



The Fireless Cooker

(Also: hay basket, insulation basket)

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Definition: A fireless cooker is an insulated basket container or a box that is designated to complete the cooking that has been partially started on conventional cooking methods, e.g. solar cookers, open fires, charcoal, firewood, paraffin, gas or electrical cookers.

Main uses:

1. It completes cooking of meals which have been partially cooked.
2. It is a food warmer as it can keep food hot for more than 8 hours.
3. It can be used to maintain the temperatures of cold drinks. Yoghurt can be processed for the purpose of maintaining its cool temperature, as well.
4. It saves enormous amounts of energy and time, thus it becomes a part of your income generation plan.

How to make a fireless cooker

Materials required for a medium sized cooker of 5 to 6 persons

1. A medium sized container.
2. 2.5 meters black cotton cloth.
3. 1 meter black or clear Polythene sheet.
4. 1.5 meters, up to 2 cm thick foam, cotton, wood wool, blanket wastes or similar material.

Method

1. Align the container with Polythene sheet.
2. Pack the insulation into the bottom of the container to a thickness of about 6 to 10 cm.
3. Place a firm sizeable container in the fireless container and stuff the sides with the insulation material until it reaches the appropriate height.
4. Sew the cloth onto the container to hold the insulating material.
5. Make an insulated cover (lid) for the cooker that is tight fitting to ensure no heat is lost. The cover can be made out of the basket lid or a cushion.

Further benefits

1. Women empowerment
2. Income generation

Food that can be cooked in a Fireless Cooker

(Usually food that does not require constant stirring)

Type of food	Simmering time	Fireless cooking time
Rice	5 minutes	45 minutes – 1 hour
Pre-soaked maize and beans (githeri)	30 minutes	3-4 hours
Meat stew	10 minutes	1 ½ hours
Fish	10 minutes	20 minutes
Green vegetables (sukuma)	Fry 10 minutes	10 minutes
Chickpeas, green grams	10 minutes	2 hours
Boiled eggs	Bring to boil	10 minutes
Offals (matumbo)	10 minutes	3 hours
Potatoes	10 minutes	30-40 minutes
Green bananas (matoke)	5 minutes	40 minutes
Sweet potatoes, arrow roots	5 minutes	1 hour
Maize on the cob (green)	10 minutes	1 hour
Peanut butter stew	10 minutes	1 hour
Manioc, Tapioca (cassava)	10 minutes	1 hour
Mushroom stew	10 minutes	1 hour