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Sauerkraut & kefir recipes.

Kefir and fresh sauerkraut are inexpensive, readily available and are two of the best sources of viable, high quality probiotics - **in fact both of these foods contain more strains of bacteria and more probiotics than most commercial supplements.**

Sauerkraut typically contains 13 strains of bacteria and about 100 times more probiotics than most probiotic supplements.

Kefir typically contains about 10 strains and 5 billion beneficial bacteria.

Only the best of Probiotic supplements for dogs can match these two foods! Your dog gets all of the health benefits at a fraction of the cost of prepared supplements.

Active ingredients in kefir.

Fermented milk results in the formulation of 'gains kernels - solids - clots' that look like small cauliflower florettes.

The kefir grains are made up of casein and gelatinous colonies of friendly (beneficial) bacteria - predominantly Lactic Streptococci, *Lactobacillus caucasicus*, *Leuconostoc* species, *Saccharomyces kefir*, *Torula kefir*.

In addition the kernels include some yeast.

Kefir is the only cultured milk product that has more than three types of beneficial micro-organisms, typically averaging about 10 strains of bacteria.

Lactobacilli (genus)	Streptococci/lactococci (genus)	Yeasts
<p>Strains... <i>Lb. acidophilus</i> <i>Lb. brevis</i> <i>Lb. casei</i> <i>ssp. alactosus</i> <i>Lb. casei</i> ssp. <i>rhamnosus</i> <i>Lb. casei</i> <i>Lb. cellobiosus</i> <i>Lb. delbrueckii</i> <i>ssp. lactis</i> <i>Lb. delbrueckii</i> <i>ssp. bulgaricus</i> <i>Lb.</i> <i>fructivorans</i> <i>Lb. helveticus</i> <i>ssp. lactis</i> <i>Lb. hilgardii</i> <i>Lb. kefir</i> <i>Lb. lactis</i></p>	<p>Strains... <i>Lc. lactis</i> ssp. <i>lactis</i> <i>Lc. lactis</i> var. <i>diacetylactis</i> <i>Lc. lactis</i> ssp. <i>cremoris</i> <i>S. lactis</i> <i>S. salivarius</i> ssp. <i>thermophilus</i> <i>Enterococcus durans</i> <i>Leuconostoc cremoris</i> <i>L. mesenteroides</i></p>	<p><i>Candida kefir</i> <i>C.</i> <i>pseudotropicalis</i> <i>K. bulgaricus</i> <i>K. fragilis /</i> <i>marxianus</i> <i>Kluyveromyces</i> <i>lactis</i> <i>Kluyveromyces</i> <i>marxianus</i> var. <i>marxianus</i> <i>Saccharomyces</i> <i>ssp.</i> <i>Torulopsis</i> <i>holmii</i></p>

<i>Lb.</i> <i>kefiranofaciens</i> <i>Lb.</i> <i>kefirgranum</i> <i>sp. no</i> <i>Lb parakefir</i> <i>sp. nov.</i>		
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Kefir recipe.

You will need the following utensils:

- 3 wide-mouth quart jars complete with lids;
- 1 wooden slotted spoon or fork;
- 1 wire whisk that will fit inside jar;
- 1 plastic strainer.

You will need the following ingredients:

- Whole, milk (organic, farm-fresh milk if possible) - enough to fill the jars leaving a little space at the top;
- 1 tsp of kefir grains per each quart of milk.

You will need to purchase the kefir grains (or kefir starter) from a health food store or on-line;
 You can, if you wish also purchase Kefir making kits.

Preparation

Sterilize the jars and all utensils;

Place the appropriate qty of kefir grains in the bottom of each jar;

Fill the jar with milk leaving to 0.50 – 0.75 mm empty at the top of the jar - the kefir will need room to ferment;

Secure the lids on to the jars;

Put the jars in a paper bag(s) and place the bags in a warm place (the ambient air temperature must be about 21 C ...leave the jars to sit, undisturbed for 24 hours;

After 24 hours the contents in the jars should have a soft, delicate solid consistency and when the jar is slightly tipped over there should be a little liquid that separates from the solid;

Place the jars (still in paper bags) in a cool, dark place to cure for an additional 8 to 10 hours - this time the ambient air temperature should be as close to 10 C as possible;

After the 8 to 10 hour curing period gently shake the jar(s), remove the lid(s), use the wooden spoon to remove the kefir grains (you will notice that the kefir grains are larger as they have grown during the during process).

Place the grains in another clean jar, secure a lid and set the jar aside. Once the kefir has been removed from the cured jar of kefir, use a wisk to beat the kefir to a smooth blended consistency;

Place the strainer over the wisked kefir and pour the kefir into another clean jar, secure the lid - the kefir is ready to drink, or you can refrigerate it for later;

You can then take the remaining kefir grains from the strained jar, combine them with the other kefir grains and start another batch of kefir.

How to introduce kefir to your dog's diet.

As with any new foodstuff that you introduce to your dog's diet you should go slow.

The probiotics in kefir are highly concentrated so give your dog's and cat's system time to adjust.

For the first few days to a week cut the recommended dosage in half. This will avoid stomach upset as your dog's system adjusts to the increased quantity of good flora in their GI tract.

You can bring the daily dosage up to the recommended amount over the space of a few days to a week or two.

If your dog has a negative reaction to the new food stop providing the food to your dog.

Looking at sauerkraut.

Sauerkraut is made by: combining finely shredded fresh cabbage and salt (about 1.5% salt), then packing the resulting mixture into an airtight container and allowing it to ferment for three days at 23 degrees Celsius and then for an additional eight weeks at a cooler temperature.

History of sauerkraut.

Although many people think of sauerkraut as a German invented foodstuff, its true origins are thought to be ancient China.

The Chinese have been fermenting cabbage since 200 BC. Over 2,000 years ago, Chinese labourers responsible for building the Great Wall of China ate sauerkraut as part of their daily diet - that early version was made using rice-wine.

It is assumed that sauerkraut made its way to Europe 1000 years later during the 13th century when Gengis Kahn plundered China.

The Romans carried barrels of sauerkraut on long campaigns - feeding it to soldiers in order to prevent intestinal infections.

The Dutch sea faring traders ate sauerkraut on a regular basis as it could be easily kept on board ship, do not require refrigeration and helped to prevent scurvy due to its high vitamin C content. Captain James Cooke followed the example of the Dutch sailors.

Active ingredients in sauerkraut.

Sauerkraut is a dense source of a wide range of beneficial lactic acid bacteria.

The predominate bacteria in sauerkraut is Lactobacillus plantarum.

While commercially produced sauerkraut does retain these valuable properties, fresh sauerkraut is higher in beneficial organisms.

Sauerkraut typically contains 13 strains of bacteria and about 100 times more probiotics than most supplements while being a lot less expensive!

If you are purchasing rather than making your own sauerkraut, make sure it is in the refrigerated section of the store to ensure that it contains live bacteria.

One of the best ways to ensure that you are providing your dog with fresh, probiotic sauerkraut is to make it yourself! If you would like to see some simple but very good sauerkraut recipes you can read this [article](#). Sauerkraut is quick, easy and very inexpensive to make.

Benefits of sauerkraut.

- Aids in the digestion process;
- Boosts the immune system;
- Helps prevent cancer (sauerkraut contains compounds called isothiocyanates which protect against cancer);
- Fights E. Coli, salmonella and candida;
- Has anti-inflammatory properties (inflammation can cause some cancers);
- High in Vitamin A, B, C and E;
- High in Minerals calcium and magnesium, folate, iron, potassium, copper and manganese;
- High in phytonutrient antioxidants;
- Helps alleviate anxiety and depression;
- It helps generate omega-3 fatty acids;
- It can help reduce allergy symptoms;
- It is very low in fat and calories.

Each batch of fresh, raw sauerkraut contains different species of beneficial probiotics in different proportions. The table below provides a list of the bacteria species found in sauerkraut.

Main Species	Secondary Species
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lactobacillus brevis - Lactobacillus plantarum - Leuconostoc mesenteroides, - Pediococcus pentosaceus 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lactobacillus coryniformis - Lactobacillus curvatus - Lactobacillus sakei - Lactococcus lactis subsp lactis - <i>Lactobacillus paraplantarum</i> - Leuconostoc argentinum

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Leuconostoc citreum - Leuconostoc fallax - Weissella species
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Just look at the nutritional value of 100 grams of fresh sauerkraut.

Nutritional Information		Vitamins	Minerals
Calories	23	15 mg Vitamin C	48mg Calcium
Carbohydrates	4.3g	.21mg Vitamin B6	1.5mg Iron
Fat	14g	1.5mg Vitamin K	288mg Potassium
Protein	9mg		14mg Magnesium
Sodium	661mg		
Water	92g		

Caution

Alcohol is poisonous to dogs so do not purchase wine sauerkraut. Make sure you purchase or make water based sauerkraut rather than wine based sauerkraut.

Recommended minimum daily intake of sauerkraut.

Small size dogs - ½ tsp to 1 tbs

Medium size dogs - 1tbs to 2 tbs

Large dogs - 2 tbs to 3 tbs

You can increase (either a little or by doubling) the daily intake noted above if you wish to increase the amount of probiotics ingested by your dog on a daily basis.

Just make sure to increase gradually over the space of days or weeks.

Sauerkraut recipes.

Recipe One - Simple Sauerkraut

1 medium green cabbage;
1 tbsp of sea salt;
Water - enough to submerge cabbage in jar(s);
1 large mixing bowl;
1 Mason jar (sterilized).
Optional ingredients
Fresh dill;
Juice of one fresh lemon.
This recipe makes about 1.6 litres of sauerkraut.

Recipe Two - Confetti Sauerkraut

1 medium green cabbage;
1 medium red cabbage;
2-3 tbsp of sea salt;
1-2 cups water - enough to submerge cabbage in jar(s);
1 large mixing bowl;
Mason jars (sterilized).
Optional ingredients
Grated carrot
Fresh dill or caraway seeds;
Juice of one fresh lemon;
2-4 tbsp of fresh shredded ginger.
This recipe makes about 3 litres of sauerkraut.

Preparation.

Make sure that you wash the cabbage prior to grating it and cut off any spots that are not fresh and healthy looking, cut off the bottom of the cabbage and save it.

Once you place the prepared cabbage in to the Mason jar you can use the cabbage bottom that you have saved to press the cabbage to the bottom of the jar.

Make sure that all utensils, surfaces, bowls, etc. are very clean in order to ensure that you do not contaminate the end product.



Shred or grate the cabbage, then mix in the salt. If you are using the optional ingredients mix them in as well.

Press the resulting mixture into a mason jar.

Make sure that you leave 0.050 – 0.075 mm empty at the top of the jar.

Remember that the cabbage is going to ferment in order to become sauerkraut so you need to allow some space for the fermentation process to occur.

Cut the cabbage bottom so it fits into the jar on top of the shredded cabbage and then firmly press the cabbage down into the jar until the juice rises above the shredded cabbage.



Now you are ready to seal the jar.

You can squeeze fresh lemon juice over the jar rim and then the lid - this will ensure that any undesirable microbes are killed and that the sauerkraut remains pure and uncontaminated.

The sealed jar(s) should be placed in a location where they can sit at room temperature, away from direct light for a period of 4 to 10 days.

Although you can eat the sauerkraut after 4 days, the longer the sauerkraut is allowed to sit and ferment the more variety and quantity of probiotics present - so waiting 10 days is best!

During the fermentation period you will likely see the cabbage (soon to be sauerkraut) bubble and change colour.

You can periodically open the lid(s) to allow a little of the gas to escape, then use a clean utensil to push the cabbage back down leaving it submerged in the liquid.

Wondering why you add water to your sauerkraut?

The old people used to add the salt and stomp the cabbage and salt together till it made its own brine that way it would be preserved after it fermented.

The old way of making sauerkraut is perfect.

The water-added method is for those people that do not want to put in the physical effort required to pound/stomp the cabbage. Grandma also told me to turn the lids down firm but not tight, then back it off a quarter turn.

Then set the jars in a roaster and let them ferment till they don't bubble anymore.

The roaster will collect the overflow.

Course hers were fermenting in the garage or basement not the kitchen because of the smell but that way you don't have to worry about the lids bulging.

About salt.

Inorganic salt - table salt, is bad just as it is for us, full spectrum salt is good - read here

<http://ottawavalleydogwhisperer.blogspot.ca/2016/10/salt-in-dog-cat-pet-food-and-treats-bad.html>



Once you open a jar to eat it make sure you refrigerate it.

The finished sauerkraut should be provided to your dog raw not heated as heating will destroy the probiotic quality as heat kills live bacteria.

Kept in the refrigerator the fresh sauerkraut will preserve for several months.

Related articles.

[Probiotics for Dogs, Essential for Optimal Health - What, Why,](#)

[When and How](#)

[How to Choose a Good Probiotic Supplement for Your Dog](#)

