the fleece blanket. Stuff the second blanket around the jars, or pan of choice and close the lid on the cooler. The grain should be fully cooked in 5-8 hours.

Try one of these methods with the recipe included below! Enjoy!

Tonya Judd is a Master Herbalist graduate of the School of Natural Healing.