



## STARTER CULTURE

### FOR MAKING RAW FERMENTED VEGETABLES

Questions? Email us at [info@cuttingedgecultures.com](mailto:info@cuttingedgecultures.com)

#### Instructions for Making Fermented Vegetables

1. Prepare your ingredients and fermenting jar or crock\*

Jar Size	1 qt	½ gal	1 gal
Vegetables (pounds)	1	2½	5
Starter (teaspoons)	⅛	¼	½ (1 sachet)
Salt (tablespoons)	¾	1½	3
Water (cups)	¾	1½	3

2. Shred or slice your vegetables, using a sharp knife or a food processor.

3. Dissolve the salt in half of the water.

4. In a separate container, dissolve the starter culture in the other half of the water, stir well, and let the solution sit for 10 minutes to activate the bacteria.

5. Add the starter and salt solutions to the prepared vegetables and mix thoroughly to ensure even distribution. Add herbs, spices or other ingredients to taste.

6. Tightly pack the mixture into your jar or crock and press down well to make sure that there are no air pockets.

7. Ideally the juice from the mixture should cover the top of the vegetables. Leave a headspace of 2 inches above the juice, to allow for expansion. If you have a non-porous weight that fits neatly into the container, place this on top of the mixture to keep the vegetables submerged.

8. Put the lid on the jar or crock and let it ferment at room temperature (70F) for 7 to 10 days. The mixture should form bubbles and may expand as the fermentation proceeds.

9. Store in the refrigerator or in a cool place once fermentation is complete. The fermented vegetables are ready to eat at this stage, but will improve as they mature at around 40F. You'll notice that the flavor improves and mellows over time.

\*Special fermenting jars with airlock lids, or crocks with water seals, are ideal for fermenting vegetables. They allow the gas from the fermentation to escape, without exposing the vegetables to the air. But regular mason jars or jars with clamp-down lids work well too. Use what you have, and start fermenting!

**Note:** Store the starter culture in the refrigerator until you're ready to use it.

#### Fermented Vegetables FAQs

**Can I use less than a full sachet of starter culture for fermenting smaller quantities of vegetables?** *Yes, just use the amount of starter culture that you need, and remember to adjust the salt in proportion to the recipe as well. Keep the remaining powder in the sachet, close it well, and store it in the freezer for future use.*

**My vegetables are rising in the jar. Is this okay?** *Yes, this is perfectly normal and expected. Fermented vegetables should rise and expand as they culture, and you'll find that they can often be very bubbly.*

**Can cultured vegetables develop botulism?** *No. Botulism is an issue with canned goods and not cultured foods. The healthy bacteria in cultured foods prevent botulism from surviving.*

**How long do I culture my vegetables on the kitchen counter? Can I leave them longer?** *For most vegetables, culturing takes 7 to 10 days at room temperature. The vegetables will continue to ferment after you place them in the fridge, but at a slower rate.*

**How long can I store my cultured veggies?** *In the refrigerator, cultured veggies will keep for up to nine months, and sometimes longer.*

### Some background information...

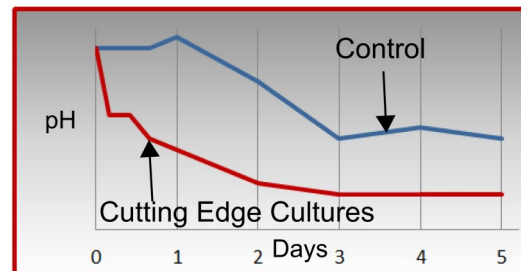
Successful fermentation relies on a combination of suitable temperature, clean equipment, and a good starter culture. If some or all of these variables are not appropriate, the vegetables may not acidify quickly enough for the fermentation to succeed.

- The ideal temperature for fermenting vegetables is a constant 70 degrees Fahrenheit (20 degrees Celsius). Try to place your jar or crock in a spot where you can maintain this temperature while the vegetables are fermenting (7-10 days).
- Salt is essential for the quality and safety of the fermentation process. Always use pure salt or sea salt without additives. Finely ground salt is easier to dissolve.
- Use pure unchlorinated water. Chlorine can kill the friendly bacteria.
- Make sure that all your equipment and containers are very clean.
- Try to select organically-grown vegetables, herbs, and spices for your ferments. The chemicals used in conventional agriculture may disrupt the fermentation process.

Scan for recipes!



Our unique starter culture provides a boost of the specific bacteria strains required for successful lactic acid fermentation. The results of an independent laboratory test show that, when used correctly, our starter can kick-start the fermentation process by rapidly reducing the acidity of the vegetables (measured in pH) in the first 24 hours, and throughout the remainder of the fermentation period, compared to fermenting without a starter.



The early stages of fermentation are crucial in order to achieve a high-quality product. A rapid pH drop also helps to eliminate pathogens, molds, and yeasts, which are less likely to survive in an acidic environment.

**Note:** Store the starter culture in the refrigerator until you're ready to use it.

### Fermented Vegetables FAQs

**Why aren't my vegetables crunchy?** *Salt is the key. Vegetables without salt become soft and slimy. Vegetables made with salt will stay crunchy.*

**Can these foods be stored out of the fridge after they have been fermented?** *Technically, cultured vegetables can be stored in a cooler basement or cold cellar. However, they will continue to ferment, and in short order they won't taste very good.*

**How will I know if my vegetables are properly fermented?** *They will taste sour and the liquid they are in will look bubbly. If your culturing has gone wrong, you will know this by the strong, unappetizing odor the veggies will give off.*

**What are the white spots on my veggies?** *This is actually something called kahm yeast. This yeast is not harmful. It may adversely affect flavor but it won't hurt you. Not using the freshest vegetables seems to be one of the fastest ways for kahm yeast to appear.*

**What do I do if the liquid is leaking from the jar while my veggies culture?** *If you made your jar too full the brine might leak out. Simply open the jar, push the veggies down so they are fully covered, and remove a little bit of the liquid or some of the veggies.*