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MAKING YUMMY YOGURT

Since biblical time, at least 2,000 years ago, peoples of the Middle East have made and eaten yogurt.

Yogurt is made when certain good bacteria bearing very long names, such as *Streptococcus thermophilus* and *Lactobacillus bulgaricus*, are grown or “cultured” in milk. The trick is to add yogurt bacteria to warm milk and then “incubate” or keep it warm (between 90-120 degrees Fahrenheit) for six hours. If the milk is too hot, the yogurt bacteria will die. If too cold, it won’t grow. You can see why a thermometer is important.

Yogurt making feels like a science experiment, except that most science experiments don’t produce anything that tastes good.

The yogurt from this recipe is plain, and I add any fruit or any flavor I want. I especially like to add blueberries and drizzle honey on top.

It is perfectly safe to make yogurt. Always use dishwasher-clean containers and spoons and fresh ingredients.

PLAIN YOGURT

Supplies: (jar, lid, spoon, cup and saucepan, all dishwasher clean!)

one-quart glass jar and lid.

1-C measuring cup

large metal spoon

Medium size saucepan

Clean insulated plastic cooler/thermos big enough to fit the jar.

cooking thermometer

Fleece blanket or sweater to wrap around the cooler.

Ingredients:

4C whole milk

4 T powdered milk (optional, but will make a thicker yogurt)

2 T fresh store-bought plain yogurt. Make sure the words “contains live cultures” is on the label. Gently stir it to make it smooth.

Here’s how: (Ask an adult to help at the stove)

Step 1) If you are using powdered milk, add it to the milk and **Heat** in the saucepan on low-med heat, to 200 degrees Fahrenheit, stirring often to prevent burning. It will be steaming hot, but not yet boiling. This is called “scalding” the milk. Remove it from the stove. Be careful!

Step 2) **Let the milk cool on the counter** to 120 degrees. This will take about a half-hour. Meanwhile fill the cooler with hot water to warm the cooler.

Step 3) When the milk has cooled to 120 degrees, **quickly and gently add the yogurt to the pan of warm milk**. Stir it well, but don’t worry if there are a few lumps.

Step 4) **Pour warm milk and yogurt into the glass jar** and screw lid on.

Step 5) **Incubate**. Empty the water from the cooler. Now place the jar in cooler. Pour in several inches of very warm tap water, at around 110-120°, around the jar to an inch

below the lid of the jar. Screw on the lid to the cooler and wrap it in fleece. Your goal is to keep the temperature between 90-110° Fahrenheit.

Step 6) **After six hours, remove the jar.** Yogurt should be firm and still feel warm. Place it in refrigerator. It will keep at least two weeks. Save 2 Tablespoons for your next batch.

Step 7) **Enjoy!** Put as much as you want in a bowl. Add honey or maple syrup to sweeten it. Then add fresh fruit, applesauce, granola, raisins, or dried nuts. Be creative.