



FOCUS: EMERGENCY FOOD



This action sheet is produced as part of the Southern California Earthquake Survival Program (ESP). ESP is an effort to increase the level of individual and family preparedness in this region. It is coordinated by eight southern California counties and the Southern California Earthquake Preparedness Project.

WHY STOCK EMERGENCY FOOD

Some areas of the region may be isolated and left to their own resources for 72 hours or more after a major, damaging earthquake. Areas that experience strong ground shaking may also face the following conditions:

- Some food stores will suffer a substantial loss of inventory due to items falling off display and stock shelves;
- Damage to transportation systems will make travel difficult, if not impossible, limiting mobility;
- Disruption of normal community functions will cause residents to depend on one another.

EMERGENCY FOOD SUPPLY

Most of us could survive for several days without food. However, after an earthquake, food is especially valuable to provide needed **energy, psychological comfort** and **nutrition**.

- Damage to gas and electric power systems will reduce energy supplies and cause a loss of heat and/or refrigeration. In turn, this condition will adversely affect the ability to store and prepare food. Unless food stores have emergency power, they also will be without refrigeration which will reduce the availability of fresh foods.

Have two types of emergency food available:

1. A 72-hour supply of "carry-out" foods that can be placed in a backpack. For example, powdered milk, honey and peanut butter to blend into a spread, plus graham crackers, dried apricots and powdered orange drink to mix with water. These are very basic foods but adequate to sustain a family.

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2. A two-week food supply that can be prepared for your family with a minimum of time, equipment, heat and water. Choose foods that your family likes, that can be easily incorporated into your regular food supply and that have a shelf life of six months or more. Store food in a cool, dark, dry place.

(Source: *Earthquake Preparedness Handbook*, Lafferty & Associates, Inc.)

TIPS FOR FOOD STORAGE AND PREPARATION

You already may have a two-week supply of food in your pantry or on cupboard shelves. Check on it to assure yourself. Maintaining a two-week reserve is a simple matter of use and replacement.

Storage

Canned foods keep almost indefinitely as long as the cans are not leaking or bulging. However, your emergency food supply should be the highest quality possible. This means it must have good color, flavor and appearance. Considering this, it is optimum if you rotate the supply once or twice a year.

- Keep food covered at all times.
- Open food boxes or cans carefully so that you can close them tightly after each use.
- Wrap bread, cookies or crackers in plastic bags and keep them in tight containers.
- Empty opened packages of sugar, dried fruits or nuts into screwtop (plastic) jars or airtight tin cans to avoid problems with insects and rodents.
- Don't forget canned and non-perishable foods for your pets.
- Buy emergency foods in cans whenever possible. Foods in glass bottles and jars may break when a disaster occurs.

Preparation

- You can use a charcoal grill, hibachi or camp stove for necessary cooking. Remember: *This type of cooking is done outdoors only.*
- Food can also be heated with candle warmers, chafing dishes or fondue pots. Canned food can be heated in the can but be sure to remove the paper first.

(Source: *Safety and Survival in an Earthquake*, American Red Cross)

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EXPERIENCE SAYS...

Store food your family normally eats.

Use foods stored in the refrigerator first; use foods stored in the freezer next; use foods stored on shelves last.

Store some favorite treats for psychological comfort as well as foods with nutritional value.

GUIDELINES FOR PUTTING TOGETHER A WELL BALANCED 2-WEEK EMERGENCY FOOD SUPPLY

Type of Food	Amount Per Person		Useful Buying Information
	One Day	Two Weeks	
MILK	2 cups (4 cups for children)	7 qts. (14 qts. for children)	1 qt. milk is equal to: 14 oz. can evaporated milk 3-3½ oz. dry milk
CHEESE	1½ oz.	1 lb. 3 oz.	
CANNED MEAT, FISH, OR POULTRY	2 servings	28 servings (8-9 lbs.)	One serving equals: 2-3 oz. meat, poultry, fish ¾ oz. dried meat
DRIED EGGS COOKED DRY PEAS AND BEANS			2 eggs — dried 8 oz. mixture with rice, vegetables, etc. 5 oz. condensed soups with meat
NUTS			1 cup cooked dried peas, beans ½ cup nuts 4 Tbsp. nut butters
FRUITS AND VEGETABLES	3-4 servings Serving + ½ cup	42 servings (5-7 lbs.)	One serving equals: 4 oz. canned fruits, vegetables 1½ oz. dried fruits
JUICES: ORANGE, GRAPEFRUIT, TOMATO (Vitamin C source)	½-1	56-112 oz. (Two 46-oz. cans)	4-8 oz. canned juices
CEREALS AND BAKED GOODS	3-4 servings Serving equals: 1 slice bread	42-56 servings (5-7 lbs.)	One serving equals: ½-1 oz. dry cereal 1 oz. crackers
CRACKERS AND COOKIES	½-1 cup dry cereal ½ cup cooked cereal or pasta ¾ cup cooked rice 6 sqs. graham crackers 2 rye wafers		1 oz. cookies ¾ oz. pasta ¾ oz. rice
FATS AND VEGETABLE OILS		Up to 1 lb. or 1 pint per person	Amount depends on extent of cooking possible. Choose types requiring no refrigeration.
SALT SUGAR FLOUR	2 tsp. 2 tsp. 1 oz.	4 oz. (¼ lb.) 4 oz. (¼ lb.) 1 lb.	1 lb. box for four persons 1 lb. box for four persons 5 lb. bag for 4-5 persons
SWEETS		1-2 lbs.	Hard candy, gum, jam, jelly, instant puddings, syrup, honey, etc.
MISCELLANEOUS	According to family practices and extent of cooking possible		Coffee, tea, cocoa, seasonings, instant creamer, bouillon products, soda, vinegar, baking powder, mustard, catsup, etc.

* Avoid foods that increase thirst.

* One-meal servings will discourage spoilage resulting from unrefrigerated leftovers.

* Because of lack of refrigeration, avoid using foods which spoil quickly, like creamed foods, some salad dressings, custards, etc.

(Source: *Earthquake Preparedness Handbook*, Lafferty & Associates, Inc.)