



Spicy Hot – Or Not

By Monique Wilber

UCCE Master Food Preservers of El Dorado County

Join the UCCE Master Food Preservers on Saturday, October 11, for a free class on how to make your foods spicy or flavorful with peppers and spices. Please note that classes are now at the Bethell-Delfino Agriculture Building at 311 Fair Lane in Placerville.

Buy dried chilies or use these general guidelines to make your own. Two good drying varieties are Ancho and Anaheim, although all pepper varieties may be dehydrated. (Anaheim peppers are not as spicy.) Choose fully mature pods. Wash and cut the peppers into strips, chunks, or leave whole. Diced pods dry faster than whole pods. Whole peppers may be strung and hung in a sheltered place to dry. Begin drying in the sun for one day, then move into a sheltered area to finish drying. Start the drying at 140 degrees F for two hours. Finish drying at 130 degrees F until dry. When dry, pods should appear shriveled, dark, and feel crisp.

Dried peppers may be crumbled and used in salad dressings, dips, as a topping for pizza, or ground for spice mixes, such as the following recipe for Chipotle Chili Powder.

Chipotle Chili Powder

- 4 dried ancho chilies
- 4 dried chipotle chilies (smoked and dried jalapenos)
- ¼ cup smoked paprika (pimentón)
- 3 Tablespoons onion powder
- 3 Tablespoons garlic powder
- 1 Tablespoon cumin seeds

Cut off stems of whole dried peppers. (You can remove the seeds or leave the seeds in for a hotter powder). Combine the chilies with the rest of the ingredients and grind together in a spice grinder. Source: The Spice Lovers Guide to Herbs and Spices.

The rest of this year's annual series of free classes presented by the UCCE Master Food Preservers of El Dorado County are from 10 a.m. to noon at the Bethell-Delfino Agriculture Building at 311 Fair Lane in Placerville. UCCE Master Food Preservers are also available to answer home food preservation questions; leave a message at (530) 621-5506. For more information about the public education classes and activities, go to the UCCE Master Food

Preserver website at [http://ceeldorado.ucdavis.edu/Master Food Preservers/](http://ceeldorado.ucdavis.edu/Master_Food_Preservers/). Sign up to receive our international E-Newsletter at <http://ucanr.org/mfpnews/>. Find us on Facebook too (UCCE Master Food Preservers of El Dorado County)!