

Advantages of having a 3-month Supply

- An emergency fund you can eat
- A great way to never run out of anything again
- A guaranteed variety of cooking options

(Crystal Godfrey, *I Can't Believe It's Food Storage*, 2009, p.32-34)

An Emergency Fund You Can Eat

According to Church leaders, in addition to setting aside money for emergencies, each family should have a 3-month supply of food. President J. Reuben Clark stated, "When we really get into hard times, where food is scarce or there is none at all, and so with clothing and shelter, money may be no good for there may be nothing to buy, and you cannot eat money, you cannot get enough of it together to burn to keep warm, and you cannot wear it" (*Church News*, Nov. 21, 1953, 4).

Did you know that stored food provides a much higher return on investment than a savings account? Currently, the average interest rate for a savings account is just 0.41%. With food prices rising an average of 5.2% in 2008 and continuing to rise in 2009, you can clearly get a better return by storing food ("Consumer Price Index Summary," March 2009). Therefore, having a supply of food is a good investment, especially during a time of inflation. Now you can rewind the clock on rising food prices, because the price of a can of wheat can't change when it's already in your cupboard. This gives your income time to adjust to the rising cost of living.

A Great Way to Never Run Out of Anything Again

Don't you hate it when you're cooking a dish and discover that you don't have one of the ingredients? This can ruin your day, not to mention your meal! With a 3-month supply of food, you never run out of ingredients you regularly use, because you always have extras on hand. You will be able to make any favorite recipe at any time, with no more emergency trips to the store and no more overspending for items at regular price!

Don't you hate running out of non-food items like soap, detergent, toothpaste, deodorant, and toilet paper? No doubt you can relate to folding paper towels into napkins for dinner, or trying to squeeze out enough toothpaste to get you through until morning! Now you can stop doing that, because you have a 3-month supply of these household items.

A Guaranteed Variety of Cooking Options

A 3-month supply gives you a myriad of options. Let's say you want to make a casserole that contains condensed cream soup, chicken, and vegetables. You can choose between chicken from your freezer and canned chicken, and you can use fresh, frozen, or canned vegetables. You can make your own cream soup or use the canned versions. With your 3-month supply, you always have different option to choose from, depending on how much time you have.

Creating Your 3-Month Supply

1. Sit down with your family and decide what are you preparing for, how do I pay for it and what should we store? (Review Alan T. Hagan article “Start your for food storage for \$10 a week”).
2. See how you can incorporate “Basic Items” offered by the cannery. (Review “Basic Food storage for 3 months”).
3. Make a pantry list of items you use all the time and what would allow you to use more “basic items.” (Review “3-month Supply Pantry” list).
4. Make a menu plan and see if this incorporates your pantry items listed. (Review “Menu plan and inventory sheet”).
5. Brainstorm with your family a list of household items and brands you use (don’t forget sanitary items, paper products, medicines, etc.). Start tracking how often you use a particular item to know how much to store. (Save receipts to help you track this).
6. Look at your budget and set aside an amount for your 3-month shopping. If you don’t have extra money, find an area where you could cut back so you have enough money to begin building your supply. (Review “Financing Food Storage” document).
7. Find a place(s) to store your food storage. Be creative and use space in your closets, under beds, under stairwells, make your own furniture, etc. Find shelving units to store #10 cans for easy access (4,000 lb shelves). Build shelves to store sanitary items in laundry room or other closets. (Review “Small Space Storage Solutions” document).

Remember, it will be worth it, since once you have your 3-month supply, you’ll be saving a lot of money.

Tips for Grocery Shopping

1. When you purchase something you’re running out of buy, two. The plan is to always have at least one on hand.
2. Keep your 3-month supply list nearby when you go through grocery ads or coupons. When you see an item from your list on sale, either at the grocery store or with a coupon, stock up!
3. Make a list of items you’re running out of, items you need for meals that week, and any 3-month supply items that are on sale or for which you have a coupon. Then take the list with you to the store.
4. Don’t go to the grocery store hungry or you’ll be tempted to buy items not on your list- items you don’t really need.
5. Compare prices before you shop at a warehouse- or anywhere else. Just because you can purchase something in bulk doesn’t necessarily mean it is cheaper.
6. If you don’t know if the price of an item is high or low, watch the price for a couple of weeks.
7. Buy canned food that looks perfect. Torn labels or dust may indicate that the can has been sitting on the shelf for too long. NEVER buy dented or bulging cans,

- even if they are cheaper. Eating food from a dented or bulging can may lead to botulism, a form of food poisoning that can be fatal.
8. Shop at off-peak times. If you shop late at night or early in the morning during the week, you can often find meat and baked goods at clearance prices. And best of all, the checkout lines will be short!
 9. Keep a list on your refrigerator or pantry of the items you use. Then when the sale ads arrive in your mailbox, you can check to see if anything on your list is on sale.

(Crystal Godfrey, *I Can't Believe It's Food Storage*, 2009, p.38-39)