

STORING FOOD IN YOUR KITCHEN CUPBOARD

WHY HAVE A FOOD STORAGE PROGRAM?

We never know what emergency may jeopardize our food supply. The emergency may be loss of job or inability to work due to accident or illness. Natural catastrophe such as flood, earthquake or storms may result in temporary inability to distribute food to supermarkets. Under these conditions even having money to purchase food does not mean it can be obtained.

Teton County has 103 islands, 106 bridges and is located in the center of an earthquake area. Because of the possibility of such emergencies the Red Cross and Civil Defense recommends storing food and water adequate for your family's needs for at least a two-week period.

STARTING YOUR FOOD STORAGE

There are a number of approaches to building a food storage program. Only two will be out-lined, which can be adapted to fit individual needs. The first, double purchase is a simple way to avoid a large cash outlay, purchase double the items on the grocery list with each shopping excursion. The extra items are then marked with the purchase date and put into storage to be rotated out and replaced on the next shopping trip.

Perishable items such as fluid milk or eggs are difficult to work into this system. Therefore substitutes such as non-fat dried milk may be purchased for storage. Keep in mind, however, that there is a limit to the length of time that even these semi-perishable or dehydrated items can be stored.

A disadvantage of the double purchase system is that it is not as easy to benefit from sales prices. One advantage is that items are only purchased that are routinely used in menu planning, thereby reducing waste and improving rotation.

Another approach to beginning a food storage program is to use a lump sum of money such as a tax refund or a bonus check to purchase a large amount of basics for your family.

When establishing a food storage program do not forget:

- 1. Store only those items you will use. If you do not currently include a food in your diet it is unlikely that you will use it.**

2. **Do not purchase more than you will rotate and use within a two to three year period of time to reduce waste.**
3. **Insure that the quality of the item you purchase is acceptable. Quality does not improve upon storage for most foods.**

Planning before you begin a food storage program will help to avoid pitfalls.

HOW MUCH TO STORE?

One pound of dry matter provides about 1,600 calories of energy. Dried beans, flour, wheat, rice, sugar, dried fruits or vegetables, pastas or dried skim milk all provide about 1,600 calories per pound. One pound of dry matter per day serves as a basis for a food storage program. Many individuals maintain a 6-12 month supply of food.

GENERAL STORAGE TIPS

Here are some reminders for ways to store foods which will assure that your foods are nutritious, fresh and tasty, and that you don't waste money by having to throw food out which is no longer palatable.

1. Always read the label to see if the food item should be refrigerated. Don't assume that all boxed or canned goods may be held at room temperature. There are many products that should be refrigerated even before opening. For example, some containers of Parmesan cheese call for refrigeration after opening and others don't. If you have failed to refrigerate something that should have been, throw the product away, because bacteria in foods that should be refrigerated or frozen can multiply rapidly under warmer conditions.
2. Store shelf-stable foods in cabinets located in the cooler areas of your kitchen. Put dishes or cooking pans in the warmer cabinets located over the range, near the *dishwasher* or *refrigerator motor*. *In these places the temperature is too warm for food*, even dry mixes and cereals. Keep foods in air-tight jars (dried beans, pastas, peas, flour) in dark places.
3. Store potatoes and onions in the coolest parts of your cupboards.

Check the cabinets beneath the kitchen sink or any cabinets containing water, drain or heating pipes. Food should never be stored in these cupboards because they can attract insects and rodents through openings that may be impossible to seal adequately. And any water or heat leaks from the pipes can damage food products (for example, causing cans to overheat or rust.)

It is always a mistake to store anything you may eat alongside poisonous household chemicals. Bottles of cleaning chemicals could easily be mistaken for bottles of soda or other foods.

CANNED FOODS

Canned foods have a long shelf life, but don't neglect them for several years and then suddenly decide to use them. These aged canned goods may be safe to eat, but their color, flavor, texture and/or nutritive value may have deteriorated.

Store canned goods in a dry place at moderately cool, but not freezing temperatures. Rotate foods. Try not to keep canned foods over one year. Canned fruit juices should not be kept over 9 months. The shelf life will be shorter when canned goods are stored above 70/F.

What if your canned foods freeze? If the can isn't rusty, leaking or bulging, the food can be considered safe. A slight breakdown of texture may result from freezing some canned foods, otherwise a single freezing and thawing does not affect them adversely.

If you have ***bulging cans, throw them away***, for they are spoiled!

Do not buy cans with dents on the side seam of the can or on the rims at the top of bottom of the can.

Check rusty cans for leakage. The rust may have penetrated the can.

Keep cans clean and dust-free. Any foreign matter on the tops of cans will be pressed into the food itself during opening.

Pick up each can on the shelf. Do they stick slightly? This could be a sign of *leakage, and the can should be discarded*, or if you've had the can for only a short time, return it to the store. Weak seams in the cans can allow gases to build up and force fluid out. This can be a dangerous situation, as toxins (poisons) can be forming.

LONG-TERM STORAGE

If storage is prolonged or products are stored at too high temperatures, reactions can take place between the food and the container, as in corrosion of cans.

Many food reactions and breakdowns are obvious to the naked eye, such as fading in color, turning brown, caking, hardening or softening, becoming cloudy. Off-odors are another sign of staleness or spoilage, as are off-flavors.

However, resist any temptation to taste food that doesn't seem right. Examine cans and their contents but do not eat anything you suspect may not be safe. You don't even have to swallow a food to be poisoned by the toxins produced by certain types of bacteria, and in some cases, even the food's taste is no indicator of its safety.

If you're going to be storing foods for several months in your cupboards, save time, ingredients and money by labeling each container with the purchase date so you know how long its shelf life is. Compare this date to the following chart.

STOCKING YOUR SHELVES

If you keep the following staple foods on your cupboard shelves you will have the basic ingredients needed to make most recipes. You need not buy them all at once. Add a few each time you buy groceries until you have the supplies you use. Buy smaller sizes until you discover which items you use often.

Canned Goods

Tomatoes
Tomato Sauce (8 oz. cans)

Canned Soup
Canned Meals
Canned Vegetables

Tuna and/or salmon
Fruit, as pineapple, peaches,
pears
Canned Skim Milk
Canned Meat

Dry Staples

Cooking/Salad Oil
Cooking Oil Spray
Rice (regular or instant)
Macaroni
Noodles
Spaghetti
Cereals to cook, as Oatmeal, Cream of Wheat
Ready Prepared Cereals
Flour, all purpose
Sugar, granulated
Sugar, brown
Sugar, powdered
Vegetable shortening
Cocoa
Chocolate chips
Nonfat dry milk powder

Cornstarch
Instant Potatoes
Vinegar
Coffee (ground or instant)
Tea (bulk, bags, or instant)
Corn syrup, light or dark
Molasses
Commeal
Raisins
Peanut Butter
Gelatin, flavored
Gelatin, plain
Baking powder
Baking soda
Cream of Tartar
Baking Mix
Cake Mix

Spices and Seasonings

Iodized salt
Black pepper
Seasoned salt
Garlic powder
Powdered lemon
Cinnamon, powdered
Dried onion flakes
Onion powder

Paprika
Beef bouillon
Chicken bouillon
Dry mustard
Soy sauce
Worcestershire sauce
Vanilla

Stocking Your Refrigerator

<p><i>Milk</i></p> <p><i>Eggs</i></p> <p><i>Fruit in season</i></p> <p><i>Fruit juice</i></p> <p><i>Frozen vegetables</i></p> <p><i>Jelly or jam</i></p> <p><i>Margarine and/or butter</i></p> <p><i>Mayonnaise or salad dressing</i></p> <p><i>Salad dressings</i></p> <p><i>Plain yogurt</i></p> <p><i>Lemon juice</i></p> <p><i>Sour cream</i></p>	<p><i>Barbecue sauce</i></p> <p><i>Catsup</i></p> <p><i>Mustard</i></p> <p><i>Celery</i></p> <p><i>Carrots</i></p> <p><i>Cabbage</i></p> <p><i>Lettuce</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Nuts for baking</i></p> <p><i>Cheese</i></p> <p><i>Parmesan cheese, grated in shaker can</i></p> <p><i>Pickles and/or relish</i></p>
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FOOD SHELF STORAGE CHART

Foods, including canned goods, herbs and spices, staples, mixes and packaged foods, are listed in alphabetical order in the left-hand column. The center column contains the recommended maximum storage time on the shelf at 70/F. The right column gives extra handling information.

FOOD	MAXIMUM STORAGE TIME at 70/F	HANDLING GUIDELINES
Baking powder	18 months or expiration date on can	Keep dry and tightly covered.
Baking soda	2 years	Keep dry and covered.
Biscuit, brownie, muffin mix	9 months	Keep cool and dry.
Bouillon cubes or granules	1-2 years	Keep dry and tightly covered.
Bread crumbs, dried	6 months	Keep dry and covered.
Cakes, purchased ready to serve	1-2 days	If butter-cream, whipped cream or custard frosting or filling, refrigerate.
Cake mixes, angel food	9 months 12 months	Keep cool and dry.
Canned foods, all (unopened)	12 months	Keep cool and dry.

ALL OPENED CANNED FOODS--

baby foods	2-3 days	Refrigerate and cover tightly. To avoid metallic taste, transfer foods in cans to glass or plastic storage containers, if kept more than 1 day.	
fish and seafood	2 days		
fruit	1 week		
meats	2 days		
pickles, olives	1-2 months		
poultry	2 days		
sauce, tomato	5 days		
vegetables	3 days		
Casseroles mixes, complete or add own meat	9-12 months		Keep cool and dry.
Catsup, chili sauce (unopened) (opened)	12 months 1 month		Refrigerate for longer storage.
Cereals ready-to-eat (unopened) ready-to-eat (opened)	6-12 months 2-3 months	Refold package liner tightly after opening. If cereal has lost its crispness you might restore it by heating cereal (in a shallow pan) in a preheated 350/F oven for about 5 minutes.	
cooked	6 months	Keep dry and covered	
Cheese, parmesan, grated (unopened) (opened)	10 months 2 months	Refrigerate after opening if package indicates. Keep tightly closed.	
Chocolate, premelted semi-sweet unsweetened	12 months 12 months 18 months	Keep cool. Keep cool. Keep cool.	
Chocolate syrup (unopened) (opened)	12-18 months 6 months	Cover tightly. Refrigerate after opening.	
Cocoa mixes	6-8 months	Cover tightly.	
Coconut, shredded--canned or packaged (unopened) (opened)	12 months 6 months	Refrigerate after opening.	
Coffee cans (unopened) cans (opened) instant (unopened) instant (opened)	1-2 years 2-3 weeks 1-2 years 2-3 weeks	Refrigerate after opening; keep tightly closed. Use dry measuring spoon.	

Coffee lighteners, dry (unopened)	9 months	Keep lid tightly closed.
(opened)	6 months	
Cookies homemade	2-3 weeks	Put in airtight container. Keep box tightly closed.
packaged	2 months	
Cornmeal	4-6 months	Keep tightly closed, in cool dry area.
Cornstarch	18 months	Keep tightly closed.
Crackers	8 months	Keep box tightly closed.
Flour white	6-8 months	Store flour in an airtight container, as it takes up moisture and also dries out easily. When buying in quantity, leave in bag and store in large container. In hot, humid weather, buy flour in small amounts and keep in refrigerator or freezer. If you store flour in a warm place, you are likely to have company-insects. Flour absorbs odors. Do NOT store near soap powders, medicines, or other items with strong odors.
whole wheat	6-8 months	Keep whole wheat flour in the refrigerator the year around. Natural oils cause this flour to turn rancid quickly at room temperature. It can be frozen.
Frosting canned	3 months	Store leftover in refrigerator.
mix	8 months	
Fruits, dried	6 months	Keep cool, in airtight container; if possible refrigerate, and it will keep at least 12 months. During hot humid weather, dried fruit should be refrigerated.
Fruit juices, canned	9 months	Keep cool.
Gelatin, all types	18 months	Keep in original container.
Grits	4-6 months	Store in airtight container.
Herbs	6 months	Store in airtight containers in dry places away from sunlight, heat of range or refrigerator unit. Check aroma at 6 months and if faded, replace.
Herb/spice blends	6 months	
Honey	12 months	Cover tightly. If crystallizes, warm honey jar in pan of hot water.

Jellies, jams, preserves (unopened)	12 months	Cover tightly. Storage life is lengthened in refrigerator after opening. If white mold spots appear on surface, remove at least 1 inch below mold spores, and jelly can be used.
Marshmallow cream (unopened)	3-4 months	Cover tightly, refrigerate after opening to extend storage life. Serve at room temperature.
Marshmallows	2-3 months	Keep in airtight container.
Mayonnaise (unopened)	2-3 months	Refrigerate after opening.
Meat substitutes--textured protein products (imitation bacon bits)	4 months	Keep tightly closed. For longer storage, refrigerate.
Metered-calorie products, "instant breakfast"	6 months	Keep in can, closed jars or original packets.
Milk		
condensed or evaporated (unopened)	12 months	Invert cans every 2 months. Refrigerate after opening.
nonfat dry (unopened)	6 months	
(opened)	3 months	Put in airtight container.
Molasses		
(unopened)	12 months	
(opened)	6 months	Keep tightly closed. Refrigerate to extend storage life.
Mustard, prepared yellow		
(unopened)	2 years	
(opened)	6-8 months	May be refrigerated. Stir before using.
Noodles, egg	6 months	Once opened, store in airtight container.
Nuts		
in-shell (unopened)	4-6 months	Refrigerate after opening. Freeze in moisture vapor-proof containers for longer storage, and to delay rancidity.
nutmeats packaged (unopened)		
vacuum can	1 year	Unsalted and blanched nuts keep longer than salted. If nuts become moldy, throw them out.
other packing	3 months	
nutmeats (opened)	2 weeks	
Oils, salad		
(unopened)	6 months`	
(opened)	1-3 months	Refrigerate after opening.
Pancake mix	6-9 months	Put in airtight container.
Pasta, spaghetti, macaroni, etc.	1 year	Once opened, store in airtight container.

Peanut butter (unopened)	6-9 months	Refrigeration not needed but keeps longer if refrigerated. Use at room temperature.
(opened)	2-3 months	
Peas, beans, lentils (dried)	12 months	Store in airtight container in cool place.
Pectin, liquid (opened)	1 month	Recap and refrigerate.
Pie crust mix	8 months	Keep cool and dry.
Pies and pastries	2-3 days	Refrigerate whipped cream, custard, and chiffon fillings.
Popcorn	2 years	Store in airtight container. May be refrigerated or stored in freezer.
Potatoes, instant	6-12 months	Keep in airtight package.
Pudding mixes	12 months	Keep cool and dry.
Rice		
white & parboiled, packaged		
precooked	1 year	Keep tightly closed.
flavored or herb	6 months	Keep cool and dry.
Roll mix	18 months	If opened, put in airtight container.
Salad dressings		
bottles (unopened)	10-12 months	
bottles (opened)	3 months	Refrigerate after opening.
made from mix	2-3 weeks	Refrigerate prepared dressings.
Sauce and gravy mixes	6-12 months	Keep cool and dry.
Shortening, solid	8 months	Refrigeration not needed.
Soup mixes	12 months	Keep cool and dry.
Spices		
whole spices	1-2 years	Store in airtight containers in dry places away from sunlight, heat of range or refrigerator unit. At times listed, check aroma; if faded, replace. Whole cloves, nutmeg and cinnamon sticks maintain quality beyond 2 year period.
ground spices	6 months	

Sugar brown	4 months	If brown sugar is so hard that you need a hammer to break it, spread it (as best you can) on a cookie sheet and heat in a slow oven (250-300/F). When softened, remove sugar from oven and measure it while it is still warm; it will harden again when cooled. To keep brown sugar soft, put it in a glass or plastic jar with a tight fitting lid. Slipping an apple slice in with the sugar will also do the trick. Check occasionally to see that the slice has not dried out or become moldy.
confectioners granulated	18 months 2 years	Put in airtight container. Store cool dry area, cover tightly.
artificial sweeteners	2 years	Cover tightly.
Syrups	12 months	Keep tightly closed. Refrigerate to extend storage life.
Tea		
bags	18 months	Put in airtight container.
instant	3 years	Cover tightly.
loose	2 years	Put in airtight container.
Toaster pastries	2-3 months	Keep in airtight packet.
Vanilla		
(unopened)	2 years	
(opened)	12 months	Keep tightly closed.
other extracts (opened)	12 months	Keep tightly closed.
Vegetables, dehydrated flakes	6 months	
Vegetables, dried	1 year	Keep cool, in airtight container; if possible refrigerate.
Vegetables, fresh		
onions	2 weeks	Keep dry and away from sun. For longer storage, keep about 50/F in bins or ventilated boxes. Do not refrigerate sweet potatoes, use up quickly. Cold temperatures (below 50/F) cause starch changes which alter the flavor.
potatoes, white	2 weeks	
sweet	2 weeks	
rutabagas	4-6 months	Rutabagas and winter squash usually
winter squash	6 months	keep best in cool (50-60/F) dark places.
Vinegar		
(unopened)	2 years	
(opened)	12 months	Keep tightly closed in cool, dry areas. Slightly cloudy appearance doesn't affect quality. Distilled vinegar keeps longer than cider vinegar.

Whipped topping (dry)

12 months

Keep cool and dry.

Yeast, dry

See expiration date on
package.