

How To Preserve Meat For Survival

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In a SHTF event, chances are that you will not be able to rely on your fridge to preserve your food as usual.

People can get overtly reliant on fridges to store their food and this can be a problem.

If you don't have access to a fridge anymore, what will you do? How will you preserve your meat for later use? People have been using other methods to preserve their food for centuries. This knowledge can come in real useful.

You can start by taking a look in your kitchen. Examine how much food you have and think how much of it would spoil without refrigeration.

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Meat would be the first one to go once you lose electricity, but spoiling can be prevented using old-fashioned techniques. Methods such as smoking and curing are just two examples used for a long time, and are efficient when it comes to keeping meat from spoiling.

First, you need to decide on a place where you will store your meat. Ideally, you will want to do it in the coldest area available. Good examples are the attic, a storage shed, a shelter etc. Use a thermometer to check the temperature in each place and decide on the best one.

How to Cure Meat

Curing is a technique which basically involves preserving the meat in salt. This was one of the most common ways of keeping meat fresh in the days before refrigeration. Some still use it today, but now it is more about enhancing the flavor of the meat, not about preserving it.

Meat spoils because it is a good place for bacteria to thrive in. Bacteria need water, and there is a lot of water content in the meat, especially the muscle fibers. This is solved by introducing salt. It will expel a lot of the water from the meat, and creates an environment where bacteria cannot develop and multiply.



Besides the meat, you will also need a mixture of

curing salt and brown sugar. For example, half a pound of salt mixed with a quarter cup of sugar should be enough for ten to twelve pounds of meat.

The sugar is necessary in order to counterbalance all of the salt, and will also give the meat a distinct flavor. If you like, other sweet products can be used such as honey or maple syrup.

You can also add [your favorite herbs and spices](#) if you want, they will also give your meat a unique aroma.

There is another ingredient which, ideally, should be included: sodium nitrite. It is particularly effective at fighting off botulism - a very bad bacterium which you do not want anywhere near your meat. At the same time, high levels of nitrite can also be toxic, and you need to take special care with this step.

There are two safe ways for you to add sodium nitrite.

- Using green leafy vegetables such as celery, spinach and lettuce. They all naturally contain sodium nitrite. You can add juice or extract and you will get the sodium nitrite you need.
- Adding pink salt. Also known as Prague Powder #1, this salt already contains a mixture of regular table salt and sodium nitrite in the appropriate composition.

Once you have the necessary ingredients, start cutting the meat into slabs. Pork is commonly used, but you can also use beef or fish. Take a slab and cover it heavily in the salt mixture. Do this with the rest of the meat. After this place it in jars or crocks for storage. Make sure that the meat slabs are tightly packed together.

Take them to your storage destination of choice. Make sure that the temperature is below 38 degrees Fahrenheit, but that it is well above freezing. 36 degrees Fahrenheit is ideal.

After about a month of storage, take the meat out. Take each slab and wrap it in paper or plastic. Either is fine as long as it is moisture-proof. This meat is now ready to be stored and consumed whenever you need it.

How to Brine Meat

The process described above is referred to as dry curing, but there is also a method for wet curing, also known as brining. This technique involves you keeping the meat submerged in a salty solution.

The steps are similar: the meat needs to be cut the same way and placed in jars or crocks. Wash the meat and sterilize the jars before you do.

Now you need to make the salt water. Adding about a pound of salt and half a cup of sugar to three quarts of water should do. Feel free to mix in other ingredients such as herbs and spices. Repeat this process until you have enough water for all of the jars. Fill each one up.

Make sure that the meat is completely submerged. If you are having problems, place a weight on top. Take the meat to your storage area.

Unlike dry curing, the meat will need your attention on a weekly basis. Each week you will have to take the meat out of the jars, stir the brine well and then place it back. After four weeks of repeating

this process, your meat is ready. If you find the brine to be getting too thick, you will need to replace it with a fresh batch.

How to Smoke Meat



Smoke has the same effect as salt of keeping away bacteria from your meat. It also gives it a very tasty flavor which is why it is still used today.

If you know of a smokehouse near you, you can take it there, you will save time. If not, you can do the process yourself, but you will need a smoker. The good news is that they are available in all kinds of shapes and sizes, and use various fuels such as propane or charcoal. You can also modify grills or ovens to work as smokers, but the use of a regular smoker for this purpose is recommended.

This method is similar to grilling the meat and will generate a lot of smoke, so it needs to be done outdoors. However, grilling is a quick cooking process that uses high heat, while smoking takes much longer and uses indirect heat at low temperatures. The temperature should be anywhere between 150 and 225 degrees Fahrenheit.

This process is known as hard smoking and it is a way of cooking your meat in a way that will not require refrigeration. The end product will look similar to jerky.

Cold smoking is also available, and uses much lower temperatures below 100 degrees Fahrenheit. This method is only used for flavoring the meat rather than actually cooking it.

There you have it: three ways to prepare and preserve your meat for long periods of time. You should choose the one which is most accessible to you and meets your needs of survival.



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