

Food Storage

We are like you, learning about things that a few years ago were unthinkable. We started thinking about food supplies two years ago. We are by no means experts, but we've tried to assemble some links and suggested resources to assist in your quest to learn more, and we're happy to share what we've done.

Types of food:

Dried foods, stores with minimal requirements – rice, beans, Quinoa, grains (oats, barley), wheat flours, powdered milk, dried fruit.

Sugar, iodized salt, other spices and herbs

Bottled water, storage tanks, and water purification (camp-style hand-pump filter with spare cartridges. Potable water tablets.) The best of all worlds is to have a well.

Canned food – fruits, vegetables, meats, fish.

Frozen foods – remember they require a freezer, which requires power.

MREs – freeze dried camping food (Mountain House the name heard often a few months ago when the Feds bought out their production capacity to stock up. Problem: What do you with the stuff if you never need it?

How much of which kinds? Depends on how many people you want to feed, and how long a period you want to prepare for.

Storage

- Cool, dry, dark storage location seems universally recommended.
- Check expiration dates on everything you purchase.
- Use food grade plastic containers and heavy duty glad/zip-lock bags for storage.
- Label and date everything - keep track of expiration dates and cycle foods before they expires.
- First in first out
- Once you've reached your storage requirements – stockpiled as much food as you think you will need –Categorize storage according to type for food; organize within sections according expiration dates.

Medicine: First aid (bandages, antibacterial ointment, iodine, etc.) generic pain killers, cold/flu medicine. Vitamins and supplements.

Living off the land: Gardening and wild foraging

Learn how to garden so you can put up your own food.

- Square-foot gardening
- Larger plots – don't overcrowd plants, follow individual planting guidelines.
- Ensure sufficient sun
- Test soil and till in nutrients as needed for crops you wish to plant.

- Use heirloom seeds and plants – you can collect their seeds and plant them again next year!
- Pesticides vs organic
- Mulch around established plants with grass clippings to hold down weeds
- Harvesting seed
- Not too late in the season to give it a try – you can still plant cold weather crops like spinach, and root vegetables like turnips

Composting – Save garden and yard refuse and combine with loam. Add earth worms and let nature take its course. As you add more refuse to bin or pile, mix it into the loam.

Raising Chickens – many folks are getting into it. Just check your city ordinance.

Canning foods – tools, techniques, time, cost. Refer to the reference links for biling vs pressure cooker, and detailed instructions.

We typically re-heat canned food like tomato sauce to boiling before eating.

Vacuum seal and freeze – tool, techniques, time, cost. Vacuum sealed foods can last up to 5 years when vacuum sealed,

Date everything you put up. Different foods may have different shelf lives.

If you ant to practice canning or freezing but don't have your own garden? Shop farm stands and farmers markets and work a deal to buy things in quantity.

Speak to vendors at markets about gardening. More often than not they are eager to share information.

Resource links

Canning:

<http://www.canning-food-recipes.com/canning.htm>

<http://www.freshpreserving.com/guides/IntroToCanning.pdf>

National Center for Home food Preservation:

<http://www.uga.edu/nchfp>

Gardening:

<http://www.vegetablegardeningguru.com/>

<http://urbanext.illinois.edu/veggies/basics.cfm>

URI Mater Gardener program:

<http://www.urimga.org/>

Composting:

<http://compostguide.com/>

Raising Chickens:

http://www.wakeuppeople.org/RAISING_MEAT_CHICKENS.html

WILD PLANTS - foraging, storing, and cooking

http://www.netwalkri.com/NATURAL_DETECTIVES.html

MICROGREENS - seed procurement, growing, and nutrition...

<http://www.wakeuppeople.org/MICROGREENS.html>

NUTS - compact nutrition and calories

<http://www.wakeuppeople.org/NUTS.html>

HEIRLOOM SEEDS - links to resources

http://www.wakeuppeople.org/HEIRLOOM_SEEDS.html

KEEPING HERBALS ON HAND

<http://www.wakeuppeople.org/FLU-TALK.html>

PRESERVING SQUASH and conserving seeds

<http://www.wakeuppeople.org/SQUASH.html>

STORING ROOT VEGETABLES

<http://butterflywings.hubpages.com/hub/How-to-Store-Root-Vegetables-in-Boxes-in-a-Cellar>

STORING SEEDS - info about bolting spinach and lettuce down at bottom of page

http://www.netwalkri.com/NUTS_AND_BOLTS.html

PLANTING GARLIC in October

http://www.gardenaction.co.uk/fruit_veg_diary/fruit_veg_mini_project_april_3_garlic.asp

MRE freeze dried foods:

<http://www.survival-warehouse.com/index.htm>