Preliminary Cooking and Flavoring Techniques

Par Cooking

Advance preparation often requires precooking and flavoring of ingredients to make them ready for the finished dish.

Partial cooking is done by both moist-heat and dry-heat methods

4 main reasons for this method are:

- To increase holding qualities
  - Destroys bacteria that cause spoilage
  - Destroys enzymes that cause discoloration
- To save time by speeding up final cooking times
- To remove undesirable flavors that may be present on meats and vegetables
- To help the product to be further processed

Blanching is to cook an item partially and briefly in boiling water

Some varieties of vegetables (rutabaga) are blanched to make them milder and palatable

Some vegetables and fruits (tomatoes/peaches/nuts) are blanched to loosen the skin before peeling

Often a product being blanched is immersed in an ice bath (ice + water) to stop the cooking process before being further processed

Blanching

Marinating

Marinating means to soak a food product in a seasoned liquid in order to:

- Add flavor
- Tenderize
  - The acid in marinades are fairly small so the proper cooking method still applies

A marinade can be used as a cooking medium and become part of the sauce

3 types of ingredients

- Oil – helps to preserve the products moisture
  - Use a neutral oil since this doesn't add flavor and usually floats to the top
- Acids – vinegars, citrus juice, wine
- Flavorings – spices, herbs, vegetables
- Marinades can also be dressings or vinaigrettes

Kinds of Marinades

- Cooked – helps release spices and intensify the flavor
- Raw – used for long periods of marinating under refrigeration
- Instant – used for a few minutes or overnight mainly used for delicate foods

Brining

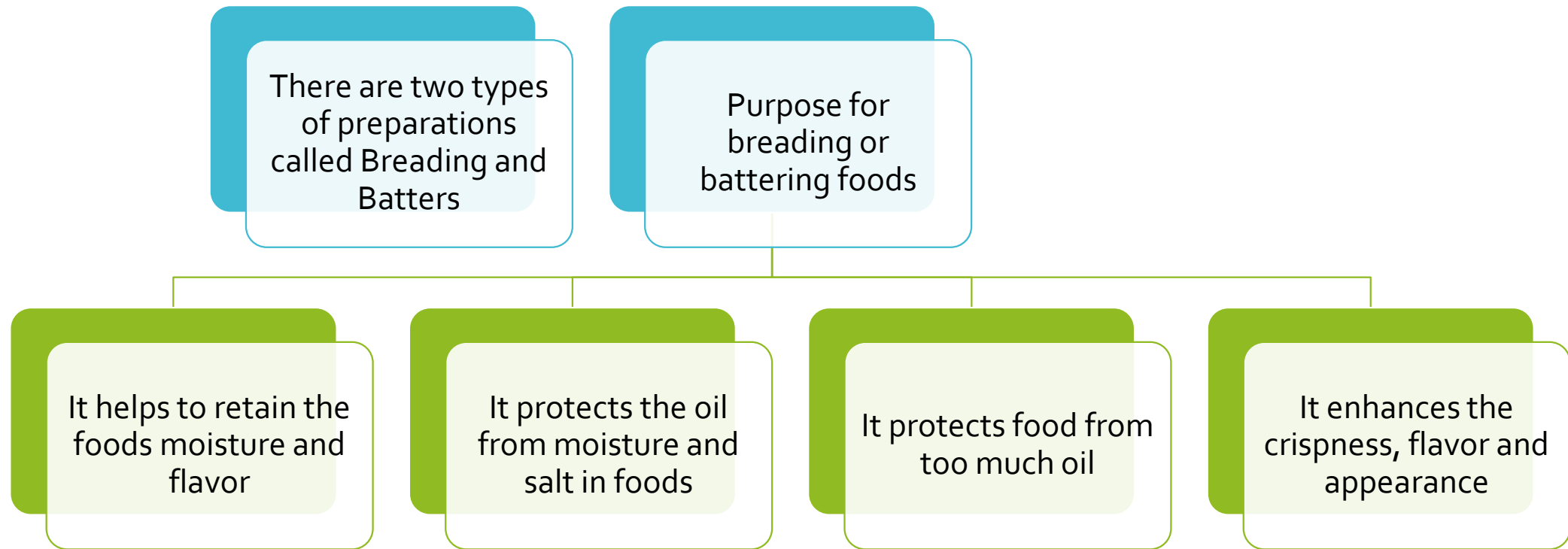Brining is to cure meats and other foods in a water-based solution of salt and other ingredients.

Brining helps to

| Flavor | Tenderize | Extend a food's shelf-life |

There are two types of preparations called Breading and Batters

Purpose for breading or battering foods

It helps to retain the foods moisture and flavor

It protects the oil from moisture and salt in foods

It protects food from too much oil

It enhances the crispness, flavor and appearance

Preparation for Frying and Baking Breading and Batters

Breading and Batters

Breading is a coating that covers or surrounds a food product before sautéing, pan frying, deep frying and baking.

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5 things to remember

| Seasoned flour | Egg wash, whipped eggs or other alternative liquid | Crumbs – bread, meal, chips, cereal : don't add salt to crumbs. This breaks down the cooking oil. | Fry or bake immediately | Stain ingredients often to avoid clumps from forming |

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Batters are semi-liquid mixtures containing flour or a starch

| Liquids – milk, water, beer | Eggs | Leavening agent – baking powder, egg whites or carbonated water | Flour or a starch |