

# Survival Stockpiling

**How To Make Sure There's Plenty Of Food On the Table When All Hell Breaks Loose**



**A Stay Alive Blueprint**

# SURVIVAL STOCKPILING

How to make sure there's plenty of food on the table when all hell breaks loose

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## When Disaster Strikes

It doesn't take long for the shelves at the grocery store to become empty soon after a disaster. Or even before, if there's enough of a warning. Within hours, basic items like water, bread, or milk can literally "disappear". Think about how spoiled we are as Americans. A typical run to the supermarket and we come home with just about anything and everything we could want. Regardless of what the season is, we can have fresh strawberries, oranges, peppers - again, just about anything - all year round!

Now think about it a little more. How is it possible that someone in Illinois can enjoy strawberries in the winter? And a family in Alabama can bake delicious homemade bread with wheat from out west? Rarely, do we think about the transportation and delivery systems that make such things possible. We have gotten so used to having an enormous variety of food at our fingertips that it's hard to imagine anything less. But what if, for some reason, those delivery trucks never made it to our stores?

Have you ever been to the store the night before Thanksgiving? There are certain things that you just can't buy - because they're simply not there! Not even one! Everyone went shopping for the same ingredients for the same favorite dish. Even a day or two after the holiday the inventory isn't replenished. Do you know why?

**Because the typical grocery store has only a three day supply of food.** That means that if something delayed the delivery truck from bringing in a new supply, the store would only have enough inventory in stock for three days. And it's very possible that it could be even less than that! Especially if everyone is in panic mode!

There have recently been mentions of a possible food shortage - right here in the good ol' USA! How long will it be before the average American consumer starts to think more about this? Is it possible that people will start panicking and hoarding basic grocery items? Without strategic planning, we could very well see food supplies disappear within hours - if there ever was a panic.

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Put this book down for a moment. Go take a peek in your cupboards or your pantry. So? If today brought food shortages....and you couldn't get to the grocery store....would you be able to get by? For a few days? For a few weeks? What about even longer – a month or two? Again, we tend to take for granted being able to run up to the store to “get a few things” when we need them. But what if we couldn't do that – because, what we needed wasn't there?

Now imagine what would happen if grocery store shelves were empty across the nation. The average family probably doesn't have enough food on hand to last more than a week. If you live in an area where hurricanes are common, you might have already learned how to prepare for scenarios that would cause a shortage of food. And you've probably seen how certain items tend to vanish quickly when people are worried.

If such a food crisis were to occur, would you be prepared to feed your family for however long it took before the problems were resolved? What if it lasted longer than a few weeks? Don't think such a thing could happen? Well, we are currently facing the biggest economic disaster our country has ever seen. Anything seems possible at this point.

With that being said, the ball is in your court. It's up to you to take the responsibility to keep your family fed if such a situation does arise.

## Strategic Planning

Don't lose hope! The purpose of this handbook is to help you plan for such an occasion. You can take the advice in these pages, act upon them, and keep your family safe – and fed! And you might even have enough to share with others in your neighborhood. And don't worry – it doesn't have to empty your bank account! You'll be surprised at how far you can stretch your dollars (even in a time of economic disaster)!

The time to start planning is NOW! The secret to successful preparation is stocking your pantry while the stores are plentifully supplied. It's important to purchase the items you'll need before panic sets in. Otherwise it's too late. You'll be in the same boat as everyone else – rushing to get whatever you can.

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It would also be wise to have an awareness of how or where to get additional food – just in case the problems aren't fixed after a few days. You can imagine the widespread panic that would occur if grocery stores throughout America were unable to provide even the most basic of foods to hundreds of thousands of people.

Another disadvantage when disaster is on the horizon, and after it strikes, is a significant increase in price. Even in the absence of a crisis, with huge financial bailouts being shoved down our throats, inflation brings about rising costs all on its own. So, you want to stock up before prices skyrocket.

## Always Messing Things Up

You have to admit, whether it's responding to hurricane damage or trying to fix our economy, the government is always messing things up. Yet, regardless of previous failures, they can't resist an opportunity to try to "save" us. Those elite and elected (and appointed) few know what's good for the rest of us! Trust us, they say, we're acting in your best interest (as they continue to pour buckets of water over our drowning nation).

Seriously though, we need only take a look at Hurricane Katrina. It was an embarrassing reminder of what's wrong with the "government as savior" mentality. It seems as if the only people they are interested in saving are themselves (along with those who "pay to play".) They are slow and inefficient. Do you honestly think that if our country experienced a food crisis that government intervention would result in a speedy recovery?

What if, in a possible crisis, the government actually makes the situation worse? You might be thinking "Yeah, I agree with their bumbling inability to help when it's needed the most, but to actually worsen things? How can that be?" With more and more attention drawn to corrupt government officials, wouldn't it be very possible for them to take what they wanted and in turn give it those who "need" it. Or what if they decide to warehouse supplies – again, acting in the best interest of the people?

Look at what happened during the Great Depression. They were killing livestock and destroying crops – while people were STARVING! What madness! That's government intervention for you.

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And there's no reason to believe that if something happened right now it would be any better.

Still not convinced? Take a look at Presidential Executive Orders. Regardless of the fact that it's unconstitutional, what do such orders look like at a time of crisis? The government can confiscate any "excess and surplus real and personal property." Personal property? Anything of yours could be legally taken: food, gold, guns, and ammo (and whatever else would benefit those in authority).

Of course, we hope it doesn't come to this. But it doesn't hurt to have these kinds of possibilities in the back of your mind. You have to be able to protect your family from officials who, unconstitutionally, make laws that do more harm than good. You don't have to outright disobey but you can play smart.

## And Then More Intervention

Just when you think the government can't mess things up anymore than they already have – they somehow manage to do just that. They can't help it; it's like the touch of Midas; but instead of gold we get ruin. So, what does more intervention look like in the event of a food crisis? Well, here they come to save the day - with an attempt at controlling what's made available and at what price.

With a government that is becoming more and more controlling, it wouldn't be surprising to have homes searched and excess food (or whatever else they think would be for the greater good) confiscated. You need to be prepared for this type of situation.

Don't advertise to those in your neighborhood what you're doing or about to do. It's better to later share than have someone steal or alert authorities to your stockpile. Plan where you can store things (possibly out of sight in case home inspections become the norm). It's always better to prepare for the worst than to be unprepared. (Need some extra ideas on secret storage? There are books available on creating and using hiding places throughout your home.)

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## What's the Shelf Life?

When people are thinking, for the first time, of stockpiling, they usually wonder about shelf life – how long food items will last in their pantry. Not everything lasts forever. Some people aren't phased by the "expiration date" – provided there aren't living things crawling around (and I'm sure there are people out there who wouldn't be bothered by that either!) but it's important to remember that the older something is means that the nutritional value might not be as great as it used to be.

Rotating your stockpile of pantry goods (those with less shelf life) is a good habit to get into. That way you replace the items that have been sitting there the longest with newer items and there's less throwing away food that's gone bad. However, you may decide to invest in foods that have longer shelf life so that you don't have to worry so much about periodic rotating. (One suggestion, for rotating, is to write the purchase date somewhere on the can or box – so you know when it's time to rotate.)

The advantage of longer shelf life items is that you'll spend less time replacing them. You can put them on the shelf and not have to worry about them until it's time to use them! Fortunately, the foods that last longer cost less. You don't have to spend a fortune to establish a decent sized stockpile. And you can probably afford to spend a little more -just in case you have to share with your neighbors.

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Here are some common pantry items and their shelf life:

Food Item Baking	Shelf Life
All purpose flour	12 months unopened, 6-8 months opened
Whole Wheat flour	12 months unopened, 6 months opened (if refrigerated)
Granulated sugar	2 years unopened, 6 months opened
Brown sugar	4 months unopened, 4 months opened
Confectioner's sugar	18 months unopened
Solid shortening	8 months unopened, 3 months opened
Cocoa	2 years unopened, 1 year opened
Baking Soda	18 months unopened, 6 months opened
Baking Powder	6 months unopened, 3 months opened
Cornstarch	18 months
<b>Spices</b>	
Whole spices	2 – 4 years
Ground spices	2 – 3 years
Paprika	2 – 3 years (if refrigerated)
Cayenne Pepper	2 - 3 years (if refrigerated)
<b>Canned Goods (lower acid foods have a longer shelf life)</b>	
Tomato products	1 -2 years unopened
Fruit Juices	1 -2 years unopened
Soups	3 – 5 years unopened
Meats	2 – 4 years unopened
Gravy	3 - 5 years unopened
Vegetables	3 – 4 years unopened
<b>Other Items</b>	
Pasta dried (no eggs)	2 years unopened, 1 year opened
Pasta dried (with eggs)	2 years unopened, 1 – 2 months opened
Salad Dressings	1 year unopened, 3 months opened (in refrigerator)
Honey	1 year
Ground Coffee	1 year unopened, 2 weeks opened (in refrigerator)
Instant Coffee	1 year unopened, 3 months opened
Bottled Water	2 years unopened, 3 months opened
Jams and Jellies	1 year unopened, 6 months opened (in refrigerator)
Peanut Butter	6-9 months unopened, 2 – 3 months opened

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Remember, these are suggested shelf-lives. Common sense, and a good nose, will tell you when something needs to be thrown out!

## Can It

Canned foods, as you've probably guessed, are perfect for stockpiling. The studies done on canned food are really quite remarkable. For instance, in a study articulated by the FDA on canned foods found from 100 years ago, despite the lack of fresh smell and appearance, the chemists determined that there was no microbial growth and the contents were safe to eat.

Fruits and vegetables are filled with the vitamins, minerals, and fiber that are essential to our well being. You would think that fresh produce would win, hands down, against canned food when it comes to the nutritional value. However, canned goods come pretty darn close compared to fresh. Other than some loss of Vitamin C, due to heat processing, studies have shown stable levels of the nutrients found in canned foods.

Surprised? What do we know about canning? Well, it's one of the safest ways to preserve food. The high heat process kills the microorganisms that are responsible for foodborne illnesses. And there are no preservatives. The suggested shelf life of a canned good is two years. You can either load up on canned goods from the store or you can learn to can your own produce grown from your own garden. Don't know how to can? It's easy to learn! There are DVD's that can teach you this long lost skill – you'll be canning like a pro in no time. (Check out [www.foodshortageusa.com](http://www.foodshortageusa.com) )

The only disadvantage to canned food, whether it's your own or bought, is the heaviness of the container and difficulty that comes when rotating your supply. You also need quite a bit of storage space to stockpile enough jars or cans to feed your family (and don't forget a little extra just in case you need to share with your neighbors). There is also the possibility that, after a crisis, if authorities were confiscating supplies, the canned food would be the first to go simply because they would be the hardest to hide.

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## Other Pantry Items

There are plenty of other items that can be stored in your pantry and used in an emergency. While suggested shelf life for some of these products was given previously, it's important to remember, when it comes to your pantry items, the proper environment and storage needed for a longer shelf life: A cool temperature, out of light, and tightly sealed. Let's take a look at some of the other pantry items you should consider having on hand.

- ➔ Powdered milk
- ➔ Bouillon cubes
- ➔ Cereals
- ➔ Nuts
- ➔ Dried fruits / jerky
- ➔ Vegetable oils
- ➔ Lard/Crisco
- ➔ Seasonings/spices
- ➔ Flour
- ➔ Sugar/ white and brown

Don't forget pasta products. A basic pasta dish can be whipped up in no time and with few ingredients. Spaghetti, macaroni, rotini; these are inexpensive ways to feed your family. Plus, as mentioned earlier, they have a shelf life for up to two years when unopened.

It would be good to note; with all of your items, regardless of shelf life, that you get in the habit of writing the date of when you purchased the food item somewhere on the container. This can really help when rotating your supply and help you use up the older items first.

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## Should You Buy in Bulk?

Warehouse stores, like Sams or Costcos, are great places to buy items like beans, rice, flour, etc. When you purchase bulk items you usually get more for your money. You might want to consider purchasing large amounts of food from a store that you aren't a frequent visitor to. Or you might want to accumulate items for your stockpile gradually over a period of time rather than all at once.

Keeping a low profile could be the difference to keeping your food or being forced to "share" with the local authorities. Remember, stores can track your purchases when you use a credit card. It may be your best bet to pay in cash when making purchases for your stockpile. Try to stay off the radar.

## Survivalist Living

Have you ever watched an episode of Man vs. Wild? You know, where they drop off the guy somewhere by helicopter and leave him (well, except for the camera crew). Throughout the episode, he explains survivalist tips and techniques as he treks across a desert or tries to cross snow-laden territories. He eats bugs, lizards, snakes, builds shelters with whatever he can find and always stresses the importance of finding a water source; typical survival guy stuff.

So, while watching an episode like that from the comfort of my own home is a fun way to pass 30 minutes, it's not anything I'd like to try anytime soon. I'm sure a few days of it wouldn't be so bad but it would quickly lose its appeal. Unless you consider yourself a survivalist and really know how to "live off the land", it's probably not the best route to go unless you absolutely have to. It's much easier to prepare ahead of time by creating a stockpile and growing your own foods.

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## Your Own Garden

The best, and most practical, way to “live off of the land” is to have your own garden. If you're already an avid gardener, this is no big deal. But for those who don't have a clue about growing their own produce, it can be a little overwhelming. Take a look around your yard and think about where the best place to grow food would be. Choose the area that gets the most sun.

One thing to consider, if you're turning a part of your yard into a garden for the first time, is the amount of chemicals you are currently using in that area. You might want to stop applying herbicides or insecticides. Sometimes these chemicals can make for difficult growing. Another option, if you don't want to dig up your yard, is to use raised beds. And for even more variety, you could always plant berry bushes or fruit trees on your property.

It might not hurt to read up on which wild plants can be eaten (just in case). This could be a fun family activity, learning to identify edible weeds. If you really want to be prepared, you could study up on the medicinal purposes of herbs and other plants and grow them as well.

There are lots of books available on the subject of planting your own garden and using herbs. In fact, there is a Survival Seed Bank that can be purchased. It's a really neat concept, for those who do garden and those who don't. There are enough seeds to plant a full acre! Plus, they are heirloom seeds – which means you can harvest the seeds from this year's crop to use for next year! For more information on how you can order one of these crisis food banks, go to [www.survivalseedbank.com](http://www.survivalseedbank.com).

You don't want to be forced to learn about these things because of a crisis. Learn about them before – make it part of your everyday life.

## Hunting for Food

Unless you hunt as a pastime, this is not an easy way of acquiring food. And don't forget the cleaning and preparation part. For those not accustomed to doing such tasks, it might take some practice and an unsettled stomach!

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If the times call for hunting for your own source of meat, this will depend on where you live and what you have access to. You might want to take advantage of the next hunting season by finding someone who knows what they're doing and have them teach you the basics.

Here are some basic tips for beginner hunters:

1. You need to have a firearm. If you don't already have one, now's the time.
2. If you're not used to firing a gun, take a gun safety course.
3. Make sure you use a firearm that is appropriate for what you're hunting. (You don't want to blow up the rabbit)
4. Practice shooting. Go to your local shooting range and hit target after target.
5. Don't forget other necessary tools – a knife is used to field dress the game. Game cleaning kits are available online or at most stores that carry hunting items.
6. Read a book or two about hunting and field dressing. Search online – there are tons of materials out there.

Just like all of the other things talked about in this handbook, you should prepare now and get some experience under your belt. You don't want to have your family's survival dependent on how quickly you can pick up a new skill during a crisis

## Can You Eat Your Dog's Food?

Sure your dog gets an occasional scrap or two from your table, but what about sharing what's at his table? You would never even consider eating your dog's food on a normal day, but what if that's all there was? Dog food is pretty cheap. But is it safe?

You'd have to take a look at the product's label. Remember, that an animal's digestive system is different than a human's. Some of the things they can consume would make us sick. And if the label says "meat products" there's no telling what that means. I'm not sure I want to know.

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Maybe you should start purchasing a more grain-based dog food - just in case you should have to share a meal with your animal friend! Seriously, don't forget your pet when you're stockpiling. Have some extra bags in storage.

## Specialty Foods for Survival

You can purchase survival "kits" which are specifically designed for emergencies. They contain long shelf-life foods and are packed to last for up to a month (different brands may vary). There are several websites that sell food survival kits – keep in mind, prices might start rising as more people become concerned about a possible food crisis – so if you're interested, you'd better act now.

What can you expect from the more expensive already prepared survival foods? Most of the foods are freeze dried – all you have to do is add water. They come in cans and can have a 30 year shelf life! If money isn't an option for you, you can get gourmet meals (for breakfast, lunch, and dinner) for a whole year for around \$3,000.

Other foods are dehydrated. Some would say the advantage of freeze dried foods is that they retain the texture, freshness, and nutrients, resulting in a better overall taste. However, you'll have to take into consideration the amount of water you'll need to prepare these meals. Make sure you store additional water for your meal preparation.

Another option would be MREs (Meals Ready to Eat). These were developed for the US Army. You can eat the meals right out of the package. MREs can be purchased at camping stores and military surplus stores. Make sure the MREs you purchase are legitimate "civilian" products and not stolen military meals! You might get in trouble for that if your home ever gets inspected.

One disadvantage about MREs; because they are packed in water (or oil) they are a heavier product. Plus, they are not very cost efficient. You could feed more people for your money using unprocessed foods. And remember, these meals follow the same rules as other pantry items when it comes to storage conditions, cooler temperatures and keep out of light.

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## Food for Barter

Let's take a look at some other food products that can be purchased for use during an emergency. They are fairly inexpensive and can be stored for a long period of time. Since these items could be harder to acquire during a crisis, they could be used as bartering items.

- ➔ Candy (almost 100% sugar)
- ➔ Cocoa
- ➔ Coffee
- ➔ Grain
- ➔ Honey
- ➔ Salt
- ➔ Spices
- ➔ Sugar
- ➔ Tea
- ➔ Tobacco

These sorts of items could become very valuable during a time of emergency – when the supply runs really low. One of the best things about stocking up on the above items is that if you don't use them for barter - you can use them yourself!

Don't forget the importance of salt as a stockpile item! Especially when you start to prepare unprocessed foods for your meals, you'll appreciate having some salt around! Salt has a long shelf life –just keep it dry!

Sugar and spices will come in handy, too! Dried spices don't spoil, but they do diminish in strength. If kept in airtight containers; whole spices can last up to 4 years and ground spices for 2 to 3 years. Leafy herbs can last between 1 and 3 years.

If there is no smell – toss it. A bit of fragrance left and you can still use it, just use more of it than called for in the recipe. Abide by good storage (cool, dry, and dark) and your spices and herbs will last for quite some time.

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If you don't make your own bread, you probably don't keep a lot of dry yeast on hand. This is another item that could be a great bartering tool. You can buy packets or jars (the jars should be refrigerated, though, after opening). Who knows, you might start producing loaves of fresh bread for your neighborhood!

## Low Priced Foods

When food items, such as grains and beans, are not ground or cracked they have an almost unlimited shelf life. Like so many other goods, the proper dry storage is needed. Buying grains or beans by the bucket (6 gallon or less) is a really inexpensive way of stocking up on useful food. Think about it. There's little work that goes into it...the grains are harvested, dried, put in containers, and pretty much are ready to sell just like that. That explains why they are so inexpensive.

Those who are in the habit of baking their own bread buy grains by the bucket and mill the amount needed when needed. It's a great way to have on hand enough to feed a large amount of people for minimum expense.

Let's say you buy a 6 gallon bucket of wheat. You can decide how you want to use it. Want some cereal? Crack it. Want bread? Grind it into flour to make breads, cakes, or pastas. There's nothing quite like fresh bread – especially, when the flour has just been ground. And if you don't know how, this might be a great time to start learning!

## Survival Through the Ages

Isn't it amazing how unprocessed foods, such as grain, can last for such a long time? Remember the famine thousands of years ago in Egypt? How did Joseph save Egypt - By store housing enormous amounts of grain! Did you know that after years of storage, you can sprout wheat kernels or even plant them? What incredible food wheat is!

While meat can be a great source of protein, it's not the only way to get life sustaining amounts. In fact, wheat contains the eight essential amino acids required to synthesize complete proteins. Sure, the levels are lower in wheat (than in meat) – but the fact is, they are still there.

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The ideal situation would allow for a combination of grain and meat. But, if you had to go a few days, maybe weeks, without meat – you could survive on grains and legumes. Unfortunately, grain doesn't have as much of the vitamin or mineral content that your body needs. Because of this, it would be wise to make sure you stock up on the vitamin and mineral supplements that you currently take.

(This is not intended to be a nutritional handbook, so for further information you'll have to do more in-depth research)

## More to Eat Than Wheat

Don't think you're limited to wheat in an emergency situation. There are several other unprocessed foods that offer the same benefits. Here are the more popular ones:

- ➔ Barley
- ➔ Corn
- ➔ Dried Beans
- ➔ Oats
- ➔ Soybeans

These foods can last and last – as long as they are stored properly (cool and dry).

Don't forget that these are also “yummy” for pests. Take the extra effort to keep these foods from being ruined by insects or mice (or even larger vermin). Plastic containers are difficult for furry friends to penetrate; however, the key to keeping insects out is to keep oxygen out of the containers.

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## Store It

It's not as hard to build up a grain/legume supply as you might think. The only concern about having large containers and plenty of supplies on hand would be, and we hope this will never happen, government confiscation during an emergency situation. Remember, credit card purchases can be searched by authorities. If you are buying larger than normal quantities, you might want to consider paying in cash.

If you really want to stay under the radar, you might want to get an animal or two as livestock. That way your grain purchases could be used primarily for feeding your animals while simultaneously adding to your stockpile.

Purchasing grains locally can be cheaper but that means the packing would probably be up to you. You would need containers that are designed for food storage as well as moisture proof. The all around best container would be a 6 gallon bucket. You can buy these buckets at your local hardware or paint store.

Where do you plan on storing your grains? An ideal temperature would be somewhere between 45 and 65 degrees Fahrenheit. Also, keep your containers off of the concrete floor or ground (if you're storing them in your garage or shed). Lay some boards down to stack the containers upon. Another tip when storing large quantities of grain is to mark the container with the date when you fill it. Rotate your containers, using the oldest grains first. And don't stack the containers too closely together – you don't want them to "sweat".

Pests were mentioned earlier as a threat to your supply. The easiest way to combat this problem:

Dry ice – frozen carbon dioxide gas. This is deadly to pests because it prevents the animal from getting oxygen – a very effective method. Be cautious when handling dry ice – it'll freeze your skin upon contact. (If you're unsure about where to buy dry ice, you can search online or in the phone book. Check welding supply stores or ice cream parlors.)

Dry ice comes by the block or in pellets. You might find that pellets are easier to work with. Make sure you use heavy gloves and the proper tools when handling dry ice.

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Once you have your 6 gallon container filled with grain, lay  $\frac{1}{4}$  of a pound of dry ice on top. Press the lid down gently enough so that some of the air is allowed to escape. After the dry ice has evaporated (this can be anywhere from 2-5 hours) seal the container.

You'll want to keep a close eye on the process because you don't want any air to get back into the container before it's sealed. If you seal it prematurely, the bucket can split or the lid pop off. Any adults or larval insects in the container will die from the lack of oxygen. It may take a longer period of time for eggs and pupae to die.

(NOTE: Do not let children or pets near dry ice and never use in a closed room.)

You don't want moisture getting into any of your containers of food. So you'll need to be aware of the conditions and provide the driest environment possible. When you purchase your grain make sure that it's been dried completely. If you buy grain shortly after it's been harvested, you'll have to be sure to dry it before storing it. Always smell the grain before buying, or using, to make sure it hasn't gone bad.

If you do have a supply of grain that needs moisture to be drawn out, you can consider using silica gel packs. You can try to buy these at local supply stores or hardware stores. If you are unable to find them, check out Desiccare, Inc. ([www.desiccare.com](http://www.desiccare.com)) They are a manufacturing company of moisture control products. They have a large range of products; with some innovative items for the home. They don't list their prices online so you'll have to give them a call to place an order with them.

## Buying Locally

You might try to purchase your grains from a local co-op. This can be a great place if you're interested in buying things locally grown as well as other supplies that could be used for farm related issues (animals and crops). It might be in your best interest to not let on that you're storehousing for a crisis – or that the animal feed you're buying might be used for human consumption in an emergency.

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We all know how these things end up. When the government finds out that more and more people are buying grain, they'll be sure to impose a higher sales tax or put a limit on how much you can buy. Plus, federal agencies might start paying closer attention to the human use of products that are intended for animals.

It might be harder to acquire grains through a feed store simply because products are packaged and marketed towards specific animals rather than a general mixture. Also, some places add supplements to the feed so that the animals aren't lacking in essentials. Suspicion might be aroused when you're buying large quantities of grain but not opting for the additional supplements. If you can find a feed store or co-op that doesn't ask many questions, take your business there.

Or you could just act like you don't know any better – pretend you're a hobby farmer trying to go “all natural” for your animals. In this case, it won't be so bad if they try to take advantage of you by “letting” you buy too much. The more grain you're intent on purchasing the harder it will be to hide what you're trying to do.

You can load the grains in the back of a pickup truck (they can be bagged first if you'd like) and once you get home you'll have to take the necessary steps for storing them properly. If you don't have the privacy of living in the country, you should probably pull into your garage to unload. You don't want nosy neighbors trying to figure out what you're doing.

Take care to clean up the dust after it settles. Not too many people are aware that flour dust can be explosive – meaning, you would want to be extra careful that a spark doesn't ignite the dust. Especially after grinding your own wheat, be sure to clean up all of the dust afterwards.

If you don't feel comfortable visiting the local co-op or feed store, become friends with a farmer. They probably wouldn't mind selling you a load or two from their harvest. Plus, this is a relationship that could really come in handy – if they have livestock that they butcher, you might be able to purchase some of that meat and fill your freezer.

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## Buying Grains Online

There are numerous websites that sell grains or legumes (or just about anything else that you want to store). The advantage of purchasing online is that all of the hard work is already done. You simply pick out what and how much. If you choose larger quantities, they come in 5 or 6 gallon pails – and most of them are already oxygen-free. So you don't have to worry about handling dry-ice or other methods of pest control.

This also gives you the freedom to buy in smaller quantities first and then you can determine what you really want to store more of in larger amounts. Buying online is also great for the unprocessed food “beginner”. There are some really great websites that have nice pictures and descriptions of all their products as well as useful information such as preparation and recipes.

## What to do with Unprocessed Foods

One of the best things about having unprocessed foods in storage, like grains or legumes for example, is that you can choose how you want to process it and what you want to use it for. Add a little meat and make a protein bulked soup with legumes; put in a little wheat or rice and it turns into an even more nutritious meal

You can take some wheat and boil it to use for a breakfast cereal or use it in a dish as a substitute for rice. If you sprout legumes or wheat you can use them for a salad (along with some of your home grown veggies). Soybeans can be used to make your own soymilk. And how about fresh bread made with freshly ground flour? Yum!

Purchasing grain in bulk requires a mill to process it. These items can be pretty pricey – but well worth the investment. You'll have to decide which product is best suited for your needs as well as your budget. Consider what you plan on grinding and when you plan on using it.

An electric mill makes grinding grain so easy – they are popular because of their speed and efficiency! If you're concerned about emergency use, like in cases of no power, you'll want to make sure you have a generator available so that you can still use it. (A solar generator would be perfect for something like this.)

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A good electric mill starts around \$200.00. Other disadvantages about electric mills: they are loud compared to a hand mill and they produce flour dust. A hand cranked mill can be less expensive; you can find a basic one for a little under \$100. However, there are hand mills that are just as expensive as, if not more, electric mills. With a hand mill you can grind anything! They even allow you to grind grains that tend to be oily (like flaxseed). Another advantage is that you can crack the grains; an electric mill is unable to do that. The only downside with the hand mill is that you (or another family member) have to do the work.

## A Fine Grind

Remember, the finer you grind the grain, the less of a laxative effect it has. As silly as that sounds, there is a reason this is mentioned. We are so used to eating highly processed, refined flours so when you switch to coarser whole wheat flour your body will need to adjust. You can begin with finer flour and gradually switch to a more course flour. If you are feeding babies and young children, you'll want to make sure that they are consuming a finely ground flour to prevent any problems with digestion.

## Sprouting

Another way to use your grains or legumes is to sprout them. Here are some of the seeds and beans you can sprout:

- ➔ Alfalfa
- ➔ Barley
- ➔ Chickpeas
- ➔ Corn
- ➔ Fenugreek
- ➔ Lentils
- ➔ Mung beans
- ➔ Peas
- ➔ Pumpkin
- ➔ Wheat

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The health benefits that come from eating sprouts are amazing! They are a year-round source of Vitamin C, carotenoid A, as well as B vitamins. By consuming them, you are consistently getting a high volume of vitamins. Unlike vegetables and fruits, which begin to lose their nutritional value after they're picked, sprouts remain full of vitamin content and even continue slow growth after being harvested.

How do you go about sprouting? Well, it's a lot easier than you think!

You'll need a large jar. Keep in mind that sprouted seeds have a larger volume – 6 to 8 times - than dry seeds. (You have to account for that when you consider the size of your jar.) Do not use seeds that are packaged for gardens. They might be chemically treated and the germination rate will be slower. Purchase good quality seeds and go through and remove any damaged ones before placing them in the jar. You can measure, for a quart container, about 4 tablespoons of seeds.

Place the seeds in the jar, fill with water, and soak. (Cheesecloth works well as a covering for the jar since it allows airflow.) The size of seed will determine how long they should soak; smaller seeds – five hours, medium sized seeds – eight hours, and grains and legumes 10 to 12 hours. After the soaking time is completed, drain the water and rinse off the seeds.

After rinsing, place the jar in a cool, dark place. Rinse and drain the seeds twice every day. Within two days, the sprouting should occur. Don't let the sprouts sit in water – this will cause them to rot. When there are tiny green leaves at the tips, and the sprouts are about two to three inches long, this is the best time for flavor and nutritional value to eat them. Refrigerate them to retain freshness and nutritional value and they should be eaten within a few days.

Sprouts are an excellent and inexpensive way to acquire a high concentration of vitamins, minerals, and enzymes. You can toss them in a salad, make them into a bread (cake-like), add them to soup; regardless of how you choose to use them – you'll benefit greatly health-wise and it'll even be fun for the kids!

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## It's Never too Late to Start

Don't worry if you've never stored your own wheat or legumes before. It's never too late to learn how to properly store, process, and cook with your unprocessed foods. In fact, it can become a fun family activity. There are tons of resources available to guide you. Experiment with recipes, learn how to grind your own wheat, teach the kiddos how to sprout – if you start to make it a part of your everyday (or weekend) life then when a time of crisis comes – you'll be prepared because it's become your way of life.

Remember to keep on hand various seasonings, spices, oils – all of the extras that add the “oomph” in making a delicious meal. Stock up on the items you use the most or learn how to grow and make your own.

## Family Needs

When determining what you should be adding to your stockpile, your first priority should be “what will your family need”. Take into consideration things like; formula or diapers (if you have an infant), diabetic needs, low sodium foods, anything that is a special need.

It's important, in families with children, to stock up on food items they like and need for nutritional value. A milk substitute would come in handy. Powdered milk has a shorter shelf life once opened while cans of evaporated milk last longer. Peanut butter and jelly are always good things to stock up on, too.

Again, if you start adjusting your eating habits now, there will be less to get used to later – if there comes a time when you can't just run up to the store and grab what you need.

Don't forget the needs of your pets! Stock up on bags of food, treats and chew toys. Any medicines they need or flea treatments would also be good to have on hand. Be sure to keep up on their vaccinations and rabies shots.

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## Longer Shelf Life

The number one condition for establishing a longer shelf life is a cool temperature. Depending on where you live will affect how and where you store your food. If you live where it is cooler, and even below freezing for several months, you should be able to store your goods in the garage or shed, if you need to. However, if you live in an area where it gets really hot, you'll want to make sure that products are kept cool – which may mean air-conditioned.

Remember to write the dates of purchase on your food items so you can rotate them and use according to age. Store opened boxes or bags in airtight containers to prevent oxygen and insects from getting to the contents.

## Quantities – How Much?

Planning on how much to store can be a little overwhelming. An average person can do quite well on 2,000 calories a day. If, during an emergency, you are performing tasks that increase your daily activity (walking or biking to work, working in a garden, processing more of your own food, etc) then you would want to increase your calorie intake for adequate energy and to maintain weight.

You'll also want to make sure that everyone is getting enough protein. When things get tough and you find yourself doing more physical work than you're used to, your muscles will need that protein to rebuild until they are conditioned for the additional workload. Children, especially, need protein for their growing bodies.

You may want to plan on providing 3,000 calories for each person each day. If you use up that much food per day – fine, you planned for it. And if you don't – great, there's more in storage! At this point you're probably thinking "Okay, great. But how do I calculate that into actual food amounts?"

It's very unlikely that you'll want to keep a year's worth of food in storage. Most people just don't have the room to keep that much food around. While it depends completely on your budget and your personal goals, a 3 month supply seems like a reasonable amount of food to store.

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When determining how much food per person, some suggest one six gallon container per person for one month. So, if you have a family of four, you would want four six-gallon containers of wheat for one month. There is a website designed to calculate the amount of food for you. All you have to do is enter the number of adults and children – keep in mind, their calculations are for 12 months. That website is [www.thefoodguys.com/foodcalc.html](http://www.thefoodguys.com/foodcalc.html).

If you figure a ratio of grain to legumes at 4 to 1, this would be a good ballpark figure for how many containers of legumes you should store. So, for every one container of beans you should have four containers of grain.

## Where to Buy Unprocessed Foods

There are several choices on where you can purchase large amounts of unprocessed foods. Your decision will be made on what's important to you; maybe it's buying locally, maybe it's finding the lowest price, or maybe you just want a good product with the least amount of work on your end.

If you decide to buy locally, you'll want to locate a co-op or find a farmer who's willing to sell some of his harvest. This method might require either having or renting a truck or paying for delivery; it would depend on how much grain you are purchasing. Plus, if you purchase a truckload you would need the space to store all of it. And then you would have to consider how to protect that supply from pests. This might not be the easiest route for someone who lives in an urban area – unless, you are willing to package it in containers after you purchase it.

By far, the easiest way to purchase your grains is online. The products you order will come in packaged containers and you simply store them until you need them. You also don't have to worry about pests because of the plastic and the lack of oxygen will kill any bugs. Most websites sell numerous types of grain, as well as any other unprocessed foods that you would want to have in storage.

You can take the time to research and find the lowest prices so that you can save a few dollars or you can order from a company that has products in stock and can ship right away. Sometimes you just want to get something right away.

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## Alternative Cooking Methods

Another aspect that requires consideration is, in the event of a crisis, how would you cook your meals? If the utility companies were shut down for a few days (maybe longer), what type of fuel would you need to create the heat necessary to have a hot meal or to bake some bread? You need to have a method of emergency heat. Keep in mind – it's a good idea to be familiar with how to use (and cook) with this alternative heat source before an emergency occurs.

A camping stove can be good for emergencies. You'll have to decide which type of fuel you want to work with. Some stoves run on propane tanks (similar to a gas grill) which means you'll want to have additional tanks in storage. Other stoves run on gasoline – this option requires careful care because you'll have to store extra gas. There are additional items that could come in handy, such as; Coleman's propane crockpot and propane oven.

Wood fueled stoves can be used just anywhere. You want a stove that is designed for directing the heat upward making it more efficient for cooking on. These types of stoves aren't limited to wood as its fuel source. You can use other flammable materials; wood chips, paper, twigs, grass.

There is another cookstove available that allows you to use propane, wood, charcoal – whatever you have on hand. It's called the Crisis Cooker ( [www.crisiscooker.com](http://www.crisiscooker.com) ). An unbelievably well insulated unit, you can cook just about anywhere, on any surface, without any worries about caused damage. It produces a remarkable amount of heat and with a 25 lb bag of charcoal you can cook two meals a day for up to 3 weeks (this might vary depending on how big of a crowd you're cooking for). The point is – this might be the most economical and efficient way to cook in an emergency.

Always remember – when using units designed for the outdoors that you keep them out doors!

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## **Importance of Water**

Most people are on city water. Turning on your faucet for bathing, cooking, or washing clothes or dishes is something we take for granted. But in a time of emergency, or if the water plant in your area goes down, where are you going to get your water? Have you thought about that?

You might want to get your family in the habit of conserving water. Maybe have periodic days where everyone takes super short showers or bathing with minimal water. Coming up with a short term plan, such as using paper plates, can be helpful as well.

You should also consider different ways to store water. Large containers, 15, 30 or 55 gallon drums, can be purchased. You would probably need an emergency siphon to get the water out as you need it. Stored water needs to be kept out of light and necessary precautions should be made to keep harmful bacteria from growing. Water filtration and purification kits can be purchased to ensure that your water sources remain safe.

## **Don't Wait Any Longer**

You wouldn't have read through this if you weren't concerned about a possible crisis. The time to start preparing is now – don't wait any longer! No harm can come from being prepared. In the case of an emergency, you'll be ready.

Don't procrastinate any longer. With the unstableness of our country's economy, the dollar on the brink of collapse, who knows what the next year will bring. Make a list of items that you need to start stockpiling. Prioritize that list according to your family's need and geographic location– buy the most important things first.

Another piece of advice – don't let everyone know what you're doing. Unless it's a very trusted friend or family member, keep your growing stockpile a secret. Begin to accumulate those items that have long shelf lives.

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Don't look at it as wasted money. This is an investment – one that could save the lives of your family and possibly your neighbors. Not only will you be able to provide food but you'll have items that could be bartered if needed. Now is the time to start planning!

This handbook was designed, not as a comprehensive guide, but as a way to get you thinking more about what you should do to prepare for an emergency. A steer in the right direction, if you will. Most Americans don't think enough about "What if." Well, it's time to go even further than thinking about it – it's time to act. Good luck!

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## Stockpile Checklist

<b>Baking/Cooking Essentials</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="checkbox"/> Baking Powder</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Baking Soda</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Yeast</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Salt</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Vinegar</li></ul>	<b>Seasonings/Spices</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="checkbox"/> Pepper</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Chili Powder</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Onion Flakes</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Garlic</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Bouillon Cubes</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Cinnamon</li></ul>
<b>Dairy</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="checkbox"/> Dry Milk</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Evaporated Milk</li></ul>	<b>Sugars</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="checkbox"/> Honey</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> White Sugar</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Brown Sugar</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Jams/Jellies</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Flavored Gelatin</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Flavored powdered drinks</li></ul>
<b>Fats and Oils</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="checkbox"/> Vegetable Oil</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Shortening</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Salad Dressing</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Peanut Butter</li></ul>	<b>Water</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="checkbox"/> Water</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Filter/Purification Kit</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Storage Barrel/other containers</li></ul>
<b>Grains/Legumes</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="checkbox"/> Barley</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Hard Wheat (white or red)</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Quick Rolled Oats</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Pinto Beans</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Brown Rice</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Grain Cereal</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Soy Beans</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Split peas</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Dry Soup Mix</li></ul>	<b>Additional Pantry Items</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="checkbox"/> Pastas</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Tomato Sauce</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Instant potatoes</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> #10 size cans of various fruits and vegetables</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Bags of dried fruit</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Coffee/Tea</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Condiments</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Bleach</li></ul>