



Food Storage Recommendations

How long can food supplies be stored?

To judge how long you can store food supplies, look for an “expiration date” or “best if used by” date on the product. If you cannot find a date on the product, then the general recommendation is to store food products for six months and then replace them. It’s also a good idea to date the foods when you purchase them if the item is not dated. Canned foods have a shelf life of at least two years from the date of processing.

Some households find it helpful to pull food products for their regular meals from their disaster supplies kit and replace them immediately on an ongoing basis, so the food supplies are always fresh.

What kinds of food supplies are recommended to store in case of a disaster?

Take into account your unique needs and tastes. Familiar foods can lift morale and give a feeling of security in times of stress. Try to include foods that you will enjoy and that are also high in calories and nutrition.

Select foods that require no refrigeration, preparation or cooking, and little or no water. Canned foods won’t require cooking, water or special preparation. Foods that are compact and lightweight are easy to store and carry. Military and camping supply stores often carry lightweight and ready-to-eat meals that require little or no preparation.

Store supplies of non-perishable foods and water in a handy place. You need to have these items packed and ready in case there is no time to gather food from the kitchen when disaster strikes. Sufficient supplies to last three to six days are recommended.

