



Burnt Ridge Nursery and Orchards
432 Burnt Ridge Rd.
Onalaska, WA 98570
phone: 360-985-2873
fax: 360-985-0882
email: mail@burntridgenursery.com
website: burntridgenursery.com

Elderberries: Uses and Recipes

Elderberries are an incredible medicinal berry, high in anti-viral compounds to help you fight off sickness. The berries are also thought to have anti-carcinogen, anti-oxidant properties, and are very high in Vitamin C. They are an excellent fruit for treating a cold. We are often asked how we like to process and cook elderberries, since the berries need to be destemmed and cooked before consumption. Below are some recommendations and recipes for elderberries.

Freezing

For easy processing, we would recommend rinsing the fresh clusters of elderberries in cold water, then drying them and freezing them spread out on a baking tray. Once frozen, it is much easier to destem the berries, since they will fall right off the stem. When still fresh, it can be a much longer process to remove each berry from the stem.

From there, you can place the frozen berries in a bag, and keep them in the freezer until you are ready to process them.

Drying

Elderberries can also be dehydrated. We would recommend again, rinsing the fresh clusters of elderberries in cold water, then placing them spread out on a dehydrator tray. You don't need to remove the berries from the clusters yet; you can do this once the berries are dehydrated and it will be much easier. "The Elderberry Book," by John Moody recommends dehydrating the berries at 140 degrees Fahrenheit for 12-18 hours. This all can depend on the machine you have, how many berries you're dehydrating, etc., so make sure to check on the berries every once and a while to see if they are done.

Once the berries are dehydrated, place them in an airtight container, like a glass jar, and keep in a cool dry place until you are ready to use them.

*** Cooking is still necessary even if elderberries are frozen or dried! ***

Elderberry Tea

Elderberry tea is a quick and easy way to use frozen or dehydrated elderberries. If you're starting to feel sick and don't have any elderberry tincture or syrup lying around for immediate use, this is a great option.

"The Elderberry Book," by John Moody recommends:

1. Place ½ tablespoon of dried elderberries in 2 cups of water with some rose hips or any other desired herbs or flowers.
2. Bring to a gentle simmer for about 10 minutes. Strain out and compost plant materials or feed to appropriate animals.

3. Enjoy as is or with a dab of honey or other added sweetener.

If using fresh or frozen elderberries, we'd recommend using a couple tablespoons of the berries instead of the ½ tablespoon of dried elderberries.

Elderberry Syrup

We like this recipe from “The Science and Art of Herbalism” website, by Rosemary Gladstar, a renowned herbalist.

1. Combine 2 quarts of fresh ripe elderberries with ¼ cup of water (or 1 quart of dried berries with 2 quarts of water) in a large soup pot and simmer until soft. Strain out the pulp, reserving the liquid. Compost the solids and return the liquid to the pot.
2. Add ¼ ounce freshly grated ginger root and ½ teaspoon of ground cloves to the liquid. Simmer uncovered until the liquid reduces to about half its original volume. Pour the juice into a measuring cup and note its volume, then return to the pot.
3. Add an equal amount of honey to juice and stir until thoroughly combined. Let cool, then bottle. Store in the refrigerator and use within 12 weeks.
4. **To Use:** To treat or fight off a cold or flu, take 1 to 2 tablespoons several times throughout the day.

For more information on this particular recipe, visit <https://scienceandartofherbalism.com/how-to-make-elderberry-syrup/>.

If you want a recipe for elderberry syrup that is a little less sweet, we would recommend adding less sugar, then freezing the completed syrup in ice cube trays to then thaw as single servings whenever you need it. Maple syrup also makes an excellent sweetener for elderberry syrup, although it makes the syrup less thick.

Elderberry Tincture

Tinctures are simple to make, require few ingredients, and are shelf stable. The only downside is that it needs to sit for a few months. Thankfully, if the tincture is started in late summer when the elderberries are ripe, it should be ready for use by the winter.

We enjoy this recipe from “The Elderberry Book,” by John Moody:

1. Clean a 1-quart glass jar, thoroughly rinse, and dry. Place 750 mL of organic alcohol, and 2 cups of dried elderberries in the jar.
2. Shake well. Place in a cool, dark location, such as a closet or pantry. Once or twice per week, shake mixture well.
3. Allow to age for 2-6 months.
4. Once the mixture is mature, strain and bottle. It is best to store tinctures in dark amber bottles in a cool dark place. Light may damage and degrade many of the beneficial compounds.

Additional Resources

For further information on elderberries, “The Elderberry Book,” by John Moody is available for purchase on the Burnt Ridge Nursery website at <https://www.burntridgenursery.com/THE-ELDERBERRY-BOOK-by-John-Moody/productinfo/BKELDER/>