



INSTRUCTIONS

Before You Begin:

- The milk kefir grains you received have been fully dehydrated and will need to be rehydrated. The rehydration process generally takes 5-7 days. Please see the instructions below. The kefir grains have been packaged with a small amount of organic dry milk powder.
- Our milk kefir grains can be used with pasteurized or raw milk successfully. They can also be acclimated to coconut milk but should be initially rehydrated in cow or goat milk and occasionally be returned to cow milk to revitalize.
- We do not recommend allowing the kefir grains to have contact with metal. This includes measuring spoons/cups and stirring utensils. We recommend using glass jars for culturing kefir (such as canning jars). If metal utensils must be used, contact should be limited to stainless steel.
- Do not consume any kefir which smells, looks or tastes unpleasant.

Rehydrating the Kefir Grains:

1. Place the dehydrated kefir grain in one cup of fresh milk and leave in a partially sealed container for 24-hours at room temperature.
2. Each day, strain the grain from the milk and add the kefir grains to fresh milk. This process should occur even if the milk does not coagulate/kefir. The strained milk can be discarded or used for cooking provided it looks and smells okay.
3. Within 4-7 days, the 24-hour milk batch will begin to smell sour but clean. Eventually the milk will start to coagulate/kefir within 24-hours (please note, if the area where your kefir grains are kept is cooler than 70 degrees, it may take 30-48 hours to see coagulation).
4. The first few days may yield an overgrowth of yeast or a layer or froth or foam on the surface of the milk. Within 5-7 days, the bacterial balance should stabilize and the kefir will begin to smell clean, sour and possibly of fresh yeast. Under some circumstances, the kefir grains may take 2-4 weeks to start to making kefir. Please be patient during this process.

Making Kefir:

1. Place the kefir grains in 1-2 cups of milk (future batches can be made with up to a quart of milk but we recommend increasing the amount slowly over several batches). Stir the milk and kefir grains briefly. Be sure to use a wooden or plastic utensil—never metal!
2. Cover the jar with a towel or coffee filter and secure with a rubber band.
3. Leave the jar in a warm place (68-85F degrees) in your home. Stir a few times a day if desired.
4. Check the kefir every 6-12 hours or so. Unless it is particularly warm in your home, kefir normally takes at least 24 hours to form. Kefir which cultures at room temperature for longer than 48 hours can have a laxative effect.
5. Once the milk has thickened, the kefir has formed. Remove the kefir grains, cover the jar of finished kefir with a lid and store in the refrigerator.
6. The kefir grains can then be placed in new milk and the process repeated.
7. In general, give the milk no more than 48 hours to kefir. A longer period of time may be needed only if your home has a low ambient temperature. If kefir does not form, discard the milk, place the grains in a cup of new milk and repeat the process.
8. If you are culturing multiple products (e.g. different varieties of yogurt, buttermilk, kefir, Kombucha, etc.) be sure to keep a distance of at least several feet between cultures so they don't cross-contaminate each other. Over time, cross-contamination will weaken the cultures.

TROUBLESHOOTING

- For extensive troubleshooting information, please visit our website: <http://www.culturesforhealth.com/troubleshooting>
- Once your kefir grains have been successfully acclimated, if you have an occasion where you're the kefir doesn't form properly within 48 hours, add the grains to new milk, insure the jar is in a warm location and repeat the process. Normally the problem can be attributed to room temperature. If the culture is too cool, kefir will not form properly. Drafts from windows, air conditioners, etc. can affect the temperature where the culture is sitting. Warm parts of the house are generally best (e.g. the kitchen).
- If your kefir separates into curds and whey, experiment with shorter fermentation times. How quickly kefir forms and separates into curds and whey is dependent on the temperature of the environment. Therefore, exact fermentation time will be unique for to your situation and also depend on the consistency of kefir you desire. To determine a good fermentation time for your situation, we recommend placing the grains in new milk approximately 12 hours before you plan to wake up the next day. After waking in the morning, check the kefir (just give it a quick stir) every few hours until the desired consistency is reached.

For more information on making Kefir and other cultured foods including How-to Videos, Recipes, Ideas and more, please visit our website: www.culturesforhealth.com.

RECIPES

Kefir Cream

- Milk Kefir Grains
- Cream

Place the kefir grains in the cream and allow the cream to kefir for 12-48 hours. When the desired consistency and taste is achieved, remove the kefir grains and place the grains in fresh milk. Kefir Cream can be used to make Kefir Ice Cream (see below) or even Kefir Butter.

Kefir Cream Cheese (a.k.a. Strained Kefir)

- Milk Kefir
- Tight Weave Dish Towel or Paper Coffee Filter

Pour the milk kefir into the tight weave towel or paper coffee filter. Hang above a bowl or jar and allow the whey to drain off for 6-12+ hours depending on the thickness desired. Depending on thickness of the kefir once strained, use in recipes in place of sour cream or cream cheese.

Chai Kefir

- ¼ cup Liquid Chai
- ¾ cup Kefir
- Sweetener if desired (raw honey, agave, stevia)

Blend together and serve over ice.

Fruit Flavored Kefir

- 1 cup Kefir
- ½ cup – 1 cup Fruit (fresh or frozen)
- ¼ tsp Vanilla Extract (optional)
- Sweetener if desired (raw honey, agave, stevia)

Puree fruit in a blender until smooth. Add Kefir, vanilla and sweetener. Blend together and serve cold.

Watermelon Smoothie

- ¾ cup Seedless Watermelon Chunks
- ½ cup Kefir
- 3 tbsp Orange Juice (use OJ concentrate for stronger flavor)

Use blender to puree watermelon until smooth. Add juice and kefir, process until blended completely.

Apple Cinnamon Kefir Pancakes

- 1 cup Kefir
- 1 tbsp Melted Coconut Oil
- 1 tsp Vanilla Extract
- ½ cup Oats, ground in blender or food processor (can substitute ½ cup flour)
- ½ cup Flour
- 1 Egg
- 1 tbsp Butter, melted
- 1 tbsp Raw Honey or Agave
- 1 tsp Baking Powder
- ¼ tsp Baking Soda
- ¼ - ½ tsp Salt (to taste)
- ¼ - ½ tsp Cinnamon (to taste)
- 1 small apple, chopped
- Chopped Nuts (optional)

12-24 hours prior to making pancakes, mix the flour, oats and kefir together (easier if done in a blender). Cover and allow the flour to soak. The soaking process can be skipped if using sprouted flour. When ready to make the pancakes, mix in the oil and vanilla. Add the egg, melted butter and honey. Blend until smooth—do not over blend. Add the baking powder, baking soda, salt cinnamon and apple. Blend just until mixed. Drop ¼ cup for each pancake on a hot griddle greased lightly with coconut oil or butter. Top the baking pancake batter with a few chopped nuts if desired. Makes 12 pancakes.

Kefir Banana Bread

- 2 cups Organic Sugar (Rapadura or Sucanat work well)
- ½ cup Butter
- 2 cups Whole Wheat Flour
- 3 ½ cups Bananas, mashed
- 1 ½ cups Kefir
- 1 ½ tsp. Baking Soda
- ½ cups Walnuts or Pecans, chopped (optional)

12-24 hours prior to making bread, mix the flour and kefir together. Cover and allow the flour to soak. The soaking process can be skipped if sprouted flour is used. Preheat oven to 350 degrees. In a large bowl, mix together the sugar, butter, flour, bananas and nuts. Add the kefir and flour mixture and mix just until blended. Add the baking soda and mix just until blended. Pour into a greased bread pan (generally there will be enough batter for 1 large bread pan, 2 medium bread pans or 3 small bread pans). Bake until an inserted toothpick comes out clean (exact time will vary depending on size of pan and number of pans baking at once).

Kefir Ice Cream

- 2 cups Kefir
- 1 cup Kefir Cream made with Heavy Cream (can substitute non-kefired Heavy Cream)
- 2 eggs
- 2 tsp Vanilla Extract
- ¾ cup Organic Sugar (can use raw honey or agave but reduce the amount by approximately 40%)

Beat eggs together well then beat in sugar (start with a conservative amount of sweetener and add in small increments to taste; keep in mind that the finished ice cream will be slightly less sweet than the kefir mixture before it's frozen). Blend in the kefir cream and vanilla. Transfer to the ice cream maker and follow the instructions that came with the machine.

Variations:

- **Chocolate:** Add 2/3 cup Organic Cocoa Powder. Increase the amount of sweetener to taste.
- **Strawberry:** Add ½ to 1 cup crushed strawberries.
- **Mint:** Decrease the amount of vanilla extract and add 1-3 tsp. Mint Extract. If desired, add organic dark chocolate chips or a 3 oz. organic dark chocolate bar, chopped.
- **Turtle:** Add toasted organic unsweetened coconut flakes, toasted organic pecans and organic dark chocolate chips or a 3 oz. organic dark chocolate bar, chopped. Drizzle the finished ice cream with raw honey or homemade caramel sauce.

Kefir Dessert Sauce

- 2 cups Kefir Cream or Strained Kefir (see above)
- 1 tsp Vanilla
- ¼ cup sugar, honey or agave (to taste)

Blend all ingredients. Cover and chill at least an hour in the refrigerator before serving. Serve over fruit, cake, etc.

Coconut Milk Kefir (a.k.a. non-dairy kefir)

- Coconut Milk
- Milk Kefir Grains

Add the milk kefir grains to the coconut milk and allow the milk to culture for 12-48 hours until the desired consistency and taste is achieved. Remove the kefir grains and place the kefir grains in fresh milk. Milk kefir grains can be used repeatedly in coconut milk but should be returned to cow or goat milk occasionally to revitalize them. Coconut milk kefir can be used in place of regular milk kefir in all of the above recipes. Coconut milk kefir is also a wonderful addition to your morning coffee.

More ideas: Kefir can generally be used in place of yogurt and buttermilk in recipes. For more recipes and ideas, please visit our website: culturesforhealth.com