Freeze Dryer BATCH LOG

Every machine, kitchen and climate is different. Logging each batch is how you learn *your* times, so the next load of strawberries is a no-brainer.

Date	Food & prep	Trays	Weight in	Weight out	Pre-frozen?	Total time	Notes / added dry time

IS IT DONE? Weigh a tray at the end, add 2 hours, weigh again. Same weight? It's done. Anything cool or gummy in the middle needs more time.

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Fun & Easy FIRST LOADS GROCERY LIST

Your first real loads should be easy and fun: minimal prep, quick to dry, and delicious enough to keep you excited. If something goes wrong? Your Skittles aren't going to be ruined. Take it to the store and fill in what you spend.

	Item	Prep tip	Qty	Price
FRUIT				
☐	Strawberries	*Hull and slice; thin-skinned, no nicking*		
☐	Bananas	*Slice about ¼–½ inch, amazing raw*		
☐	Apples	*Slice into chips or spirals*		
☐	Raspberries	*Whole, single layer*		
☐	Frozen fruit (mango, peaches)	*Straight from the bag*		
VEGGIES				
☐	Frozen peas	*Straight from the bag*		
☐	Frozen corn	*Straight from the bag*		
☐	Frozen mixed veggies	*Spread in a single layer*		
☐	Diced peppers & onions	*Frozen bags work great*		
DAIRY				
☐	Shredded cheese	*Parchment or mat; blot extra oil*		
☐	Yogurt (for yogurt drops)	*Pipe drops on a mat, pre-freeze*		
☐	Sour cream	*Spread flat, pre-freeze*		
MEAT				
☐	Lean ground beef	*Cook, drain, rinse, crumble small*		
☐	Rotisserie chicken	*Pull off bone, skip the skin*		
TREATS & CANDY (CANDY MODE)				
☐	Skittles	*Space out on parchment*		
☐	Salt water taffy	*Give it room to puff*		
☐	Gummy worms or bears	*They grow! Space them out*		
☐	Ice cream sandwiches	*Cut in bites, keep frozen until loading*		
☐	Mini marshmallows	*Eat from the bag or float in cocoa*		
LEFTOVERS & MEALS				
☐	Chili or soup	*Pre-freeze flat, under the tray lip*		
☐	Mashed potatoes	*Spread thin, pre-freeze*		
☐	Cooked rice	*Spread loose in a thin layer*		
MY OWN IDEAS				
☐				
☐				
		Total		

MAMA TIP Shop the sales and the seasons. Strawberries in June, apples in fall, and frozen veggie bags any time they're cheap. Stay two loads ahead with a pre-frozen tray waiting in the freezer, so your machine never sits empty.

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From Box to Pantry
YOUR FIRST WEEK

A simple plan for your first seven days with your new machine, no overwhelm required. Check things off as you go (that's half the fun) and jot notes in your Batch Log. Always follow your own manual for setup, since models differ.

Delivery day: _____ **Model:** _____ **Pump:** _____

Day	What to do	Notes
Day 1 SETTLE IN	☐ Unbox and inspect for shipping damage ☐ Set it up in its spot (dedicated outlet, airflow around it) ☐ Add pump oil if needed, slightly above ¾ on the sight glass ☐ Let it rest 24 hours (per your manual) ☐ Pre-freeze a tray or two of something easy for Day 3	
Day 2 TEST BATCH	☐ Power on and complete Factory Setup ☐ Start your test batch (follow your manual) ☐ Set up your packaging station: bags, absorbers, sealer, labels, bins	
Day 3 EASY LOAD	☐ Check and finish the test batch ☐ Defrost and wipe the chamber dry ☐ Start an easy batch: sliced bananas or strawberries, or frozen peas and corn	
Day 4 PACKAGE!	☐ Crunch test, then package your first real food! ☐ Practice your seals (tug test) ☐ Start a candy batch in Candy Mode just for fun ☐ Pre-freeze tomorrow's trays	
Day 5 MEAL LOAD	☐ Package the candy (and hide some from the kids) ☐ Start a meal batch: chili, soup, or leftovers you pre-froze	
Day 6 TASTE TEST	☐ Package the meal when it's done (meals can take more than a day) ☐ Rehydrate a little of something to see how it comes back ☐ Write notes in your Batch Log	
Day 7 CELEBRATE	☐ Clean the chamber and trays ☐ Check your oil ☐ Plan next week's three loads ☐ Celebrate. You're a freeze dryer now!	

DON'T WAIT FOR PERFECT
A half-full tray of bananas is still a win.

WRITE IT ALL DOWN
Food, prep, start time, end time, how it came out.

TASTE AS YOU GO
That's the best part. Seriously.

EXPECT A HICCUP
Check the drain valve, door and oil first, then your manual.

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Freeze Dried

FOOD _____

PACKED _____ AMOUNT _____

WATER TO ADD _____

USE BY _____ ☐ RAW: cook first



Freeze Dried

FOOD _____

PACKED _____ AMOUNT _____

WATER TO ADD _____

USE BY _____ ☐ RAW: cook first



Freeze Dried

FOOD _____

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PACKED _____ AMOUNT _____

WATER TO ADD _____

USE BY _____ ☐ RAW: cook first



Freeze Dried

FOOD _____

PACKED _____ AMOUNT _____

WATER TO ADD _____

USE BY _____ ☐ RAW: cook first

Label Everything
MYLAR BAG LABELS

Page 1 is a sheet of 10 labels sized for **Avery 5163** (2×4 in) shipping labels, or any compatible 2×4 sheet. Future you will thank you for every label you fill in today.

HOW TO PRINT

1. Print only **page 1**.
2. Set scale to **100% / Actual size** (turn off "fit to page").
3. Test on plain paper first, hold it over a label sheet up to a window, and check it lines up.
4. Load the label sheet the way your printer feeds (usually face down).

WHAT TO WRITE

1. **Food:** what it is, plus prep (e.g. "taco meat, seasoned").
2. **Packed:** the date you sealed the bag.
3. **Amount:** cups, servings or weight.
4. **Water to add:** from your weight check (e.g. "1 cup, 10 min").
5. **Use by:** your rotation date. Check RAW for raw meat or eggs.

OXYGEN ABSORBER STARTING POINTS

Bag size	Oxygen absorber
Pint or quart	100 cc
Half gallon	200 to 300 cc
Gallon	300 to 500 cc
5-gallon bucket liner	2,000 cc

Airy foods (marshmallows, candy, fruit slices) leave more air in the bag, so size up. Dense powders and rice need less. When in doubt, go one size bigger.

PICKING A USE-BY DATE

IDEAL STORAGE

Cool, dark and dry, sealed with an absorber: 10–15 years (up to 25) for many foods.

REAL-LIFE PANTRY

Home-dried food is best rotated within about 5–10 years. Heat is the enemy, so attics shorten it.

EAT SOONER

Higher-fat foods, cheese and meats with some fat, and anything you opened. Vitamin C fades over 1–3 years.

MAMA TIP Put the label on the bag above the food line, never right over the food. A friend's food took on the taste of the marker when she wrote directly on the bag!

RAW FOODS Freeze drying doesn't cook anything. Label raw meat and raw eggs clearly, store them separately, and cook to 160°F (poultry 165°F) after rehydrating.

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Keep Her Happy MAINTENANCE SCHEDULE

FREEZE DRYING SHELF

Your freeze dryer is maintenance-light, not maintenance-free. Tape this to the side of your machine and a few minutes here and there will keep it working hard for you for years.

EVERY BATCH

- [ ] Defrost and wipe the chamber and shelves dry
- [ ] Empty the water bucket (or 360 water tray and filter)
- [ ] Check the gasket: clean, dry, seated evenly
- [ ] Check oil level and clarity (oil pumps)
- [ ] Drain any water from the oil pump
- [ ] Close the drain valve before the next batch
- [ ] Leave the door cracked to dry out

EVERY 20–30 BATCHES or when oil is cloudy

- [ ] Change or filter the oil (Premier and Countertop 360)
- [ ] Refill slightly above ¾ of the sight glass. Don't overfill!
- [ ] Approved oil only: Robinair Premium or JB Black Gold
- [ ] Change it warm, right after a batch is packaged
- [ ] Legacy standard pump: about every 5 batches

Candy batches count the same as any other batch.

MONTHLY

- [ ] Clean the chamber with a vinegar solution
- [ ] Wash the gasket and the door's sealing surface
- [ ] Wipe down the shelves (unplugged)
- [ ] Vacuum dust from machine vents and the pump
- [ ] Hose fittings hand-tight, O-rings look good
- [ ] Smell check; run an "absorber" batch if needed

EVERY 6 MONTHS

- [ ] Inspect cords, hoses and connections for cracks
- [ ] Clean the outside of the machine and pump well
- [ ] Check the demister/exhaust filter (oil pumps)
- [ ] Run a dry vacuum test; write down time + lowest mTorr
- [ ] Check for software updates (read what's new first)
- [ ] Replace worn O-rings or a worn gasket

PREMIER OIL PUMP

Keep the gas ballast open while it runs. Water sinks: let the pump sit 20 minutes after a batch, crack the drain until oil appears, then top off.

OIL-FREE PUMP

No oil to change, but keep moisture out. Fully defrost and dry everything before each batch, no Teflon tape on fittings, and listen for rough or muffled sounds.

COUNTERTOP 360

The Premier pump is inside the cabinet (about 1.7 cups of oil). Check level and clarity at the front sight glass, and follow your manual to drain and fill.

OIL CHANGE LOG

Date	Batch #	Changed or filtered?	Oil looked	Notes

CHECK YOUR MANUAL Models and software versions differ. If your manual or Harvest Right support says something different for your machine, follow them. And always unplug before cleaning or working on the pump.

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Before, During & After BATCH CHECKLIST

Tape this to the side of your machine. You'll stop needing it in about two weeks, and then one day you'll forget a step and be so glad it's there. Your screens may look a little different depending on your model and software, so keep your manual handy.

1. BEFORE YOU LOAD (prep)

- [ ] Food cut thin and even (about ½ inch or thinner)
- [ ] Nothing stacked higher than the tray lip
- [ ] Thick skins nicked (blueberries, grapes, cherry tomatoes)
- [ ] Liquids and saucy foods pre-frozen flat on the trays
- [ ] Grease and extra liquid drained and blotted
- [ ] Sticky foods on parchment or silicone mats
- [ ] Foods with similar dry times grouped together
- [ ] Packaging station ready: bags, absorbers, sealer, labels

2. AT THE MACHINE (start)

- [ ] Chamber, shelves and gasket clean, dry and defrosted
- [ ] Drain valve CLOSED (no vacuum if it's open!)
- [ ] Bucket empty (Countertop 360: water tray emptied)
- [ ] Door gasket wiped clean and seated evenly
- [ ] Oil pump: oil clear, slightly above ¾ on the sight glass
- [ ] Every shelf loaded (split small loads across all trays)
- [ ] Wettest tray where your manual says the sensor is
- [ ] Door pad in, door closed and latched snug
- [ ] START, then work through the on-screen checklist

3. WHEN IT SAYS DONE (check)

- [ ] Open the drain valve slowly to release the vacuum
- [ ] Break the thickest piece from the middle of a tray
- [ ] Dry, crisp and room temp or warmer all the way through
- [ ] Any cool spots? Cool means water. Add dry time
- [ ] Weigh test: weigh a tray, add 2 hours, weigh again
- [ ] Not sure? Add more time. You can't over-dry it!
- [ ] Package right away, within about 2 hours at most
- [ ] Label it: food, date, water to add, RAW if raw

4. DEFROST & RESET (after)

- [ ] Drain hose in the bucket (or 360 water tray in place)
- [ ] Drain valve open, door closed (no door pad)
- [ ] Start Defrost and let it finish (about 2 hours)
- [ ] Empty the water bucket or water tray
- [ ] Wipe the chamber and shelves dry
- [ ] Drain water from the oil pump, top off the oil
- [ ] Write it in your Batch Log
- [ ] Leave the door cracked so everything dries out

Batch # _____ **Date:** _____ **Food:** _____

MAMA TIP If something seems off and the vacuum won't come down, check the three usual suspects first: the drain valve, the door gasket, and the pump oil (or hose fittings). Then grab your manual. You've got this.

CANDY NIGHT? Choose Start New Candy Batch. Line the trays, space the candy out (it grows!), and package it fast. Candy pulls in moisture and goes chewy.

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Freeze Dried ROTISSERIE CHICKEN

MAKES about 8 quart bags
BATCH about 24 hrs
PRE-FREEZE No

YOU'LL NEED

- 3 store rotisserie chickens (I love Costco's)
- Gloves, if you like
- Quart Mylar bags + oxygen absorbers

TO USE IT

Eat it like jerky, or rehydrate in warm broth 10–20 min. Chicken noodle soup and fajitas!

STEPS

1. Pull the meat off the bone, breast first. Let the kids hunt for the last bits.
2. Skip the skin. It's mostly fat, and fat doesn't dry.
3. Tear into bite-size chunks. Single layer, a little space between.
4. Load all 4 trays (Medium) and press Start. Four birds can take about 26 hrs.
5. Done when it feels like Styrofoam, warm, no cool spots.
6. Package warm and fast: about half a tray per quart bag.

> MAMA TIP Start it around dinnertime and it's ready the next evening.

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Freeze Dried GROUND BURGER

PER TRAY 1½ lb cooked
BATCH about 24 hrs
PRE-FREEZE Not needed

YOU'LL NEED

- The leanest ground meat you can get (we use venison or elk)
- Optional: cooked onions, peppers, dry taco, Italian or BBQ seasoning (not sauce)
- Parchment (optional)

TO USE IT

Hot water or broth to cover, 10–15 min, or add dry to simmering sauce: tacos, chili, spaghetti, sloppy joes, shepherd's pie, goulash.

STEPS

1. Cook the meat all the way through and drain well.
2. Rinse with cool water to wash off fat (and any gamey taste).
3. Stir in any add-ins. Crumble small.
4. Spread 1½ lb per tray (Medium) and press Start.
5. Done when it's darker, crumbly and no cooler than the tray.
6. Package warm with an oxygen absorber. Label the seasoning!

> MAMA TIP Leaner meat = longer shelf life. Fat is what goes rancid.

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How I Make
RAW EGG POWDER

PER TRAY about 2 dozen eggs
BATCH about 28 hrs
PRE-FREEZE Yes!

YOU'LL NEED

- About 2 dozen large eggs per Medium tray (about 4½ cups)
- A big measuring cup for pouring
- Quart Mylar bags + oxygen absorbers

TO USE IT

1:1. 2 Tbsp powder + 2 Tbsp water = about 1 egg. Let sit 5 min, then cook fully. Great in baking and scrambles.

STEPS

1. Whisk really well. Never leave yolks whole; the fat won't dry.
2. Pour onto an unlined tray set flat in the freezer.
3. Freeze solid (3 hrs to overnight) so it can't slosh.
4. Load and press Start. Expect lots of ice on the drum.
5. Done = pale yellow wafer with no cool spots, top or bottom.
6. Crunch into powder; about half a tray per quart bag.

> RAW. COOK BEFORE EATING. Freeze drying doesn't kill germs. Label it, cook to 160°F, never snack on it, and clean the machine well after. Pasteurized eggs = less worry.

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Rhonda's
RASPBERRY POWDER

PER TRAY 2 frozen blocks
BATCH about 35 hrs
PRE-FREEZE Yes

YOU'LL NEED

- Pureed raspberries, frozen flat in 3¼-cup bags
- Silicone mats
- Small Mylar bags + small absorbers

TO USE IT

Smoothies, pancakes, waffles, frosting (gorgeous color!), cake mix, banana bread, cocoa, yogurt and ice cream.

STEPS

1. Puree the berries and freeze flat in vacuum bags.
2. Peel off the bags; set 2 blocks per tray on silicone mats.
3. Load and press Start.
4. Halfway through, flip the blocks. Dense, seedy bottoms dry slowly.
5. Feel for cool spots and add dry time if needed.
6. Mash the dry blocks into a fine powder in a big bowl.

> MAMA TIP Pack in ¼-cup portions so you only open what you need.

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Freeze Dried PUMPKIN SPICE BARS

MAKES 4 gallon bags
BATCH about 17 hrs
PRE-FREEZE No

YOU'LL NEED

- 1 box spice cake mix
- 2 eggs
- 1 large can (about 30 oz) pumpkin pie filling
- Greased 9×13 pan, parchment

TO USE IT

Don't rehydrate! Eat them like spice cookies or biscotti, dunk in milk, or crumble over ice cream.

STEPS

1. Beat everything on low. It'll be thick as pudding.
2. Wrestle it into the greased pan. Worth it, promise.
3. Bake at 350°F about 40 min, until a knife comes out clean.
4. Cool completely before cutting.
5. Cut bars about 1 × 3 in. (Tiny bites crumble into chaos.)
6. Parchment-lined trays, press Start, then package.

> MAMA TIP Even my pumpkin-hating family ate these. The spice wins.

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My Favorite Load SPLIT PEA SOUP

MAKES about 10 cups
BATCH a day or more
PRE-FREEZE Yes

YOU'LL NEED

- 1 lb dried split peas, rinsed
- 1 onion, 2 carrots, 2 celery ribs, diced
- 2 cloves garlic, 1 bay leaf, ½ tsp thyme
- 8 cups broth or water
- 1 cup diced lean ham (optional)
- Salt and pepper

TO USE IT

About ¾ cup hot water per cup, stir, cover 10–15 min, then heat. Or eat it in dry chunks on a hike like I do!

STEPS

1. Simmer everything 1–1½ hrs, until the peas fall apart.
2. Remove the bay leaf. Season. Cool and skim off any fat.
3. Ladle into trays, under the lip. Pre-freeze flat.
4. Load and press Start. Thick soups take a while.
5. Break the center chunks: dry and warm all the way through.
6. Package right away with an oxygen absorber.

> MAMA TIP Keep the ham lean and trimmed. Fat shortens shelf life.

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Your Own RECIPE CARDS

✂ *Cut on the dashed lines (6 × 4 in cards). Print at 100% on cardstock. Times are from my Medium; yours will vary.*

Recipe for _____

MAKES _____
BATCH _____
PRE-FREEZE _____

YOU'LL NEED

STEPS

TO USE IT

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Recipe for _____

MAKES _____
BATCH _____
PRE-FREEZE _____

YOU'LL NEED

STEPS

TO USE IT

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Just Add Water RECONSTITUTION CHART

The Golden Rule

Add water a little at a time. You can always add more, but you can't take it out. Add some, stir, wait a few minutes, then decide. Your food needs roughly the water the machine pulled out: a tray that went in at 32 oz and came out at 8 oz lost about 24 oz, so write "add about 3 cups water" on the label.

POUR
Hot water over the food, stir, cover, wait 5–15 min.
BEST FOR cooked meals, soups, rice, potatoes, oatmeal.

SOAK
Cover with water (hot for cooked, COLD for raw), soak, then drain.
BEST FOR meat and vegetables.

SPRITZ
Mist with a clean spray bottle, then rest in a sealed bag.
BEST FOR shredded cheese, berries, delicate fruit.

DAMP TOWEL
Wrap in a damp paper towel inside a zip-top bag, about 20 min.
BEST FOR bread, cake, baked goods.

STARTING RATIOS

Conservative starting points. Start small, wait, add more.

Food	Water to start with	Method & time	Tips
Fruit (berries, sliced)	Just enough to cover	Soak in cool or room-temp water 5–15 min; drain	Or eat it dry. For baking, add it dry.
Vegetables	Just enough to cover	Soak in hot water or broth 5–15 min; drain	Or add straight to soups and casseroles.
Cooked chicken	Warm broth or water to cover	Soak 10–20 min; drain	Broth adds flavor. Great straight into soup.
Cooked ground beef / taco meat	Hot water or broth to cover	Soak 10–15 min; drain	Or add dry to simmering chili, sauce or tacos.
Raw meat	Cold water to cover	Soak covered **in the fridge** until pliable (hours, up to overnight)	Then cook to 160°F (poultry 165°F).
Powdered whole eggs	2 Tbsp water + 2 Tbsp powder (about 1 egg)	Stir, sit 5 min; up to 1 Tbsp more water if thick	Cook fully. Great for scrambles and baking.
Milk powder	About 4 parts water : 1 part powder	Whisk, then chill	Start with less water; adjust to taste.
Butter powder	Equal parts water and powder	Stir into a paste	Works best in baking.
Shredded cheese	A light mist	Spritz, seal in a bag, rest 10–20 min	Or sprinkle dry on hot food to melt.
Sour cream / yogurt	About half as much water as powder	Stir, add water by the teaspoon, chill	Refrigerate after rehydrating.
Cooked rice or pasta	About ½ cup hot water per cup	Pour, cover, rest 5–10 min	Add more by the tablespoon. Pasta can go straight into hot sauce.
Mashed potatoes	About ½ cup hot water or milk per cup	Stir, cover, rest 5 min	Go slowly: stiff to soupy happens fast.
Soups, stews, chili	Your weight-check amount, or about ¾ cup hot water per cup	Pour, stir, cover 10–15 min; heat if needed	Simmering helps chunky stews.
Casseroles, lasagna	Hot water about halfway up the food	Cover, rest 10 min, then microwave or bake to heat	Add a splash more if dry.
Oatmeal	About ¾ cup hot water per cup	Pour, stir, cover 5 min	Add fruit dry right into the bowl.
Bread, cake, muffins	Damp paper towel	Wrap in a bag about 20 min	Or eat it crunchy!
Ice cream & candy	None	Eat as-is	Add water and you get melted ice cream. Trust me.

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Just Add Water
REHYDRATING TIPS

MAMA TIPS

- **Cold or hot?** Cool water for fruit and anything raw. Hot water or broth for cooked meals, rice and potatoes.
- **Spray bottle for fruit.** A light mist brings berries and cheese back without turning them to mush.
- **A little at a time.** Add, stir, wait 5 minutes, then decide. Mashed potatoes go from stiff to soupy fast.
- **Skip the soak.** Veggies, cooked meat and fruit can go dry into soup, chili, casseroles or muffin batter. Add a little extra liquid.
- **Lost its tang?** Pickles and sloppy joes lose vinegar in the machine. Add a splash back (or try vinegar powder).
- **Label it now.** Write the water amount from your weight check on the bag. Future you will be thrilled.

RAW MEAT & RAW EGGS

- Freeze drying **does not kill** bacteria. It puts them to sleep, and water wakes them up.
- Label raw foods clearly: **RAW. COOK BEFORE EATING.**
- Rehydrate raw meat in **cold water in the refrigerator**, never on the counter or in warm water.
- Cook to a safe internal temperature: **160°F** for meat and egg dishes, **165°F** for poultry. Use a thermometer.
- Cook raw egg powder fully, or start with pasteurized eggs.
- Feeding little ones, older folks or anyone with a weak immune system? Cook it before you freeze dry it.

AFTER IT'S REHYDRATED It's fresh food again. Eat it, or refrigerate it and use it within a few days like leftovers. Rehydrated dairy goes straight into the fridge.

MY OWN RATIOS

Write down what worked in your kitchen, so next time is a no-brainer.

Food	Water I used	Method & time	How it came out

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Learn From My Flops
WHAT NOT TO FREEZE DRY

Freeze drying works by pulling water out of food. Two things get in the way: **sugar**, which clings to water and won't let go, and **fat**, which isn't water at all, so it never dries and goes rancid in the bag. Here's my list, with the why and a better idea for each.

STRAIGHT SUGAR

Honey refuses to give up even one teeny gram of water. It bubbles and spreads through your machine like the Blob. Please don't. I'm begging you.

STRAIGHT FAT

Fat stays fat. It makes a mess on the trays and turns rancid in storage, even when it looks and feels perfectly dry.

Food	Why it's a problem	Better idea
Honey, syrups, jam NO	Sugar won't release its water. Sticky, bubbly mess.	Bake them into cookies, muffins or biscotti, then freeze dry those.
Butter, oil, lard NO	Pure fat. Won't dry and goes rancid.	Buy commercial powdered butter. (I rebel-can mine.)
Mayo, creamy dressings NO	Mostly oil.	Add fresh after rehydrating your chicken or tuna salad fixings.
Peanut & nut butters, nuts NO	Too much fat. Rancid long before you need it.	Store nuts in the freezer. Peanut butter cookies freeze dry great!
Plain chocolate NO	High fat, and it barely changes anyway.	Chocolate chips baked into bars and cookies work.
Guacamole & avocado SHORT-TERM ONLY	High fat. Mine went rancid within a month (my biggest flop).	Snack on it within weeks, if at all. Don't count it as storage.
Bacon, fatty sausage, fatty meats LIMIT	Fat pools on the tray. Short shelf life.	Lean meats, turkey sausage, or cook, drain and rinse the fat away. Eat bacon within weeks.
Raisins SKIP	Already dried and sugary. Just weird.	Freeze dry fresh grapes (nick the skins).
Overripe fruit SKIP	Mushy and extra sugary. Dries poorly.	Make fruit leather or smoothie bites.
Ham sandwiches SKIP	A powdered, crazy disaster.	Freeze dry the ham and the bread separately. Or don't.

MY BIGGEST FLOP: GUACAMOLE It came out green, crisp and gorgeous. I sealed it up, so proud. A month later I opened a bag and it was rancid. I almost threw up. Lesson learned: dry isn't the same as shelf-stable when there's a lot of fat involved. (Yes, there's a video. Watch me suffer.)

FOOD SAFETY: FREEZE DRYING DOESN'T KILL GERMS It puts them to sleep, and water wakes them back up. Label raw meat and raw eggs **RAW**, rehydrate raw meat in cold water in the fridge, and cook it to **160°F** (poultry **165°F**). Or cook it first. Once food is rehydrated, treat it like fresh food.

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Oh Honey, Yes! WHAT TO FREEZE DRY

The list of what you CAN freeze dry is way longer than the list of what you can't. Check off each one as you try it. My rule of thumb: if you can eat it raw, or it freezes and thaws well, it's probably a great candidate. (Always at the top of my list: marshmallows!)

FRUITS

- [ ] Strawberries
- [ ] Raspberries
- [ ] Blueberries*
- [ ] Bananas
- [ ] Apples
- [ ] Applesauce
- [ ] Peaches
- [ ] Pineapple
- [ ] Mango
- [ ] Cherries, pitted
- [ ] Grapes*
- [ ] Pears

VEGETABLES

- [ ] Peas
- [ ] Corn
- [ ] Green beans
- [ ] Broccoli
- [ ] Cauliflower
- [ ] Celery
- [ ] Onions
- [ ] Bell peppers
- [ ] Jalapeños
- [ ] Cherry tomatoes*
- [ ] Potatoes (blanched)
- [ ] Butternut squash

MEATS (cooked, lean, drained)

- [ ] Rotisserie chicken
- [ ] Shredded chicken
- [ ] Lean ground beef
- [ ] Ground venison
- [ ] Taco meat
- [ ] Steak slices
- [ ] Turkey
- [ ] Pork chops
- [ ] Diced lean ham
- [ ] Meatballs

DAIRY & EGGS

- [ ] Shredded cheese
- [ ] Cottage cheese
- [ ] Yogurt + yogurt drops
- [ ] Sour cream
- [ ] Cream cheese
- [ ] Milk (pre-freeze)
- [ ] Ice cream
- [ ] Scrambled eggs
- [ ] Raw egg powder**
- [ ] Cheesecake

MEALS & SIDES

- [ ] Chili
- [ ] Stew
- [ ] Chowder
- [ ] Split pea soup
- [ ] Taco soup
- [ ] Spaghetti sauce
- [ ] Lasagna
- [ ] Casseroles
- [ ] Mashed potatoes
- [ ] Rice + cooked beans
- [ ] Stuffing
- [ ] Ravioli, tortellini
- [ ] Burritos
- [ ] Frozen pizza

DESSERTS & CANDY

- [ ] Marshmallows
- [ ] Ice cream sandwiches
- [ ] Cheesecake bites
- [ ] Cookie bars
- [ ] Pumpkin spice bars
- [ ] Wedding cake
- [ ] Skittles
- [ ] Gummy worms + bears
- [ ] Salt water taffy
- [ ] Milk Duds
- [ ] Caramel squares
- [ ] Jell-O + fruit

HERBS & EXTRAS

- [ ] Basil
- [ ] Oregano
- [ ] Parsley
- [ ] Cilantro
- [ ] Chives
- [ ] Dill
- [ ] Salsa
- [ ] Pico de gallo
- [ ] Sauerkraut
- [ ] Mustard
- [ ] Edible flowers
- [ ] Smoothie bites

IDEAS WHEN YOU'RE STUCK

- [ ] Bag of frozen veggies
- [ ] Pre-sliced fruit
- [ ] Shredded cheese
- [ ] Last night's leftovers
- [ ] Canned veggies
- [ ] Canned soup
- [ ] Tray of eggs
- [ ] Taco meat, drained
- [ ] A bag of candy
- [ ] Yogurt, pre-frozen
- [ ] Cooked rice
- [ ] Salsa

** Nick or slice thick skins so the water can escape. ** Raw eggs and raw meat stay raw: label them RAW and cook fully after rehydrating (160°F, poultry 165°F).*

MAMA TIP Keep a few "ten-minute loads" in the freezer for busy days. You can tray up frozen veggies or a bag of shredded cheese faster than you can find your shoes, and your machine never sits there like a long-forgotten classic car.

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