

# BONE BROTH TIPS



*By: Cory, Valley Natural Foods' Meat Department*

Bone broth is a very nourishing and versatile product from a lesser used cut - the bone. It is yielded from any variety of bones, connective tissues and/or meat. When left on a low simmer, these cuts slowly break down and a good deal of beneficial vitamins and minerals are added to the broth. These vitamins and minerals are easily absorbed during digestion. Bone broth is best made in large batches. There are many ways to make it. Through much trial and error, this is my current way.

- 1. Roast or cook bones.** Broiling works well for beef. Cover to avoid splashing and cook until marrow appears brown on the outside. This helps to improve the smell and taste. Adding raw bones to a simmer can produce off-putting smells. If using a whole chicken, roast and remove meat. Add all skin, bones and whatever else to stock/crock pot.
- 2. Cover with water.** Nothing should be exposed.
- 3. Add salt and cider vinegar.** The salt and vinegar help to breakdown the marrow and release beneficial nutrients into the broth.
- 4. Add the carrots, onions, celery.** These vegetables fortify the broth and add flavor. Adding these vegetables is highly recommended. Add herbs to enhance the flavor further. Basil, thyme and rosemary are also recommended. (If you want to keep the broth clear of herbs, but want the flavor, put herbs in a teabag and remove when done).
- 5. Set to simmer.** Simmer the chicken for 12 hours and the beef for 24 hours. Doubling this time is recommended, if you have time. You can do this up to 2 days for chicken and 3-4 days for beef. There is a greater release of beneficial elements, along with better flavor, the longer you simmer the meat.
- 6. Check a few times a day to ensure water is above bone level.** Add more if needed.
- 7. When simmering is complete, strain the meat products and vegetables.** Line a heat tolerant strainer with cheesecloth before straining. The cheesecloth serves as an added filter to further strain the broth. Straining the cheesecloth several times is recommended.
- 8. Now skim the fat.** Use a fine baster and later a spoon to skim the clear layer of fat on top. This fat can be used as a frying oil but I discard it (some sources say impurities and other unwanted elements collect in the fat and foam on top). To remove all fat, at the end of the process, cover and let the broth cool in the refrigerator overnight. The fat will then harden and can be chipped off. **IMPORTANT:** If simmering for longer than the recommended time, fat should be skimmed several times throughout the process. This is important, as the fat can turn rancid over long cooking periods and can produce bad tastes and smells. A baster helps this process greatly. When simmering is complete, and before any refrigeration, all meat and vegetable products are to be strained and discarded (any beneficial elements are cooked in to the broth, minus solid proteins). Line a heat tolerant strainer with cheesecloth. The cheesecloth serves as an added filter. Straining several times is recommended.
- 9. If done in large batches, freeze whatever cannot be used in 5-7 days.** Broth can be frozen into cubes, in jars or canned.
- 10. The final product will be somewhere in the range of yellow to brownish yellow to light or dark brown, depending on the animal, cook time and the spices added.** Also, if high collagen cuts are used (oxtail, neck bones, certain marrow sections), the broth may have a jello-like texture. This is caused by the gelatin yield in these cuts. Sometimes, if simmering for a long time, this jello-like texture maybe diminished as the long simmering period further breaks down the gelatin.