



## Herb processing tips

Before you bring your herbs to sell to HAALo, please prepare the Certificate of Origin and the HAALo HANDS application (pdf on website).

Please also do the following things:

- ***CLEAN THE HERBS PROPERLY*** Be sure to clean the herbs thoroughly before drying them and do your best to remove dust/dirt/spider webs/bird droppings etc. You do not need to always wash the plants with water (roots, yes, but not for most leaves and definitely not for flowers...think about lavender!) Just try to get as much of the dirty stuff off as you can and remove all dead or damaged parts.
- ***DRY THE HERBS THOROUGHLY*** There are a few different ways to dry herbs. For aerial parts (stems/leaves/flowers), you can tie them into bundles and hang them upside down in a warm, dry, airy place out of the sun. The bundles need to be loose enough to allow for good air circulation, otherwise the plant won't dry or it could be susceptible to rot. Roots need to be cut into small pieces BEFORE drying, as they might be too difficult to cut after they are dried. Go to [http://www.gardenherbs.org/preserving\\_herbs.htm](http://www.gardenherbs.org/preserving_herbs.htm) for a detailed description of the different methods to dry and find the appropriate one for the herb you are drying.
  - Each herb takes a different amount to dry; test the herbs for moisture periodically. It is good to weigh the herbs before drying, so you can estimate the final product to weigh approximately 2/3 the weight of the fresh herb if it is a leaf crop and 3/5 the weight of the fresh root.
- ***STORE THE HERBS CORRECTLY*** Be sure to test the herbs for dryness before bagging them up to bring to the shoppe. Leaves are sufficiently dry when they are brittle and crumble easily. You can use a garbling screen to separate the leaves from the stems and crumble the leaves into small pieces. Flowers are best left fully intact. Glass jars are many times better for storing



herbs than plastic bags, but we don't expect you to store/transport your herbs in 1/2 gallon mason jars (but if you did that would be awesome!). We have a garbling table at HAALO behind the counter. You can make an appointment to use it to process your herbs, but you will still need to take it home to freeze overnight afterwards. Please keep the herbs for at least a week after processing them and observe the product for any residual moisture. If you do see any moisture or rotting, please dry them further and remove any damaged parts. The process can be difficult to estimate. Never store the herbs in paper bags or cardboard after you have processed them, as moisture and bugs can creep in, and the herbs will degrade faster than in a plastic bag or glass jar.

- ***FREEZE TO PREVENT BUG DAMAGE*** freeze the herbs overnight to ensure that nothing is creeping around in there or laying eggs. It would be a shame for all your work to be ruined by a bug infestation.
- ***LOT NUMBER AND EXPIRATION DATE*** We request that you keep track of your product by creating a lot number for every herb batch you submit to sell to us at the shoppe. This allows us keep track of where our herbs come from. An expiration date is also necessary so that we keep our standards high by offering herbs that are as fresh as possible. Thank you for working with us on providing top-quality local herbs to the public! The future of our herbs depends on people like you!

Here are a few more resources to help you in your endeavors with processing herbs:

<http://nchfp.uga.edu/how/dry/herbs.html>

[http://www.gardenherbs.org/preserving\\_herbs.htm](http://www.gardenherbs.org/preserving_herbs.htm)

<http://www.planetnatural.com/herb-gardening-guru/harvesting-preserving-herbs/>

**The Organic Medicinal Herb Farmer: The Ultimate Guide to Producing High-Quality Herbs on a Market Scale**

by Jeff Carpenter (Author), Melanie Carpenter (Author), Rosemary Gladstar (Foreword)



**The Chinese Medicinal Herb Farm The Chinese Medicinal Herb Farm: A Cultivator's Guide to Small-Scale Organic Herb Production Paperback – November 30, 2011**  
**by Peg Schafer (Author), Steven Foster (Foreword)**