

The Butcher

Butchers are responsible for everything involving meat—from the living animal to a neatly trussed roast in a display counter. However, most butchers in the United States are either primal butchers or secondary butchers. Primal butchers select either carcasses or large portions of animals, make primal cuts, and prepare primal cuts for subsequent fabrication. Secondary butchers turn the primal cuts into portions usable by ordinary consumers. Many secondary butchers also produce sausages and other cured or smoked meats. Both types of butchers are responsible for maintaining high levels of hygiene and food safety.

Knives are of critical importance to butchery, especially boning knives. Other tools include meat hooks (for hanging carcasses and sides of meat), band saws, and personal protective gear such as safety gloves and belly guards. Butchers often work in grocery stores, processing plants, or butcher shops. They often work in chilly conditions to maintain the freshness of the meat. At other times, butchers work in open areas, where consumers can ask them questions about various cuts of meat.

No formal education is required to become a butcher, although some choose to attend culinary school. Apprenticeship programs are available in some areas. On-the-job training is also an option. Prospective butchers can start preparing themselves for their careers by improving their physical strength, practicing eye-hand coordination skills, and reading about various meats and how they are processed. Important traits include excellent interpersonal skills, a high level of personal hygiene, and tolerance for cold and damp conditions.

Seasoning and Flavoring

A **seasoning** is something that enhances the flavor of an item without changing the primary flavor of the dish. Basic seasonings include salt and pepper. They must be used with care to prevent overuse, but seasoning generally should be added at the start of the dish to create a depth of flavor.

There are four basic types of seasoning ingredients:

- Salts
- Peppers
- Sugars
- Acids

Did You Know...?

The United States produces over 40 million tons of salt each year. Only 6 percent of the salt produced in the United States is used in food. Salt is an important preservative, as well as one of the most basic tastes.

Flavor refers to the way a food tastes, as well as its texture, appearance, doneness, and temperature. A **flavoring** should enhance the base ingredients of the dish, or it can also bring another flavor to the product. For example, the addition of a small amount of onion to a consommé enhances the flavor of the stock without changing it. The addition of a large quantity of onion introduces an onion flavor to the dish.

There are many types of flavorings that have the capability to change the taste of the original food product:

- Herbs
- Spices
- Extracts
- Fruits and vegetables
- Aromatic liquids
- Cured foods

So what is the difference between seasoning and flavoring? If a cook adds a small amount of salt to the water used to cook pasta, the pasta will simply taste like cooked pasta. That means it has been properly seasoned. However, if the cook adds a lot of salt, the cooked pasta will take on the distinct and easy-to-identify flavor of salt. Salt has become a flavoring in the dish, not a seasoning.

Too Much Sodium

Seasoning generally involves the addition of salt and pepper. However, many people choose to limit their sodium intake for health reasons. Nothing can truly replace salt, an essential component of the human diet. However, other flavorings can be used to mask its absence and contribute other elements to a meal. Adding an acid, like fruit juice or vinegar, can punch up a dull dish, as can spicy peppers. A variety of herbs and spices can also contribute to the taste. When using prepared mixes, blends, or condiments, always check the label to ensure that the substitution won't add even more sodium to a dish.

Herbs and Spices

Herbs and spices are important ingredients used to enhance and add to the flavor of food. **Herbs** (URBS) are the leaves, stems, or flowers of an aromatic plant. **Spices** are the bark, roots, seeds, buds, or berries of an aromatic plant.




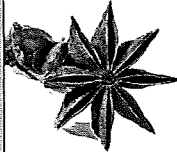



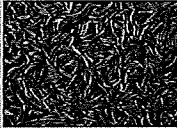
Herbs are available fresh or dried. Dried herbs are much stronger than fresh herbs because the herbs' flavorful oils are concentrated during the drying process. When using dried herbs, lightly crumble or grind them before adding

them to a dish. This releases their flavor. When using fresh herbs in place of dry, use two to three times the amount called for in the recipe. Always add fresh herbs toward the end of the cooking process to retain their delicate flavors. It is common to use both dried and fresh herbs in the same dish.

Cooks use spices most often in their dried form. They can be purchased whole or ground. Whole spices should be added early during cooking to allow their flavors to carry throughout the food. Cut or ground spices can be toasted to enhance their natural flavors and then added later in the cooking process.


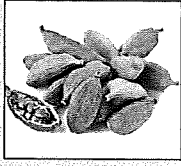

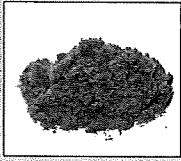

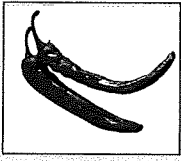
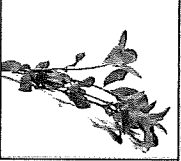

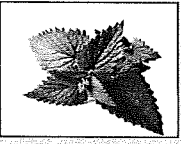
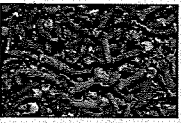

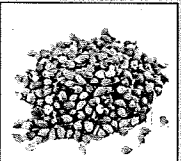
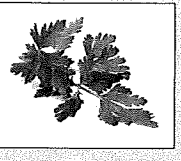

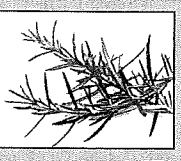
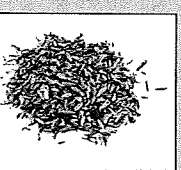
Each herb or spice used in a recipe contributes its own distinct flavor to a finished dish, and several of them can be used together to create new and exciting flavor combinations. Strong, flavorful spices and herbs such as pepper, cumin, basil, and oregano, or spice blends like curry powder, fines herbes, and Chinese five-spice, can often be used to reduce the amount of salt in recipes. Table 5.2 lists some of the herbs and spices most commonly used in restaurant and foodservice operations.

Table 5.2: Common Herbs and Spices

Herbs		Spices	
	Basil		Allspice
	Bay leaves		Anise
	Chives		Capers
	Cilantro		Caraway













continued

Table 5.2: Common Herbs and Spices *continued*

Herbs		Spices	
	Dill		Cardamom
	Lavender		Cayenne
	Lemon grass		Chile pepper
	Marjoram		Cinnamon
	Mint leaves		Cloves
	Oregano		Coriander
	Parsley		Cumin
	Rosemary		Fennel

continued

Table 5.2: Common Herbs and Spices *continued*

Herbs		Spices	
	Sage		Ginger
	Savory		Mace
	Tarragon		Mustard seeds
	Thyme		Nutmeg
			Paprika
			Peppercorns
			Poppy seeds
			Saffron

continued