

PENNY SAVER NEWS

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June 12, 2008

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The calendar has rolled around to hurricane season again, so it's time to pack your emergency food supply. Before you go rushing out to stock up on granola bars, here are some other things to consider.

1. Buy the size that you can eat in one meal. If you are a household of 2 people, get cans that serve 2 to 3 people. Remember, if we do have an emergency the power will probably be off. That means the refrigerator won't be working. So leftovers will only be good for at most 4 hours. Half a big can of beans won't be good tomorrow.

If everyone in the family insists on something different you might want to get at least some single-serve cans. Yes, they are more expensive per ounce than larger packages. But if people are stressed all ready, providing some variety might help ease their feelings.

2. Buy things you like to eat. If you can't stand to eat canned meat, then don't buy it. Or just buy a little bit, in case you get really desperate! But forcing yourself to eat things you hate, just because they're in cans, won't make you feel any better.

3. Buy things that are healthy. Don't pack your whole box with chips and power bars. Get some cans of fruit and juice too. A few strips of beef jerky are fine, but too much very salty food will just leave you more thirsty. Since water might be hard to come by, a lot of salt might not be the best idea. Some power bars are fine, but lots of sugar with little fiber will be uncomfortable, especially if the toilets aren't working.

4. Get a variety, some green beans and some corn, some peaches and some fruit cocktail. Ten for a dollar might be a good deal, but ten cans of peas will be pretty boring. The more variety you have the better nourished your body will be and the better you'll be able to handle the stress. Small jars of salsa, mustard, catsup, a bottle of lemon juice or soy sauce can make a huge difference in the flavor of canned veggies.

5. Cans are better than glass or plastic packages. Glass jars are heavy if you have to pack and carry them. They also break more easily. Home canned jars of food don't seal as well. If glass jars of food end up under water they can not be safely sanitized to be used.

The heavy foil pouches that tuna and some stews come in are pretty sturdy, but they can be punctured. They are better than glass but not as solid as cans. Light-weight plastic and paper or cardboard containers are even less protection for the food. If you get these kinds of packages, dig out those big cans that popcorn came in at Christmas. Pack the plastic or paper containers in the cans to protect them.

6. Unless every single can you pack is a pop-top, be sure to pack a manual can opener in the box with the food! A pair of scissors or a sharp knife is a good idea too, to open boxes, plastic, or foil pouches.

7. Get something to flavor all those gallons of water you need. There are powdered, fruit flavored drink mixes, both sugar and sugar-free. Get powdered milk and chocolate or strawberry flavoring for the children. Powdered tea and instant coffee will do too. These take less space to pack, will keep well, and can certainly perk up the flavor of warm, stale water if we have no other supply.

Finally, let's hope and pray we never need to use these things! For a checklist of

what foods you'll need, write or call my office.

Here's a recipe you can make with canned items, whether or not there is a storm on the horizon. The optional items are for when you have them. It makes enough for 6 to 8 people like this, or add some red kidney beans too to serve 10 or more.

Cowboy Caviar Salad

1 15 oz can black beans	1 15 oz can corn
1 15 oz can diced tomatoes	1 4 oz can diced green chilies
6 green onions, sliced - optional	1/4 cup lime (or lemon) juice
1 tsp garlic powder	1 tsp chili powder
1 tsp cumin	1 Tbsp olive or vegetable oil
salt and pepper to taste	Tortillas - optional

Drain and rinse the beans. Drain the corn. Mix the beans, corn, tomatoes and chilies in a large bowl. Mix the other ingredients in a small bowl, pour over beans and stir to mix. Refrigerate 2 -4 hours to blend flavors, or eat immediately. Roll spoonfuls in tortillas, or eat with spoons.

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