

## **Food Storage:** Getting started without getting discouraged!

**Food storage! Such a daunting word isn't it? So much so, that many people stay as far away as possible and avoid the task like the plague. No need to do this. It really isn't that complicated. My goal this year is to help you realize that a working, living, breathing food storage program in your life is not as scary as you might think and that the peace and comfort it will bring knowing that you can feed your family in desperate times is something most rewarding. With this in mind my goal is to help you, help your family in becoming more prepared. I suggest you learn, study, and put into place these seven steps.**

**Step 1: Interview yourself and ask yourself a lot of questions.** First off ask this question to yourself: Why do I want to begin a food storage program? Do you really know? If your not sure, you're in luck, this year we will be teaching you all you need to know to get your program up and going and you moving right along. You will learn what you need to, to continue on with being prepared for the rest of your life. This course will help you understand the questions that you need to ask yourself so that you can get up and running.

Some other specific questions to ask yourself are: What is it that I want to achieve? What type of time frame do I want to be prepared for? (one week, one month, three months, six months or a year?) How much money am I going to set aside to achieve my plan? How often will that money be available? How much time am I going to set aside to make my plan work? Will this be something my whole family works on or just me? Where will I be storing my food storage? How am I going to be storing my food storage? (buckets, bags, cans, etc.) Simple questions, yet questions that must be thought through before starting on your way.

**Step 2: Set specific goals, break them up and keep it simple.** Being vague or not setting goals is an absolute death wish to your plan. YOU MUST KNOW WHAT IT IS YOU WANT TO ACHIEVE! Break goals up. You may just start with one simple goal. "I want to start a food storage program this year." Then the key is to break it up into smaller more specific goals like, "I want a 3 month complete food storage program." Ok that's simple enough. But, then you have to ask the Who, What, Why, Where, How, When questions. We will talk about these later on. We don't want to over whelm you just yet.

Even though your main goal might be to have a one-year food storage program up and running, don't try and create a one-year food storage plan right off the get go. Begin by making things very simple at the beginning, especially if you have no experience. Guaranteed, that if you "go big or go home" you'll most likely be going home! Starting off with goals that are too ambitious will become overwhelming and you will most likely quit. I love to break things down and see immediate success. So my plan is this. First, start with a full weeks supply of meals ready to go without having to go to the store. Have everything either on the shelf, in the fridge or freezer bought and ready to go. You must also remember that you need to plan for your water intake as well for this week. You can achieve this goal by whatever means you want. Making and freezing extra, buying shelf items, whatever way you want. Simple right? There it is! You are prepared for a one-week emergency! A small goal met. Success made! And you are ready to move on. One week. Done! However, probably not enough right? Right. Yet do you have peace of mind? Yes you do! You have one week of food safely stored away and ready to go. YEAH! You're a pro, at least with one week of food storage. Lets move on.

**Step 3: Think about it!** A lesson I learned at this point in my plan of having a food storage program for my family is that I had to think about food storage. What do I mean? You can't have a mindset of buy the food now and I'm good for a year, or so the saying goes, out of sight out of mind. I don't know if you caught it or not earlier, but a food storage program is a living, breathing, working program. That means you have to always be thinking about it and using it in one way or another. Let me explain. We all just went through the holidays. Did you notice how many baking items went on sale? Spices, sugars, cake mixes, and so on

and so on. If you had the mindset of always trying to improve and work on your program you might of budgeted some money during the holidays to store up some of those items. This year I noticed that pudding and cake mixes were almost half off, so I set out and filled my cart with what I new my family would use for about a year. Let me say here, and this is something you must understand, that any successful food storage program is not a program where you store away food and never use until there is an emergency. It is a program that is constantly evolving and growing, just like your family is. OK, back to my story. I knew I needed these mixes because of my record keeping program I have in place (which you will learn about in a bit) and so it was a perfect time for me to gather up these items, saving up to 50% of what it would of cost me had I just gone out and bought what I needed at any other time of the year. OK, confession. Are you thinking right now that all I ever do is think about food storage? Nope, this is not the case, but I always have it in the back of my mind that I have a program, I know where it is at, I know my weaknesses and my strengths, and so when I see something that would add to my program I'm on it and I know what needs to be done. So you can see here, that if you have a mindset of always thinking and continually working on a food storage program, it becomes a natural part of your thinking process and in the long run it can save you money as well as time. And above all remember, that your program is a constant working program.

**Step 4: Get started!** There is probably a ton of ways to begin but I recommend starting off with my three easy food storage plans. These plans do not have to be completed in sequence, in fact I feel it should be done basically at the same time and if not then, as soon as you get more organized and feeling secure with your plan. I further explain later on about my three-way plan.

**Step 5: Get to know the "What If Factor":** As you become more and more familiar with your food storage program it is very important to ask yourself the "What If " questions.

**Step 6: Keep it balanced.** Why you ask? It's important to keep your program well balanced as you build it up. Buy several items rather than a large quantity of one item. If something happens and you have to live on your present storage, you will do so much better having a one-month supply of a variety of items than a year's supply of two to three items. If that emergency does come tomorrow you know right off the bat that you can get through it for at least one month. What if the power goes out or there is a blizzard warning? No need to fear and dash to the store and hope you can find something for your family to eat, NO! You are already set to get through that emergency. The peace that this brings is what motivates me to be more and more prepared.

**Step 7: Plan for everything, but not all at once.** Now, is probably the best time to talk about what type of emergencies you should plan for. Let me suggest, ALL OF THEM! Power outages, bad weather, sickness, sheltering in place, job loss, or natural disasters are just a few that come to mind. Planning for these types of emergencies is where it can get much more complicated. But it doesn't have to.

## Getting started with your food storage using three easy plans:

### Plan 1: Make extra food each time you cook and store it away, or plan and prepare freezer meals ahead of time.

This beginning level plan of food storage is simple, and most important achievable. In fact, you can do it every time you cook and it is quiet simple. All you need is to double your recipes; feed your family now and store away the other half for later. Pretty simple, yes? As you prepare your evening meals each day, double what you make for your family. Then take that extra amount and freeze it. This is such a quick and easy way to become more prepared each day. You are already making a meal, just make more of that meal! Make ahead freezer meals are so popular right now and there are oodles of recipes on line. Guess what? This is food storage at its most simplest level. What I love about this plan is that it gets you thinking about storing food. This is a key concept, and such an important principle that everyone must learn if they want their program to to be successful. Which ever way you choose to work this plan, make sure you document what you prepared and mark you freezer meals with name of food and date it was made.

### Plan 2: Begin the “One Month Of Storage With 5 Recipes Plan”

Here's how it works. Collect 5 of the most often cooked recipes for breakfast, lunch and dinner. Now you should have a total of 5 breakfasts, 5 lunches, 5 dinners. For each recipe fill in the information it asks for. Determine what you need, check what you have on hand, and calculate what you need to buy to make this recipe 6 times. It's easy, just fill in the space provided. Next, go buy the ingredients. There you have it! You have a month of food storage planned, just like that. If this is too much, then just calculate your dinners and do not add lunch or breakfast meals. Start there and get into a rhythm. Pretty soon you will get the hang of it and it will become easy. One of the big bonuses of planning food storage this way is that this food storage is food that you eat on a regular basis. *(This is what food storage really is! Store what you eat and eat what you store!)* Here is an example of my enchilada recipe:

| <b>Ingredient Item:</b>       | <b>What I will need to make the recipe 6 times:</b> | <b>How much do I have right now?</b> | <b>SHOPPING LIST:<br/>How much do I need to purchase?</b> |
|-------------------------------|---|--------------------------------------|---|
| <b>ex: Recipe:</b> Enchiladas |   |                                      |   |
| Enchilada sauce               | 6   | 1 can                                | 5 cans  |
| Canned chicken                | 6   | 3 cans                               | 3 cans  |
| Canned Chille peppers         | 6   | 0                                    | 6 cans  |
| Chopped Olives                | 6 cans  | 2 cans                               | 4 cans  |
| Tortillas: 1 cup cornmeal     | 6 cups  | 5 lbs.                               | 0   |
| Tortillas: 1 cup white flour  | 6 cups  | 25 lbs.                              | 0   |
| Tortillas: 1/2 tsp salt       | 3 tsps.   | 12 oz.                               | 0   |
| Rice: 2 cups                  | 12 cups   | 25 lbs.                              | 0   |

**Plan 3: Storing The Traditional Basics using the Estimated Food Storage Planning Guide**

And finally, Plan 3 addresses that part of your food storage program that everyone thinks of when storing food, you can't avoid it, because it is the heart and soul of any sound program; storage of the big basics, wheat, flour, legumes, water, etc. This is where most people quit. So right now say to yourself: I WILL NOT QUIT HERE! I WILL NOT GIVE UP! I CAN DO THIS BECAUSE I HAVE LEARNED TO KEEP IT SIMPLE! Even though this plan might be the most complicated and boring it is something that can be so simple if you don't let yourself make it complicated.

The first step in Plan 3 is to complete the **ESTIMATED FOOD STORAGE PLAN**. This is going to take some time. You are going to have to get down and go through the storage you have. If you have food that you know or suspect is not good, or food that you know you will not eat, then set it aside in a special place and don't count it as part of what you have in your food storage. If you do not currently have a food storage program, that is just fine, you still have a lot of calculations that must be done. Filling in the Estimated Food Storage plan is the foundation to building a successful food storage program. DO NOT SKIP THIS STEP!!!!

Make it a goal to have this done before we meet next time. We will move forward from this point on.

*Estimated food storage for one year:*

YEAR: \_\_\_\_\_

|       |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|-------|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| Memo: |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|-------|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|

|                   | PER PERSON<br>NEEDED OR<br>WANTED               | HOW MUCH<br>ON HAND | TOTAL<br>QUANTITY<br>NEEDED<br>X ___ | HOW<br>MUCH TO<br>BUY | PRICE PER<br>ITEM | EXPIRATION | Shelf life   |
|-------------------|---|---------------------|--------------------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------|------------|--|
| <b>LIQUIDS:</b>   |   |                     |                                      |                       |                   |            |  |
| <b>WATER BULK</b> | 2 week<br>supply per<br>person is 14<br>gallons |                     |                                      |                       |                   |            | Fine for a very<br>long time but<br>could go stale.<br>Suggested to<br>replace every 5<br>yrs. |

This is the critical column. When this column has an amount listed, it is imperative that you store these items. If the column is blank then that item should strongly be considered to balance out your food storage.

This column is important because it helps you know how long a food can be stored for

In this column you determine how many people you are storing for. All individuals are considered adults.

(Amount needed) X (how many people)