

# Bibliography of Hayboxes/Haybags

The results of a search of the scholarly literature on Hayboxes/Haybags compiled by Student Brandy Wilken for Professor Paul S. Anderson [psanders@ilstu.edu](mailto:psanders@ilstu.edu)

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## Introduction

Through the search of finding information on hay boxes, most of the resources I found were online only. I did find several resources such as books, magazines/journals, and brochures, however, I was unable to locate the books through interlibrary access and many of the magazines/journals/brochures required a small fee to get obtain these resources. Many of the resources that I found tied into one other. They all basically stated the same thing about hay boxes with a little difference here and there which I have pointed out in this paper.

## Scientific Principles

I found several resources regarding the principles of hay boxes. The resources found stated that the hay box is a simple process in which food is brought to a boil, simmered for a few minutes depending on the particle size and then put into the hay box to continue cooking. Because the cooker prevents heat from escaping into the environment, no additional energy is needed to complete the cooking process. The hay box normally cooks within one to two times the normal stovetop cooking time. The food can be left in the hay box until it is ready to serve and will stay hot for hours. (Cleovoulou, 1997), (N.K.A., n.d-8), (N.K.A., 1997), (N.K.A., 1998), (N.K.A., 1999 Spring/Summer), (N.K.A., 2000-a), (Roth, 2003), (Still & Kness, 1996), (Still, 2001) This design was valuable in places such as South Africa where firewood is scarce and the search for firewood can take hours each day, thus, with the hay box woman can frequently put the dinner on before they go to work and upon their return, it is ready to eat. (N.K.A. n.d-4), (N.K.A., n.d-7), (Shrestha & Munankami, 1999)

## History of the Hay box

I found a few articles on the history of the hay box. Many of the articles state that the history of the hay box appears to be a concept that has been used for centuries. (N.K.A., n.d 1) Two resources that I found (which turned out to have the exact wording in each article) stated that at the beginning of the 20th century there was a fashion for fuel-less cookery in order to save money and precious fuel not only during times of crisis but anytime. (N.K.A., n.d4), (N.K.A., n.d-9), (N.K.A., 1999 Spring/Summer) One of the sources that I found stated that at the beginning of World War II in 1939, there were leaflets sent out in England urging everyone to use hay boxes to save fuel because an oil embargo was expected. (Pierce, n.d.)

## Types of Hay boxes

The types of hay boxes found in my research varied from simple to more complicated depending on the type of hay box created. The hay box itself is any kind of insulated container that can with-stand cooking temperatures and fits relatively snugly around

the pot. There were many sources referring to the traditional hay box which is a wood, cardboard, or a Styrofoam box using an insulated material such as hay, leaves, aluminum foil, cotton, rice hulls, cork, foam, polystyrene (a type of hard, inexpensive plastic), fur, wool, wood shavings or newspapers (Becker, n.d), (N.K.A., n.d-2), (N.K.A., n.d-3), (N.K.A., n.d-4), (N.K.A., n.d-5), (N.K.A, n.d-7), (N.K.A., n.d-9), (N.K.A, n.d-12 pictures are included at end of paper), (N.K.A, n.d-13), (N.K.A, 1997), (N.K.A, 1999 Spring/Summer), (N.K.A, 2000-a), (N.K.A, 2000-b), (Roth, 2003).

Another type of hay box researched was called the haysack. The haysack does relatively the same thing as a hay box but is a material bag with layers of insulating materials including metalised polypropylene (aluminum coated plastic foil) between two layers of polyflex batting. The haysack is a better insulator than the wooden hay box in that it doesn't suffer the ravages of insects and does not decay when getting wet. (N.K.A, n.d-1), (Cleovoulou, 1997) I have provided a detailed instruction on how to build the haysack at the end of this paper. A variation is called a Hot Bag, developed by Wendy Chandler in South Africa.

#### Uses of Hay boxes

The use of a hay box is not only an environmental bonus but also a convenience in many villages where firewood is used. As stated previously, woman would need to spend less time huddling over a fire or stove and would be less exposed to smoke if they have the hay box. (Bridgwater, n.d.), (N.K.A. n.d-4), (N.K.A., n.d-6), (N.K.A., n.d-7), (Shrestha & Munankami, 1999) The haysack is a benefit to the poor for its fuel-saving, and to society at large for the convenience it offers. It is also a way of helping to preserve non-renewable energy sources. (N.K.A., n.d-1), (N.K.A., n.d-10), (N.K.A., 2000-a), (N.K.A., 1999 Spring/Summer) Another use of the haysack is to use as a warmer for food that has already cooked. Casseroles from the oven can be placed into the sack to complete the cooking process. (N.K.A., n.d-1) While completing my research, I found an article that stated that hay boxes could save fuels to the extent of one third of the total consumption by avoiding the need for reheating. (Shrestha & Munankami, 1999) Fuel-less cookery is also a technique used by campers and others spending time outdoors. They can prepare their meals to eat while on a journey or out for the day. (N.K.A., n.d-9)

#### Cost

Throughout my research the cost of hayboxes are varied depending on the area that was researched. There were suggestions of a maximum of \$1.00 due to how families live in Tamil Nadu, India. According to the sources that I found, these families have limited possessions such as only one change of clothing and basic cooking utensils so charging more than \$1.00 wouldn't be realistic. (Cleovoulou, 1997) The price suggestion in South Africa is really dependant upon the size of hotsack/hot bag that you purchase. The smallest bag ranges from \$10 - 15.00, largest \$15 - \$20.00, and the extra large costing from \$20 - \$30.00. (N.K.A., n.d - 1) The cost in Kathmandu, Nepal for a hay box is 38 NRs - unfortunately, I am unable to determine that currency. (Shrestha & Munankami, 1999)

NOTE: The cited books have not been obtained, so additional materials in this Literature Search might still be forthcoming.

Bibliography of Hayboxes / Hot Bags  
(N.K.A = No Known Author) & (n.d = not dated).

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