Since the early days of mankind, meat was preserved by salt, air drying and sometimes smoking. The problem was that the meat turned brown and was very salty, requiring a great deal of effort to remove the salt when it was to be eaten. However, this kind of meat was “ALL NATURAL”.

Eventually, it was discovered that Salt Petre (Potassium Nitrate) could be added to improve the color and reduce the possibility of spoilage during the curing process. Sugar and sometimes spices were added to improve the flavor and cut the saltiness. This is what is often called a “Country-Style” Ham and Bacon. These are dry cured for up to 6 weeks and slowly smoked at low temperatures (below 90°F). The finished product is uncooked and if carefully stored, lasted for years without refrigeration. These hams still required a series of soakings to remove the salt and needed to be thoroughly cooked to avoid trichinosis.

After the advent of refrigeration, the "City Ham" became the trend. This Ham is what most of us are used to eating. Salt Petre was replaced with Sodium Nitrite and/or Sodium Nitrate, (sometimes called: “Pink Cure, Modern Cure) a product that endured the higher temperatures required to make the modern “fully cooked” hams. It is cured with a liquid brine so it may have as much as 20% water pumped into it to carry the cure, salt, sugar and seasonings into the meat. Sodium Erythorbate was added to speed up the curing process. Phosphates were added to hold more of the water in the meat, giving greater yields and a more tender finished product. These meats must be kept refrigerated and do have a limited shelf life. These meats are ready to use and only require warming up to prepare. Some other chemicals may be added to slow mold growth and spoilage. Today we have developed all kinds of "cured and preserved, ready to eat" meats with chemical ingredients that most of us are challenged to even pronounce.

Needless to say, we have come a long, long way from where we started with ALL NATURAL meats. In both Europe and the Americas, many are becoming concerned with what all we have added to our meats for convenience sake.

Medical studies have questioned the safety of consuming high levels of nitrates/nitrites in our prepared foods. It has been discovered that nitrates convert to nitrosamine when heated to high temperatures and are potentially carcinogenic. So, what are our alternatives? Do we have to go back to the dry, salty, brown meat of antiquity? No!

The History of Meat Curing

Meat Seasonings with Alternatives

Natural Veg-a-Cure
This product is a blend of sea salt, unrefined cane sugar and a special fermented celery juice that is designed to be a natural alternative to Pink Cure in any recipe.

USDA may require labeling something like this for products made with Veg-a-Cure:

“No Nitrites added except what naturally occurs in the sea salt and celery juice”.

Natural Hickory Ham & Bacon Seasoning
This product is a flavorful blend of sea salt, unrefined cane sugar, brown sugar, natural vegetables, fruit, spice extracts and Vitamin C for a traditional Old Pennsylvania Dutch flavor profile. Use this seasoning to make hams, bacon, picnic shoulders, ham hocks and smoked Canadian bacon.

1.) It can be used alone to make brine for vein pumped hams. (keep these no nitrite meats frozen after smoking)
2.) It can be used along with “Natural Veg-a-Cure” for brine vein pumped, injected or dry cured meats.
3.) Can be used with Pink Cure for conventional cured meats with no added phosphates, erythorbates or c

Natural Lancaster County Sweet Bologna
This is like an old “Groff” family recipe from Lancaster County, sweet and smoky. This product is simple to make and delicious to eat!

Natural Pork Roll Seasoning
This is an old time favorite, inspired by Pappy Burkholder’s recipe. A delicious all pork bologna that tastes like ham. It can be served cold as a lunch meat in sandwiches, but is equally as good cut thick and broiled with honey and mustard on top.

Natural Ring Bologna
Most everyone enjoys a nice chunk of ring bologna. We have blended a variety of spices, herbs and vegetables with other natural ingredients, to give our natural ring bologna well rounded taste.

Natural Lebanon Bologna
This product features a special blend of spices to create a classic favorite from Lebanon, Pennsylvania. This bologna is typically enjoyed as a lunchmeat in sandwiches and makes a great pair with traditional American cheese.
### Recipes *All Natural recipes require Veg-a-Cure*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Product Name</th>
<th>Type of Meat</th>
<th>Quantity of Meat</th>
<th>Seasoning Amount</th>
<th>Veg-a-Cure Amount</th>
<th>Other Ingredients</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Natural Hickory Ham &amp; Bacon Cure</td>
<td><em>Ham, bacon or fresh pork loin</em></td>
<td>approx. 35-40 lbs.</td>
<td>1.40 lbs.</td>
<td>4 oz.</td>
<td>water 1 gallon</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Directions:**
1. Thoroughly mix the water, Natural Hickory Ham & Bacon Seasoning & Natural Veg-a-Cure.
2. For hams, vein pumping works best. If the raw ham weighs 10 lbs., you need to pump 2 lbs. of brine.
3. For Bacon & Canadian Bacon inject brine into the muscle evenly**.
4. After pumping or injecting, soak the meat in Brine for a few days for better, more even penetration.
5. Keep meat and brine refrigerated during the curing process.
6. Hot Smoke to reach an internal temperature of 150°F. Cool quickly, consume or freeze.
   - This product also works with Venison, Beef, Turkey or Chicken.
   - **Meat Tumblers work great, you’ll need to adjust the water content down to accommodate your machine.

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Natural Lancaster County Sweet Bologna Seasoning</td>
<td>80-90%Fresh Ground Beef*</td>
<td>25 lbs.</td>
<td>5.50 lbs.</td>
<td>2 oz.</td>
<td>muslin bags or casings</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Directions:**
1. If starting with meat, grind it 3/8” - 1/2”**.
2. Mix the Natural Lancaster County Sweet Bologna Seasoning and Veg-a-Cure together.
3. Sprinkle the Seasoning/Cure over the Meat and mix thoroughly.
4. Regrind the meat through 3/16” or 1/8” plate**.
5. Tightly stuff into Muslin Bologna Bags (socks) or casings.
6. For best results, allow to hang, refrigerated, over night.
7. Smoke, slowly raising internal temp. to 150°F. Cool quickly. Refrigerate for 2-3 days for ripening.
   - Consume or freeze.
   - * The original recipe used 20% Pork
   - **If using Pre-ground Beef, omit these steps.
   - Option: Add 1 lb. Honey for Honey Bologna or Add 1 lb. Unsulfured Molasses for Old Fashioned Bologna.

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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Natural Pork Roll Seasoning</td>
<td>Fresh Pork (20-25% fat)</td>
<td>25 lbs.</td>
<td>3 lbs.</td>
<td>2 oz.</td>
<td>muslin bags or casings</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Directions:**
1. If pork is not ground, grind at 3/8” or 1/2”**.
2. Mix the Seasoning and Veg-a-Cure. Sprinkle the seasoning over the meat.
3. Mix Seasoning into the meat vigorously.
4. Regrind with 3/16” or 1/8” plate.*
5. Stuff into Bags or casings firmly.
6. Smoke, slowly raising the internal temperature to 150°F. Cool quickly. Consume or freeze.
   - *If using pre-ground meat, skip the grinding in these steps.
### Natural Ring Bologna

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Product Name</th>
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<th>Veg-a-Cure Amount</th>
<th>Other Ingredients</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Natural Ring Bologna</td>
<td>Pork or Pork &amp; Beef*</td>
<td>25 lbs.</td>
<td>2.65 lbs</td>
<td>2 oz.</td>
<td>1/2 cup water casings</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Directions:**

1. For best results, grind the meat with a 3/16” plate. If using all pork, Veg-a-Cure is optional. If using Beef in the mix, you will need to add the Veg-a-Cure or it will brown-off.
2. Mix the Seasoning with the Veg-a-Cure. Sprinkle it over the meat. Add the water and mix vigorously. 
   - *The secret to good Ring Bologna is mixing it until it actually gets a sticky/protein feel to it.*
3. Stuff into collagen, Natural beef or pork Casings. Tie them off into rings.
4. Hang in the smoke house. Bring the internal temperature up to 150°F. Cool quickly. Consume or freeze.
   - *Traditionally pork hearts can be added to the Pork (up to 30%).

### Natural Lebanon Bologna Seasoning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Product Name</th>
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<th>Seasoning Amount</th>
<th>Veg-a-Cure Amount</th>
<th>Other Ingredients</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Natural Lebanon Bologna Seasoning</td>
<td>80-90%Fresh Ground Beef*</td>
<td>50 lbs.</td>
<td>5.5 lbs.</td>
<td>4 oz.</td>
<td>muslin bags or casings</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Directions:**

1. If starting with meat, grind it 3/8” - 1/2”.
2. Mix the Natural Lebanon Bologna Seasoning and Veg-a-Cure together.
3. Sprinkle the Seasoning & Cure over the Meat and mix thoroughly.
4. Regrind the meat through 3/16” or 1/8” plate.
5. Mix in the Encapsulated Citric Acid. Do not use regular citric acid. Do not regrind after this point.
6. Tightly stuff into Muslin Bologna Bags (socks) or casings.
7. For best results, allow to hang, refrigerated, overnight.
8. Smoke/cook, slowly raising internal temp. to 150°F. Cool quickly. Refrigerate for 2-3 days for ripening.
9. Consume or freeze.
   - *This recipe is good for Venison or other game as well.
   - **If using Pre-ground Beef, omit these steps.

**Note:** This recipe also requires the addition of: 4 ounces Encapsulated Citric Acid

### Natural Jerky Seasoning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Product Name</th>
<th>Type of Meat</th>
<th>Quantity of Meat</th>
<th>Seasoning Amount</th>
<th>Veg-a-Cure Amount</th>
<th>Other Ingredients</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Natural Jerky Seasoning</td>
<td>Beef, Venison Elk, etc.</td>
<td>25 lbs.</td>
<td>1.56 lbs</td>
<td>2 oz.</td>
<td>see options below</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Directions:**

1. Cut the meat into thin slices (1/8" -1/4" thick)
2. Mix the Seasoning with the Veg-a-Cure; Sprinkle over the meat.
3. Blend with the meat until all of the meat has been coated with the Seasoning/Cure blend.
4. Hang in the smoke house or dehydrator or oven (180°F). Dry slowly and thoroughly to "Jerky texture”.
5. If dried properly, Jerky can be stored in clean, dry containers. Excess can be stored in the freezer.
   - Options: Add Teriyaki Sauce for a Teriyaki Jerky.
   - Add Hot Sauce or Hot Pepper Flakes to achieve the desired heat level.

*All Natural recipes require Veg-a-Cure