



Building Food Storage

The emergency might be “The Big One” earthquake that decimates everything. Or it might be that Mom is flat in bed sick, or Dad loses his job, or a big storm wipes out the power, or a bird flu wipes out the egg supply chain, or so many other situations. Having food storage helps with all of these!

Think about what is simple to prepare, and regular in your diet to rotate. That might be dry lentils or it might be dino nuggets. Store more of what you eat at home on a regular basis. Food that is never eaten is wasted money and space.

Assess your readiness for different kinds of emergencies:

- How long can I feed my household, with refrigeration, running water, and my kitchen stove, oven, and microwave available to use?
- How long can I feed my household with no refrigeration, no running water, and only a camp stove to heat food?

Ways to improve your food storage that don't involve MREs:

1. Buy a little extra at each shopping trip: maybe one week, you buy peanut butter. Then the next week, get extra oatmeal.
2. Set small goals: build a 3 day supply, then work up to longer periods. Buy what you expect to use in the next year to constantly rotate.
3. Once you build a long-term supply, you can eat what you store to rotate but always keep a few weeks of food on hand.
4. Watch expiration dates when you shop. Look for expiration dates a year out.
5. Have a few days of simple, one-pot dishes on hand like pasta and sauce. If the power is out, what can you prepare on a single camp stove burner? What doesn't require heat at all? Boiling rice is far more fuel-efficient than baking bread.
6. Store items with nutritional variety. We need protein sources, fruits and vegetables, carbs, and fats. Canned and frozen produce can be nutritionally the same as their fresh versions, but watch out for added sugars and sodium.
7. Consider your storage space before you buy. Food should be kept in a dry, cool spot. Is there room in a closet or under a bed? Garages and outdoor sheds are not a safe spot for food because of heat fluctuations. Keep track of what you have stored in each place.
8. Add spices, seasonings, and condiments to your food storage. Learn to create variety with the same staple ingredients. Cooking is an important life skill for everyone!
9. Shop in bulk when it makes sense. A giant can may be cheaper per ounce, but how long will it take to use and where will you store it while you use it? Smaller package sizes might make more sense for your home. Try a sample of new-to-you items before you stock up.
10. Shop seasonally. Case lot canned food sales at the grocery stores happen in March and September. Condiments go on sale around summer holidays. Baking items, spices, and nuts go on sale in November and December.
11. Try preserving your own food. You might bottle, dehydrate, freeze-dry, or freeze something you grow at home or buy at a farmers market. Follow recipes exactly to keep food safe. The Ball canning books are reliable recipes. Use the Utah State Extension service to find tested recipes and specific instructions for our altitude: <https://extension.usu.edu/preserve-the-harvest>.
12. #10 cans of a variety of items suitable for long-term storage are available to buy through the LDS Church Home Storage Center. Go to 615 East 8400 South in Sandy, Tuesday-Saturday from 9 am-4 pm to make purchases. Enter on the east side.