

## Sun-Dried Raisins

Summertime offers the opportunity to enjoy locally grown fruits and vegetables, especially after a long, cold winter. While we can eat fresh produce year-round by flying it in from warmer climates, people in the 18<sup>th</sup> century would have had to use this time to stock up on food for the winter while it was available to them. Modern canning wasn't invented until the start of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, so how did people preserve their food until then? One common method used by both indigenous people and settlers in the 18<sup>th</sup> century was sun-drying.

### What you'll need:

- Grapes
- Small cloth (like a tea towel or a pillowcase)
- Tray (cookie sheets work well)
- Cooling rack (optional)



For best results, you'll want to make your raisins during a stretch of a few hot, dry days. You might also want to take the tray in at night to avoid nighttime humidity and fog.

**Note:** If too much moisture gets to your raisins, they might get moldy. If you notice any signs of rot, be sure to throw away the batch and try again.

- 1) Remove the grapes from the stem and rinse them in water.
- 2) If you have one, place the cooling rack in the tray (as shown) and arrange the grapes in a single layer.
- 3) Place the cloth on top of the grapes and weigh it down along the edges to keep bugs and critters out.
- 4) Place the tray in full sun for at least three days.
- 5) You can taste test the raisins until they're dried to your liking.
- 6) Enjoy your raisins right away or store them in an airtight container.