



# 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?

Following a major damaging earthquake, some areas of the region may be isolated and left to their own resources for 72 hours or longer. Areas that experience strong ground shaking may also be faced with 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 which will limit mobility.
- Disruption of normal community functions will cause residents to depend on one another.

## EMERGENCY FOOD SUPPLY

Though most of us could easily survive without food for several days, it will be especially valuable after an earthquake to provide needed energy and psychological comfort along with nutrition.

- Damage to gas and electric power systems will reduce energy supplies causing a loss of heat and/or refrigeration. This condition will in turn 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 back-pack. 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. Very basic, very boring, but adequate to sustain a family.



# JULY

2. A 2-week food supply that can be prepared for your family with a minimum of time, equipment, heat, and water. Choose foods your family likes, that can be easily incorporated into your regular food supply, and have a shelf life of 6 months or longer. Store food in a cool, dark, dry place.

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

## TIPS FOR FOOD STORAGE AND PREPARATION

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

### Storage

Canned foods will keep almost indefinitely, as long as the cans are not leaking or bulging. However, your emergency food supply should be of the highest quality possible. This means 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 because insects and rodents may be a problem.
- Don't forget canned and non-perishable foods for your pets.
- Foods in glass bottles and jars may break when a disaster occurs. Buy emergency foods in cans whenever possible.

### Preparation

- You can use charcoal grill, hibachi, or camp stove for necessary cooking. Remember, *Such cooking is for outdoors only.*
- Food can also be heated with candle warmers, chafing dishes, or even 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...

Don't store food the family does not normally eat

In addition to the foods stored for their nutritional value, store some favorites treats for psychological comfort.

## 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 2 eggs — dried 8 oz. mixture with rice, vegetables, etc
DRIED EGGS COOKED DRY PEAS AND BEANS			5 oz. condensed soups with meat 1 cup cooked dried peas, beans ½ cup nuts 4 Tbsp. nut butters
NUTS			
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 4-8 oz. canned juices
JUICES: ORANGE GRAPEFRUIT, TOMATO (Vitamin C source)	½-1	56-112 oz. (Two 46-oz. cans)	
CEREALS AND BAKED GOODS	3-4 servings Serving equals: 1 slice bread	42-56 servings (5-7 lbs.)	One serving equals: 1-1½ oz. dry cereal 1 oz. crackers 1 oz. cookies ¾ oz. pasta ¾ oz. rice
CRACKERS AND COOKIES	½-1 cup dry cereal ½ cup cooked cereal or pasta ⅓ cup cooked rice 6 sqs. graham crackers 2 rye wafers		
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	2 tsp.	4 oz. (¼ lb.)	1 lb. box for four persons
SUGAR	2 tsp.	4 oz. (¼ lb.)	1 lb. box for four persons
FLOUR	1 oz.	1 lb.	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* Lafferty & Associates)