



Honoré Farm and Mill

SOURDOUGH STARTER INSTRUCTIONS

Keep starter in the refrigerator in a tightly sealed jar. Feed the starter every week and it will be ready to bake at any time. This original jar of sourdough starter is called the “mother.” Label the jar, so it doesn’t get accidentally thrown away. It’s fun to name your starter—a tradition in the bread baking world.

WEEKLY FEEDING. To feed sourdough starter, remove a spoonful of starter from the mother jar and discard that spoonful. Replace with a small amount of water (1-2 TBLS) and enough flour, rye is best but Red Fife is also good, to make a very thick and stiff paste, like peanut butter. Wipe the jar clean around the rim and replace the mother jar in the refrigerator with a tight lid. Wait until you see air bubbles throughout to use for making levain. This will take a few days.

FEEDING SPORADICALLY, WHEN YOU WANT TO BAKE. If it’s not possible to feed the starter once per week, and you wish to bake, remove some starter from the mother jar in the refrigerator and place in a clean glass jar. Feed with a small amount of flour 1-2 TBLS and water 1-2 TBLS so that it looks like pancake batter. Leave on the counter, or in a cupboard. Loosely cover with cheese cloth. DO NOT seal the starter once it’s at room temperature. Feed the starter twice a day, morning and evening , for 2-3 days. It will be ready, or “mature” when, after feeding the starter and waiting about 6-8 hours, there will be tiny bubbles forming throughout. This means it is mature and it’s time to make your levain.

MAKING LEVAIN. Levain is what one makes when feeding sourdough for the last time before baking. Levain can be made from either the mature mother sourdough starter from the refrigerator (tiny bubbles are distributed throughout) or from starter made over the course of several days of twice a day feeding at room temperature —uncovered!

Place in a clean glass measuring cup on a digital scale. Tare the weight to zero. Add a spoonful of starter from the mother jar or from the room temperature jar into the measuring cup. Add enough water and flour (about 60% water and 40% flour, to equal how much levain is required. For example, one loaf of sourdough bread requires 120 grams of levain. Two loaves require 240 grams of levain. Always make about 25 grams more levain than you need. The levain will lose weight as it ferments as carbon dioxide is released. This becomes your levain. It should be thick, but not as thick as the mother starter, more like pancake batter. Fill the new jar with enough flour and water

Before replacing your “mother” jar of sourdough to the refrigerator, feed as described in weekly feeding.

SOURDOUGH MATURATION PROCESS

