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Aggregate Curing Data Analysis

Reported processes and outcomes from home growers and commercial operations.

22	7	15
Interviews	Home growers	Commercial operations

March 17, 2026
23 participants across 22 interviews

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1. Study Overview

This report aggregates curing process data from 22 interviews conducted as part of the CurePuck case study. Each interview covers a cannabis grower’s drying, curing, and post-harvest processes before and after adopting the CurePuck.

All data points reflect what participants reported during their interviews.

Participant Breakdown

Category	Count	Description
Home Growers	7	Personal-use cultivators growing for themselves and friends
Commercial Operations	15	Licensed or large-scale operations with employees and production targets
Total Participants	23	22 interviews (one interview included two participants)

2. Drying Process (Pre-Cure)

Nearly all participants described hang-drying whole plants or branches in dedicated spaces before curing. The following data reflects what participants reported about their drying parameters.

Drying Parameters

Parameter	Low	Average	High	Consensus
Temperature	60°F (15.5°C)	62°F (16.5°C)	66°F (19°C)	60–62°F
Duration	5 days	10 days	15 days	7–12 days
Relative Humidity	50%	58%	61%	~60%

Note: Each row is independent. Low, Average, and High values reflect the range reported across all participants for that parameter individually and do not represent linked settings or combined recipes.

Drying Method

- Hang dry whole plants or branches in a dedicated dry room or tent
- Environmental controls used: dehumidifiers, AC, exhaust fans
- Readiness indicators: stems should bend without snapping; buds crispy on outside, soft in middle
- Commercial operations increasingly use VPD-based drying (0.85–0.95 kPa reported)

Author's note: The parameters above represent aggregate data and should be read as general reference points, not prescriptions. One experienced commercial participant uses a meaningfully different approach worth noting. They run the dry room at 17.8°C (64°F) throughout drying, then step it down to 15.6°C (60°F) for trimming to slow moisture loss during handling. For humidity, they set the dehumidifier to 45% RH for the first 3–4 days to aggressively pull bulk water early, citing this as critical for preventing browning and off-nose development especially in denser larger product. Their target RH at end-of-dry is 53%, considerably lower than the 58–60% seen across most operations. The takeaway is not that one approach is right and the other wrong, but that optimal parameters shift with facility, cultivar, and product density. Calibrate to your environment and monitor closely.

3. Home Grower Curing Analysis

Seven home growers were interviewed. These cultivators grow for personal use, typically operating 1–5 plants per cycle with 1–4 CurePuck units. Their curing environments tend to be less controlled (basements, closets, garages) compared to commercial operations.

Curing Parameters

Parameter	Low	High	Home Grower Consensus
Cure Temperature	64°F (18°C)	68°F (20°C)	~65°F (18–20°C)
Cure Duration	10 days	5 weeks	14–21 days
Cure RH (Finish)	57%	60%	57–60%
Dry Time	5 days	14 days	7–10 days
Container Size	3 gallons	25 gallons	Buckets, totes, jars
Container Fill Level	~50%	~75%	~75%
CurePuck Units	1	4	1–2

Note: Each row is independent. Low, Average, and High values reflect the range reported across all participants for that parameter individually and do not represent linked settings or combined recipes. Only one home grower mentioned a temperature range for curing.

Home Grower Process

Typical workflow described by home grower participants:

- **Step 1: 5–14 days**
- **Step 2:** Trim after drying (most common approach)
- **Step 3:** Load into buckets or totes at ~75% capacity with CurePuck on lid
- **Step 4: 14–21 days**, targeting 57–60% RH
- **Step 5:** Shake or flip container every 1–2 days
- **Step 6:** Monitor via smartphone app; set-and-forget approach

Home Grower Profile

- Less precise environmental control : rely on naturally cool, dark spaces

- Tend toward longer cures (14–35 days) since there is no market pressure
- Smaller containers (3–25 gallons)
- Prior method was almost universally mason jars with manual burping
- Most common prior problems: over-drying, forgetting to burp, unreliable hygrometers
- Average self-rated curing expertise pre-CurePuck: ~4 out of 10
- Average flower quality rating with CurePuck: ~8 out of 10
- Average likelihood to recommend: ~10 out of 10

4. Commercial Grower Curing Analysis

Fifteen commercial operations were interviewed, ranging from small craft cultivators to large-scale facilities with 150+ employees and 200+ CurePuck units. These operations have dedicated cure rooms with environmental controls and structured production schedules.

Curing Parameters

Parameter	Low	High	Commercial Consensus
Cure Temperature	60°F (15.5°C)	70°F (21°C)	60–65°F (15.5–18°C)
Cure Duration	5 days	21 days	10–14 days
Cure RH (Finish)	55%	62%	57–60%
Water Activity	0.45 aW	0.60 aW	0.50–0.60 aW
Moisture Content	10%	11%	10–11%
Dry Time	7 days	15 days	10–12 days
Dry Temperature	60°F	62°F	~60°F
Container Size	30 gallons	55 gallons	30–55 gal barrels
Container Fill Level	50%	75%	50–75% (trending 50%)
CurePuck Units	1 (trial)	200	6–40 typical

Note: Each row is independent. Low, Average, and High values reflect the range reported across all participants for that parameter individually and do not represent linked settings or combined recipes. Water activity range was presented by only two participants and accompany temperature was not given.

Commercial Process

Typical workflow described by commercial participants:

- **Step 1:** Hang dry in dedicated dry rooms at 60–62°F, ~60% RH for 7–15 days
- **Step 2:** Trim (most trim after drying, before cure)
- **Step 3:** Weigh and load into 30–55 gallon barrels with drum liners at 50–75% capacity
- **Step 4:** Mount CurePuck on lid, set auto-burp parameters
- **Step 5:** Cure at 60–65°F for 10–14 days (some go 18–21 days for premium)

- **Step 6:** Roll/rotate barrels daily on racks or rollers
- **Step 7:** Monitor via app/dashboard; target 57–60% RH, 0.50–0.60 aW, 10–11% moisture

Commercial Profile

- Much more data-driven: track water activity, moisture content, and CO2 PPM
- Stronger focus on shorter cure times : product needs to reach market
- Larger containers (barrels) with barrel racks and rolling systems
- Cure rooms are environmentally controlled (temp, humidity)
- Common baseline: the "60/60 rule" (60°F and 60% RH)
- Several found CurePuck data exposed upstream drying problems they didn't know existed
- Average self-rated curing expertise pre-CurePuck: ~5–6 out of 10
- Average flower quality rating with CurePuck: ~8–9 out of 10
- Average likelihood to recommend: ~10 out of 10

Commercial Scale Data Points

Metric	Reported Values
Harvest volume	40 kg to 1,800 lbs/month across operations
Failed batches (before)	20–25 per year at one large facility
Failed batches (after)	2 per year at same facility
Labor savings	Up to 730 hours/year (~$18,000/year) at one facility
Weight savings	~10% yield preserved by not losing excess moisture
Staff reduction	2+ employees reassigned from manual burping duties

5. Where Home and Commercial Growers Overlap

Despite significant differences in scale, equipment, and market pressures, home and commercial growers converge on several key parameters and outcomes.

Parameter	Home Growers	Commercial	Overlap
Cure Temp	64–68°F (17.8-20°C)	60–65°F (15.5-18°C)	60–68°F (both cluster in low-to-mid 60°F)
Cure Time	14–21 days	10–14 days	14 days is the shared sweet spot
Cure RH Target	57–60%	57–60%	57–60% (identical across both groups)
Dry Time	7–10 days	10–12 days	7–12 days (significant overlap)
Container Fill	~75%	50–75%	Both avoid overfilling; headspace is critical
Daily Agitation	Shake every 1–2 days	Roll barrels daily	Daily physical rotation is universal
#1 Quality Gain	Terpene/aroma	Terpene/aroma	Smell and flavor is the #1 improvement
#1 Labor Gain	No manual jar burping	No manual burping at scale	Automated burping is the universal win
#1 Prior Problem	Over-drying	Over-drying	Over-drying is the most common failure

6. Key Differences Between Groups

Factor	Home Growers	Commercial Growers
Cure Duration	Longer (14–21+ days); no market pressure	Shorter (10–14 days); need throughput
Temperature Control	Less controlled ("cool closet/basement")	Tightly controlled dedicated rooms
Data Sophistication	Mostly RH monitoring only	RH + water activity + moisture content + CO2
Container Size	3–25 gallons	30–55 gallons (barrels)
CurePuck Scale	1–4 units	6–200 units
Fill Preference	Fuller (~75%)	Less full (50–75%, trending toward 50%)
Pre-CurePuck Expertise	~4/10 average	~5–6/10 average
Primary Motivation	Convenience + quality	Consistency + labor savings + data

7. Universal Truths (Agreed by Both Groups)

The following principles were consistently echoed across both home and commercial growers, regardless of scale, geography, or experience level.

1. Cure at low 60°F, finishing at 57–60% RH. This is the convergence point across all 22 interviews. Whether in a basement closet or a climate-controlled cure room, this temperature and humidity range produces the best results.

Author's note on RH sweet spot and cure failure: One experienced commercial participant offered more granular guidance on cure RH that differs from the consensus range and is worth noting. In their experience: 40% RH is too dry and requires rehydration before curing is viable; 55% RH is acceptable; 57% RH is problematic, as product begins to smell off and microbial risk increases if held here too long; and 62% RH entering the cure is too wet, associated with musty, off-nose product. Their preferred entry point is 53–55% RH coming off trim. On cure failure: the primary cause identified was too-slow moisture reduction. Holding product at 57% RH and bringing it down gradually creates conditions for microbial growth and nose degradation. The preferred approach is to move moisture down quickly if needed, then slow-cure at the end with controlled burping.

2. Don't overfill containers. Headspace is essential for proper gas exchange. Multiple participants reported ammonia smells, clumping, and uneven curing when containers were packed too tightly. Less than 20% headspace was consistently problematic.

3. Agitate daily. Every participant who discussed container management emphasized daily rolling, shaking, or flipping to prevent compaction and ensure even moisture distribution throughout the batch.

4. Enter the cure at the right moisture level. "Garbage in, garbage out" was a recurring theme. The CurePuck cannot fix flower that enters the cure too wet or too dry. Entering too wet is the more serious failure; it can ruin the batch entirely through mold or fermentation. Entering too dry reduces quality and terpene retention, but is recoverable to a degree. Either way, getting the drying phase right is a prerequisite for a good cure.

5. Over-drying is the #1 enemy. More common than going in too wet, and while not as catastrophic, still a serious quality killer. Over-dried flower loses terpenes, becomes brittle, and cannot be fully recovered. Multiple participants described this as their most frequent pre-CurePuck failure.

6. Terpene and aroma retention is the most noticeable quality improvement. Across both groups, the single most cited benefit of CurePuck-assisted curing was dramatically improved smell and flavor. Several described the difference as "night and day."

7. The "marshmallow test" is the tactile benchmark. Properly cured flower compresses when squeezed and slowly springs back to its original shape. This texture, described as "pillowy," "marshmallow-like," or "spongy," was the physical indicator cited by both home and commercial growers as the hallmark of a successful cure.

8. Every strain is different. No single recipe works for all cultivars. Each strain has its own ideal drying time, cure duration, and finishing moisture level. Participants with 50+ strains emphasized that strain-specific recipes are necessary for optimal results.

8. Final Combined Consensus: All 22 Interviews

The following table represents the aggregate consensus across all 22 interviews : home growers and commercial operations combined. These are the ranges and targets that emerged from averaging all reported data points.

Combined Curing Parameters

Parameter	Low	Average	High	Final Consensus
Drying Temperature	60°F (15.5°C)	62°F (16.5°C)	66°F (19°C)	60–62°F
Drying Duration	5 days	10 days	15 days	7–12 days
Drying Humidity	50%	58%	61%	~60% RH
Cure Temperature	60°F (15.5°C)	63°F (17°C)	70°F (21°C)	60–65°F
Cure Duration	5 days	14 days	35 days	10–21 days
Cure RH (Finish)	55%	58%	62%	57–60%
Water Activity	0.45 aW	0.53 aW	0.60 aW	0.50–0.60 aW
Moisture Content	10%	10.5%	11%	10–11%
Container Fill Level	50%	62%	75%	50–75%
Headspace (minimum)	25%	35%	50%	≥25%

Note: Each row is independent. Low, Average, and High values reflect the range reported across all participants for that parameter individually and do not represent linked settings or combined recipes.

Combined Process Flow

Step 1: Harvest and Hang Dry Hang dry whole plants or branches at 60–62°F and ~60% RH for 7–12 days. Target state: buds crispy on outside, soft in middle; stems bend without snapping.

Step 2: Trim Most participants trim after drying, before curing.

Step 3: Load Containers Place trimmed flower into containers (buckets, totes, or barrels depending on scale) at 50–75% capacity. Use drum liners for barrels. Mount CurePuck on the lid.

Step 4: Cure Cure at 60–65°F for 10–21 days (average 14 days). CurePuck handles automated burping based on RH and CO2 readings. Target finishing RH of 57–60%.

Step 5: Agitate Daily Roll barrels or shake/flip containers once daily to prevent clumping and ensure even moisture distribution.

Step 6: Monitor Remotely Use CurePuck app or dashboard to track RH, temperature, and CO2. Check every 1–2 days. Intervene only if readings fall outside target ranges.

Step 7: Finish Cure is complete when RH stabilizes at 57–60%, water activity reads 0.50–0.60 aW, and flower passes the "marshmallow test" (compresses and springs back). Move to packaging or long-term storage.

What Changed with CurePuck (Combined)

Before CurePuck

- Manual burping: 1–4 hours per day of labor across totes, jars, or bags
- Inconsistent results batch-to-batch and container-to-container
- Over-drying was the most common failure mode (brittle, crumbly, no aroma)
- Unreliable hygrometers giving conflicting readings across units
- No visibility into CO2 off-gassing inside containers
- Failed batches due to mold and microbial contamination
- Hay, chlorophyll, or ammonia smells from improper burping
- Average self-rated curing expertise: ~5 out of 10

After CurePuck

- Consistency: uniform moisture throughout container; repeatable results across batches
- Terpene and aroma retention: the most-cited quality improvement across all interviews
- Texture: "marshmallow" / "pillowy" spring-back when squeezed (vs. crumbling apart)
- Labor savings: up to 730 hours/year at large facilities; eliminated manual burping entirely
- Remote monitoring: peace of mind on nights, weekends, and during travel
- Upstream diagnostics: CurePuck data revealed drying room problems at multiple facilities
- Reduced cure times at several operations (e.g., 2–3 weeks reduced to 10–12 days)
- Failed batches dropped dramatically (e.g., 20–25/year to 2/year at one facility)
- Average flower quality rating with CurePuck: ~8–9 out of 10
- Average likelihood to recommend CurePuck: ~10 out of 10