

Your Emergency Food Plan

Food is usually the starting point for most preppers. I know it certainly was for me back in the “old” days when my prepping was mostly having supplies on hand for times when money is tight.

There’s a lot to think about with regard to food. Keep in mind that there is a wide variety of common occurrences that mean you still have power and cooking ability – you just may not be able to purchase more food or supplies for a period of time.

What kind of supply do you need?

Thinking of each of your most likely disasters, answer these questions:

Disaster 1: _____

- Will I have the ability to keep things fresh in the fridge or freezer?*
- Will I have a way to cook the food?*

Disaster 2: _____

- Will I have the ability to keep things fresh in the fridge or freezer?*
- Will I have a way to cook the food?*

Disaster 3: _____

- Will I have the ability to keep things fresh in the fridge or freezer?*
- Will I have a way to cook the food?*

Your answers here will have some bearing on the food supply you create.

Now, let's explore some other questions that you need to answer before you start building your supply.

The goal here is using what you have as much as possible so that there are fewer things you need to buy. So instead of thinking about your ideal set-up, think about the reality of where you are and what you have right now.

How will you cook?

Many of our most common cooking methods are grid-reliant. Check off all the following ways you *currently have* to cook or heat food when the electricity goes out.

- BBQ – Charcoal
- BBQ – propane
- Butane burner
- Camp stove
- Emergency stove
- Firepit/camp fire
- Fireplace
- Fondue pot
- Gas stove
- Kelly Kettle
- Propane burner (outside)
- Rocket stove
- Sun Oven
- Tealight oven
- Wonder Oven
- Woodstove

Jot down any methods I omitted.

What fuel do you need for your preferred methods of off-grid cooking?

Will you need charcoal, kerosene, or maybe propane? Make a list of what you need to have on hand and calculate how long it will last based on the meals you'd like to cook.

Be sure to store cooking fuels safely.

- Here's an article on storing all different types of fuel:
<https://preparednessmama.com/fuel-storage-for-emergencies/>

You must also be clear on whether your cooking method is safe to be used indoors. The manufacturer's website should answer this question for you. ***NEVER USE A METHOD MEANT FOR OUTDOOR COOKING INDOORS.***

How will you keep food fresh?

Depending on the length of the power outage, the food in your fridge and freezer can potentially spoil. If a power outage lasts for more than 4 hours, you need to err on the side of caution with regard to refrigerated and frozen food.

Coolers can help - you can put your most expensive perishables in a cooler and fill it with ice from the freezer to extend its lifespan. Whatever you do, don't open the doors to the refrigerator and freezer. This will help it to maintain a cooler temperature for a longer time.

According to the Red Cross¹, if your freezer is half-filled and is not opened the entire time that the power is out, the food in it will remain sufficiently frozen for up to 24 hours. If it is completely

¹ <https://www.redcross.org/get-help/how-to-prepare-for-emergencies/types-of-emergencies/food-safety.htm>

filled, your food should remain safe for up to 48 hours. If the worst happens and your freezer full of meat does spoil, keep in mind that most homeowner's and renter's insurance policies will pay for their replacement, but unless you've lost a whole lot or your deductible is very small, it may not be worth making a claim.

Print off the food safety chart in your checklist document to which you can refer or print it from my website:

<https://www.theorganicprepper.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/BLOOM-FOOD-SAFETY-CHART.pdf>

Action Steps

Here are some steps you can take to help you bring your emergency food plan to fruition.

- **Add some shelf-stable foods.** While we all enjoy using the freezer for meats, fruits, and vegetables, don't put all your goodies in one basket. (Pun intended.) Add freeze-dried, dehydrated, boxed, and canned food to your supply, too.
- **You can never have too many coolers.** Pick them up at yard sales and thrift stores every chance you get.
- **Freeze Ziplock bags of water.** This fills any empty space in your freezers and helps keep food cold longer. As well, the frozen bags can be moved to coolers if needed, and later you can drink the water.
- **Move the things you use most often.** The more you can keep the fridge and freezer closed, the better off you'll be. Move things that will be used frequently into coolers.
- **Learn how to pressure can off-grid.** A propane burner and enough fuel can help you to save the meat and vegetables in your freezer should a lengthy power outage occur.

Remember – Rome wasn't built in a day! Your plan will take time.

What to consider when building your food supply

Building a food supply is a very unique thing. There isn't a real formula for it.

Disasters come in a lot of different forms, but generally you have emergencies in which everything else is normal, but you can't buy food (so you have power, etc.) and emergencies when the grid is down. Your food supply should be created to help you handle both situations.

Here are some things to consider when building your supply.

- Foods you normally eat
- Picky eaters
- Allergies and intolerances
- Religious restrictions
- For emergency food, think about things that can be made using cooking methods you **ALREADY HAVE**
- The way you already eat – paleo, vegetarian, keto, gluten-free, super clean.

An emergency is no time to through caution to the wind and eat things that might make you feel unwell

Food lists

Below, find some food checklists from my book, [*The Prepper's Book of Lists*](#). Clearly, focus on the things that work best for your family and in your situation.

Check off the things you already have on hand and create a shopping list to keep in your wallet of other things you want to add.

That way, when you see a good sale, you know precisely what you need.

1-Week of No-Cook Food List

What if the power goes out and you have no way to cook? The following list* will keep you nourished and keep your tummies full, although it may not be the absolute healthiest way to eat.

- 7 gallons of potable water (at least)
- 10 ounces (or 1 ½ cups) milk dry milk powder/shelf-stable non-dairy milk cartons
- 1 box of breakfast cereal
- Raisins
- 12-pack of juice boxes
- 1 box of crackers
- 1 small jar of peanut butter/other nut butter/sunflower butter
- 6 pack of V-8 or other vegetable juice
- 6 pack of fruit cups
- 6 pack of applesauce
- 6 pack of pudding
- 3 cans of peas and carrots (they're not too bad eaten at room temp)
- 3 cans of corn
- 3 cans of vegetarian baked beans
- 3 cans of Vienna sausages
- 1 pack of beef jerky
- 5 cans of tuna or chicken
- Shelf-stable travel pouches of mayo
- 6 pouches of precooked rice and/or quinoa
- 2 cans of refried beans
- 1 bottle of taco sauce

- 1 package of soft tortillas
- 1 box of granola bars
- Optional: Snack foods like chips, cookies, nuts, trail mix, and dried fruit

*List is PER PERSON

2-Week Food List

This food list assumes that you have a way to at least boil water or heat things up. Because of this, the variety is more extensive, and the choices are a bit healthier. The overall health of the menu depends on the quality of options you choose.

- 14 gallons of water
- Variety box of instant oatmeal
- Box of cereal
- 24 ounces of powdered milk or shelf-stable non-dairy milk
- Raisins
- 12-pack of juice boxes
- 3 boxes of crackers
- 1 small jar of peanut butter/other nut butter/sunflower butter
- 6 cans of vegetable soup
- 2 cans of chili
- 8 pouches of pre-cooked rice and/or quinoa
- 7 cans of beans (pinto, white, kidney, garbanzo)
- 2 boxes of stuffing mix
- 1 bag of dried cranberries
- 4 cans of chicken breast
- Shelf-stable travel pouches of mayo
- Instant udon noodle bowls (Annie Chun brand is fairly healthy)
- 7 cans of vegetables
- 7 cans of fruit
- 4 boxes of macaroni and cheese

- 4 cans of pasta (ravioli, spaghetti, etc.)
- 2 cans of refried beans
- 1 bottle of taco sauce
- 1 package of soft tortillas
- 1 box of granola bars
- Optional: Snack foods like chips, cookies, nuts, trail mix, and dried fruit

*List is PER PERSON

Prepper Food List

Wondering what to stockpile? Here are some prepper pantry basics every prepper should have. When you do your food inventory in Part 4, check your supplies against this list of recommendations.

Make a rotating shopping plan: Each week, focus on one type of food in the lists below to add to your supply. By working on a different part of the list every week, you'll have plenty of variety and fewer "bare spots" in your pantry.

Scratch Cooking Supplies

- Apple cider vinegar
- Baking powder
- Baking Soda
- Balsamic vinegar
- Black pepper
- Brown sugar
- Butter
- Cocoa
- Coconut oil
- Confectioner's sugar
- Cornstarch
- Herbs and spices

- Honey
- Lard
- Maple syrup
- Molasses
- Muscovado sugar/brown sugar
- Nonfat dry milk
- Olive oil
- Salt
- Shortening
- White sugar
- White vinegar
- Yeast

Grains

- Amaranth
- Barley
- Buckwheat
- Cereal
- Cornmeal
- Couscous
- Flour
- Oats
- Pasta
- Quinoa
- Rice
- Wheat

Fruits and Veggies

- Canned
- Dried
- Freeze-dried
- Frozen

Protein Sources

- Beans, canned and dry
- Canned Meat
- Eggs, freeze-dried
- Jerky
- Milk, powdered
- Nuts/Nut Butter/Nut Butter Powder
- Protein Powder

Other

- Baked good mixes
- Coffee
- Coffee/Tea
- Condiments
- Condiments
- Cookies
- Candy
- Granola Bars
- Gravy mix
- Jam
- Marinara
- Pop corn
- Pretzels
- Pudding cups
- Sauces
- Soup and Stew
- Syrup
- Tea
- Trail Mix
- Chocolate

Additional resource

Download an excerpt from my book, *The Prepper's Pantry*, about building a pantry on a thrifty budget:

<https://www.theorganicprepper.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/Pantry-Building-Tips.pdf>

Make some lists of your own

- *Do an inventory of the meals you can already create with the things you have on hand.*
- *Make a list of any extra ingredients you need to create meals from your current supplies.*
- *Make a list of the things you want to add to your pantry.*

REMEMBER: Make the food you store as close as possible to the food you ordinarily eat.