

PreparednessMama's 10 Laws Of Food Storage

Thou shalt...

1. Store what you eat – We all have things that we don't like. I'm not overly fond of creamed corn. So no matter how great that creamed corn deal I'm not going to put it in my food storage plan.

Try this idea to begin. Make a list of 10 meals that your family likes and write down all the ingredients it will take to make each one. Use this as the foundation for your food storage plan.

2. Use it or lose it – Rotating your food stock is the key to success. So is knowing how to use it. If you have 10 lbs of beans that you can't cook well enough for the dog to eat, let alone the family, that's really just a waste of space and money.

Now is the time to practice using it, not when you're relying on it. They say that certain kinds of food storage can last up to 30 years, but do you *REALLY* want to try it?

3. Store it properly – Use the right storage temperature for maximum longevity. 70 degrees is optimum. Higher temperatures will degrade the food faster. If you know you can't keep your food cool enough, plan on using it faster than the recommended storage time. See law #2 above.

According to ProvidentLiving.org: Storage life can be significantly impacted by the following conditions:

Temperature: Store products at a temperature of 75°F/24°C or lower whenever possible. If storage temperatures are higher, rotate products as needed to maintain quality.

Moisture: Keep storage areas dry. It is best to keep containers off of the floor to allow for air circulation.

Light: Protect cooking oil and products stored in PETE bottles from light.

Insects and rodents: Protect products stored in foil pouches and PETE bottles from rodent and insect damage. Keep them off direct contact with the floor.

4. Think outside the pantry – You will also need food preparation materials. Think cooking spray, paper towels, foil and paper plates. Plus other living items like toilet paper, hygiene and cleaning supplies. See [10 Non-food Items to consider storing | PreparednessMama](#).

5. Budget for Food Storage – beginning and maintaining your food storage can be costly, especially if you are trying to build up a supply. Build it into the budget every month. Even if you only have \$5 to put to it, you can still make a dent in your plan. I purchase 2 cans of beans and 2 cans of tomato sauce every week. It costs less than \$3, and makes sure that I always have a few easy to use cans to rotate in and out of my food storage.

6. Sauce and Spice it up – That pasta dish looks pretty bland without some spice. My husband refuses to eat without some kind of sauce on his food. Your family will be happier in an

emergency if you have a variety of meal options, so make sure you add spices and sauces in the mix.

7. Vary the kinds of food you store – Each kind of food storage; 3 Month Supply, short term freezer techniques and long term dry goods all play a part in the plan. See the website “How Do I Store That?” PreparednessMama, for ways to store your food.

8. Match your water storage to your food – If you have a lot of dried soups or freeze dried meals then you need to increase your water storage to accommodate your cooking plans. One gallon per person, per day will not be enough for your freeze dried meal plan.

9. Do it on a dime – look for deals and stock up. Make Grocery Outlets and Costco your friend. I’ve put aside quite a bit of food storage by shopping sales. You can too! Plus your \$5 (see law #5 above) will go a lot farther. The Dollar Store also has a lot of choices of food and non-food items for a \$1.

10. Store it different ways – it’s not just about #10 cans and plastic buckets. Freeze, dehydrate and can in smaller batches. Big bulk items are great, but if you’ve got 2 people then opening a #10 cans of peaches or peas is just wasteful – unless you plan on eating peaches and peas all day.