



Garlic Feast combo.

In hindsight I carried on using it for a lot longer than I perhaps should have done, but it was difficult not to, given of the fishing I'd experienced.

Last year I went in with my Garlic Feast, which is a mixed particle bait flavoured, as the name suggests, with two different garlic products; one disperses well in the water, while the other stays on/in the bait. The bobbin action was like it used to be in the early days of the Hot Hemp. No doubt it will slow up by the end of this year but there are so many more combination possibilities out there that this should never be a problem. It is all a simple case of keeping an open mind and always trying to have something on the back burner, so to speak, ready to introduce to the fish.

I have flavoured different particle baits with lots of different things over the years but must admit that items from our own food chain have generally been better and more effective than the many carp bait flavours available out there. The main problem with a lot of the artificial flavours in the tackle shops available to anglers are that many of them 'burn/evaporate' at pretty low heat



Check the spice rack in your local supermarket.

levels. So, being boiled for 30 minutes isn't going to do them an awful lot of good and certainly they won't resemble the flavour you thought you were putting in. Yes, you can dribble a bit of flavour over the cooked particles once they have cooled off, but to get them to penetrate the skin of the bait you really need to be soaking them in the said flavour. Unless you have flavours with a good 'stick-on' ability most will wash off quite soon after going into the lake/river. Yes, you will create a 'smell/taste' in the water which could well attract the carp to the area but it can also confuse them as they move off trying to find the source of that smell/taste.

I have used many different spices. Most of the powdered curry blends work well, garlic in its various forms is excellent, chilli I have mentioned, packet soups as well as tinned soups, gravy, Bovril, Marmite, various seasonings, different salts, peppers, stir fry and cooking sauces, drinks and so on. A walk around your local supermarket will reveal many different

all very cheap and if you go wrong you haven't just wasted a small fortune on an expensive base mix. Basically speaking, I find the normal human grade-type products, such as those mentioned, to be much more effective for altering particles than the flavours generally offered to the angler. A lot of the human-type products are produced to withstand the heat required for the cooking of the bait.

So, let's now look at a few of the advanced-type baits I like to use. By 'advanced' I mean anything which isn't simply brought to the boil in normal water, simmered for the relevant time span, then left to cool before use.

Why bother going to all that trouble when you can buy a jar of ready-prepared particles that won't go off in a hurry from a shop?

Sprouting Particles

I love these, and can honestly say that I have never seen anyone else use them!

Certainly, I have seen them mentioned in print on the odd rare occasion, but that is all. I guess we are again back to the idle age with this one as they need preparing a few days before you actually want to go fishing. Why bother going to all that trouble when you can buy a jar of ready-prepared particles that won't go off in a hurry from a shop? The answer is simple – because they work extremely well, and, if you are desperate for something different to try, then here you have it.

So, how do you prepare and produce a sprouting particle ready to fish with? Firstly you need to get yourself a shallow tray with no holes in it. Sprinkle a layer of particles over the bottom of the tray so that they are only one-bait deep. If you make them two-baits deep and so on you will have problems as the beans/seeds/peas start to swell, because you will end up with just a few sprouting and a few remaining normal. Pour water over them so that they are only just covered. I prefer to use pond water for this or, if none is available, I use bottled water. Bottled water is very cheap and you know that your baits aren't going to be soaking up a lot of the disinfectant-type smell which exists in the tap water in many areas.

The next stage is to find somewhere which receives plenty of light. A window sill is ideal, or



You will need a shallow tray with no holes to sprout your own.

From left to right: Sprouting chickpeas; Sprouting maple peas; Sprouting tares.



20gms

15

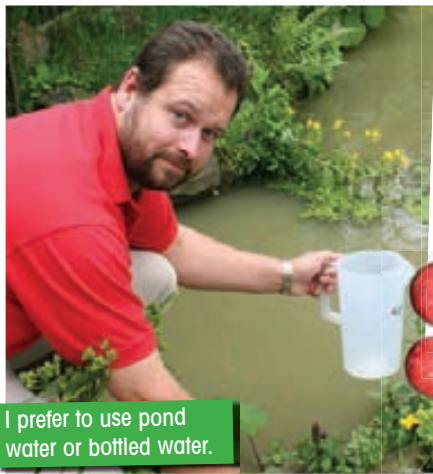
gms

170gms



AAX 0gms





I prefer to use pond water or bottled water.



You will need a little trial and error to find the strength of your dye.

You will find that if you cook some conventional deep-soaked baits at the same time, the taste of the standard and the taste of the

sprouted will be quite different. The sprouted seeds taste sweeter and this is with nothing whatsoever added to it. Just nature's own attraction at work.

Colouring Particles

When colouring particles you are best doing this right from the soaking stage so that they draw the food dye into them, rather than a simple overcoat which will wash off much more quickly. Food dyes vary tremendously

in strength. A lot of the dyes available to the angler have been cut with other ingredients to make them look better value for money than what they actually are. I fell foul of this one myself this last year. Anyone purchasing my Fruity Trifle boilies would have noticed a sudden change

in colour earlier this year. I changed dye suppliers and put the dye in at exactly the same inclusion rate as I had always used but found that the baits came out a much deeper red. I had always produced the baits to look washed-out in the past. However, having had no complaints, and a few people saying they liked the new colour, I decided to run with them in this slightly altered colour. If I had changed it a third time then I would have had a lot of explaining to do.

All I am getting at here is that dye strengths vary so much it will have to be a bit of trial and error on your part to decide the right amount. As a rough guideline, start with the recommended dosage for boilies plus about a third again. If the inclusion rate is recommended at 12ml per kilo, add 16ml. Soak the baits for the normal length of time then bring to the boil and simmer as usual. A piece of advice here – you may want to purchase your own pans for this purpose rather than borrowing the ones out of the kitchen because it does make for an easier, less dramatic home life!

Flavouring Particles

This depends very much upon what you are flavouring the particles with. So, I will break this one down into sections.

outside in the full sun (but be careful the birds don't come down and eat them all). Failing that, a room with a light on will do, although it takes longer for them to sprout this way.

Look at the tray, or trays, at regular intervals to check the water. You will find that raw particles are very thirsty and soak up a lot of liquid in the first few hours. This is the reason you need to presoak particles. It keeps the cooking times down to a minimum that way. If the liquid has gone, simply top it up then leave them again. They need to be sitting in water, but not completely submerged.

How quickly the baits start to sprout will depend on how much light the baits have received. In bright conditions

you should see them starting to sprout the following day. In duller conditions you could be waiting for a few days. Some particles, such as maple peas and chickpeas start to sprout very quickly.

It's up to you how far you leave the baits to sprout. Once you are happy with the change in the bait, simply transfer them to a pan and cook them in the conventional manner.

All I am getting at here is that dye strengths vary so much it will have to be a bit of trial and error on your part to decide the right amount



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Thick Liquids Such as Tinned Soups, etc.

I prefer to presoak my baits for half the usual time in water to speed up the process. Leave dry particles in a soup and you will be waiting for ever for them to finish soaking up the liquid. You can cook them raw in the soup but you will be waiting a long time for the baits to soften and take on enough liquid to make them safe enough to fish with. If you do go down this route, keep checking the bait by breaking it in half and checking there is no obvious dryness inside the bean/pea and that it is fully cooked through, just as you would if you were preparing them for your own consumption.

Thinner Liquids, Such as Drinks, Diluted Bovril, Diluted Carp Bait Flavours, etc.

These I incorporate right from the off during the soaking stage. There are a lot of drinks out there which can be soaked into your baits. If you look at a dilute-type drink, then dilute it first to the same levels as you would drink it. If using something such as Bovril, again, first of all make it up to the strength you would make it for you to drink then leave the baits soaking in the liquid in the conventional manner before bringing them to the boil and simmering until thoroughly cooked.

On those rare occasions I try to flavour particle baits with an artificial flavour sold for boilie-making, I first dilute this into cold water, first making sure that the flavour isn't oil-based as this will simply separate and float on the surface of the water. The particle baits are then left to soak the flavour right into the core before the cooking stage. Again, finding the flavours suitable for this is a case of trial and error. Many burn away once subjected to the amount of constant heat required for full cooking of particles, so in some cases you can find yourself using an expensive flavour which is non-existent by the time the bait is prepared.

Again, flavour and water combination levels are very much a matter of trial and error as the concentrations of flavour can vary so much. Similar to the recommended dye inclusion rates, go along with the same amount of flavour as recommended for boilie use then add another third. This will give you a starting point to work upon.

Curry Powders, Gravy Powders, Packet Seasonings, Salts, Peppers, etc.

All these I add just before the boiling stage once the particles have had a good soak. The majority of these don't mix very well with cold water so I see little point in adding them at the soaking stage. As with all the other methods mentioned, I keep the baits in the same water as they were cooked in right up to the point of introducing them to the carp. There will be a lot of



I have done well with mackerel.



Chilli flakes.



Make up as you would for yourself.

attraction in that liquid. If the situation allows, I will also pour the liquid around the area I am fishing after putting in the free baits. For marginal swims, a scoop on the end of a long landing net handle or a pole with the top sections removed, is very handy, as is a boat for more distant areas.

If anyone noticed the small red bits in the bucket of hemp I would act the daft lad and say I had purchased sweetcorn with red peppers instead of plain sweetcorn by accident

Garlic, Chilli and Tinned Fish.

I used the chilli hemp (Hot Hemp) I mentioned earlier for years. I never used to add the chilli until the hemp was cooked. The number one reason for this was that I used to use part of the hemp juice to rehydrate air-dried boilies and I didn't want the chilli in the boilies.

Once the hemp was ready I would measure off the amount of hemp juice I required for my boilies then add the chilli to the hemp while the water was still very hot. This worked so well that I never bothered to experiment with any other way of preparation. I know some anglers cook it into their hemp, but I never did and it made a huge difference to my captures so, as I said, I didn't experiment further.

For what it is worth I tried quite a few different type of chilli products, including actual chillies, but found that straightforward chilli flakes were the easiest to use and measure, and they were certainly very effective. So, again, I stopped

experimenting at that stage.

To try to keep the method quiet for as long as possible I used to add a small tin of sweetcorn to the chilli hemp once the hot water had cooled, then if anyone noticed the small red bits in the bucket of hemp I would act the daft lad and say I had purchased sweetcorn with red peppers instead of plain sweetcorn by accident. I got away with this for a few years at the place I was fishing, and was the only one using it. Sometimes it pays to be slightly conservative with the truth – not telling the whole story is very different to blatant lying.

I use a blend of garlic powders in my Garlic Feast particle mix. Again, I add this the moment I take the baits off the boil. One part of the garlic sticks to the bait and the other part spreads nicely in the water. Everywhere I have taken this mix it has been accepted by the carp from the word go. Again, if you can get some of that liquid in the swim as well...

Tins of tuna have become a popular addition in more recent years but don't draw the line there. I have done well with mackerel, both in natural form and in various sauces. Again, there are a lot of possibilities just waiting to be tried.

Flavouring Mixers and Floating Pellets

Most pellet-type baits will take a flavour and colour quite well. This is where I do turn to the conventional carp bait flavours as we don't need any flavour-destroying heat to do the job.

Choose whatever flavour you want and stick by the recommended inclusion rate on the bottle but substitute the boilie mix weight for the same weight in mixers. Add this flavour to a polythene bag (without holes), add the



Flavouring pellets.