

7 Vital Foods To Stock Up On

Famines aren't something that most people think about in the United States, but they have happened throughout global history and within the US. [Severe droughts](#) and unprecedented flooding has occurred throughout the world in recent years, while forest fires rage elsewhere, and aquifers all over the world are being drained at extraordinary rates.

Aquifer Depletion & Water Shortages

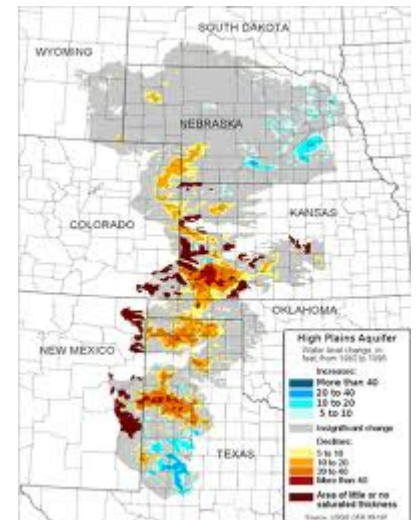
Depletion of the Ogallala Aquifer that underlies much of the high plains, stretching from South Dakota to the Texas Panhandle, is already impacting farmers in the region and forcing them to drastically adapt their water usage, convert to dry land farming, or simply leave fields fallow.

Meanwhile, family farmers are finding that their wells are increasingly going dry. Some farmers are drilling deeper and deeper to reach their groundwater, while others have given up the ghost and plugged their dry wells.

These are the sort of things that spell trouble for the food supply, and the issue of depleted aquifers is not a local one. In Florida, the aquifers underlying the state have been drained so much that large sinkholes are an increasingly common problem.

Saudi Arabia and many of the countries in the Middle East are also over-draining their aquifers. Though they became self-sufficient in wheat production after they began tapping their aquifers in the 1970s and 80s, the Saudis now rely almost exclusively on imported grain from foreigners once again.

Water resources are a serious point of contention in much of Africa, and indeed also stretching as far eastward as Pakistan, India and northern areas of China.



Without those aquifers, huge swathes of irrigated farmland cannot be sustained, and water-intensive crops like wheat, grains, and corn cannot be grown. Reserve granaries around the world have also been depleted in recent years, continuously falling, like the aquifers, without sufficient replenishment of reserves.

Food Storage

With careful planning and a touch of foresight, you can protect yourself and your family from the potential of a famine or serious food crisis. In most cases, a famine or serious food shortage doesn't result in an immediate mass exodus from the afflicted region. People still go to work, some food supplies are still available and commerce continues, to varying extents.

A one-year backup supply of food for yourself and your family is a good place to start. Companies such as Wise Foods, Mountain House, and eFoods Direct all offer supplies of dehydrated and/or freeze-dried foods.

With a typical shelf-life of 20 – 25 years or more, these foods are designed for long-term storage and come in sizes ranging from 3 day supplies, 2 week supplies and 1 month supplies, to 3 month, 6 month and 1 year supplies.

The dietary needs of you or your family members may vary based

on age, health, allergies and intolerances, and whether you're vegetarian or vegan, etc. but the human body needs a combination of simple and complex carbohydrates, protein, fats, minerals and vitamins. Whether you stock up on dehydrated and/or freeze-dried foods with a long shelf-life, or you prefer to focus on regular canned and dried foods with a shorter shelf-life, you'll need plenty of:

- Flour, flour and more flour! Unless you have some specific reason to avoid it and/or an alternative you prefer, [flour is necessary for so many things](#), chiefly bread. A one year supply for an average adult is 200 – 300 pounds of flour; if this sounds like a lot, just think of how much bread, pasta and other dough you'll be making if SHTF.

- Powdered milk is immensely useful in cooking, as well as reconstituted for drinking. In addition to 40 – 60 pounds of powdered milk, 100 or 150 cans of condensed milk (just regular condensed milk, not sweetened, condensed milk) are also indispensable.

- Yeast, baking soda and baking powder are all rising agents used in various recipes. Yeast is particularly important in bread making, so be sure to stock up on plenty of it. I have found the active dry yeast from Bob's Red Mill to be a particularly good, versatile brand of yeast that I use in bread, doughnuts, pizza dough and other yeast-risen recipes.

- [Sugar](#) or honey (or a lot of maple syrup); seriously, you'll need 50 – 60 pounds at a bare minimum to get through a year; if you've got a sweet tooth or kids, you can easily double that amount. Be sure to stock up on salt, as well, you'll want 5 – 10 pounds per person.

- Meat, beans and TVP or other high protein food sources; you'll typically need 100 – 150 pounds (if it isn't freeze-dried) per adult, per year. Canned meats, including tuna, chicken, SPAM, corned beef and ham will generally last 1 – 4

years on the shelf. Canned beans will typically last 2 – 5 years on the shelf, and quite a lot longer when dried.

– Cooking oil and butter, lard or other fats are integral to cooking, as well as an important source of energy and nutrients during a famine. You'll want a minimum of 50 pounds of fats and oils, think more along the lines of 150 – 200 pounds if you have a larger family. Vegetable oils typically last several years on the shelves, as do most shortenings and lard.

– Fruits and vegetables are crucial, especially during a famine because they become your main source of vitamins and minerals, the nutrients your body needs to function. The average adult needs upwards of 600 pounds of fruits and vegetables a year, but that weight is drastically reduced if you opt to store dehydrated or freeze-dried produce. Canned fruits and vegetables generally last anywhere from 2 – 10 years or so.

Gardening & Canning



Unfortunately, not everyone can afford to stock up on a sufficient amount of food. If you can't afford to stock up on food, for whatever reason (low or irregular income, small pension, etc.), does that mean you're just going to be left to starve during a famine or food crisis? I won't lie, it is possible that you could wind up starving if you aren't prepared when a famine strikes. History is full of the countless dead who starved during famines.

You can still take measures to protect yourself and your family from going hungry during a famine, though. If you have the space for any sort of garden, start one now. There is no time like the present to learn, and gardens take several years

to fully establish themselves, partly because it takes most novices a few years to really start honing their skills. If space is an issue, look into vertical gardening or aquaponics, they are great systems for the space and/or water constrained gardener. If nothing else, consider growing some useful plants in window boxes.

In many areas, you may be able to pay a small fee and receive the rights to a gardening plot in a community garden area. This is an option that may be worth considering for those who are limited in space at home, but it has its drawbacks due to the general lack of security that a community garden has.

On the other hand, if you start working a plot at the community garden, you may get a chance to do some networking with the other people who use the garden. It's up to you to weigh the pros and cons of this option based on your location and needs.

Growing a summer garden during the goods times can not only put extra food on your table, but you may be able to harvest a pretty substantial crop. All that extra produce can be dried, frozen, dehydrated or canned for



long-term storage; perhaps you won't get a 20 – 25 year shelf life, but 1 – 5 years for home canned and preserved foods isn't bad.

Attending farmers markets, or making a trip directly to the farm when the crops you want are in season (strawberries in June and July, for instances, but corn and potatoes in late August, September and October), is another good way to undercut grocery store prices. Most farmers, even all natural and certified organic farmers, sell their produce directly from their farm at a fraction of the store prices. Buy it up cheap when it's in season, and can it for your home storage.

In the meantime, be sure to brush up on your home-cooking skills as well. If a famine or a serious food crisis does strike, you'll need to know how to cook with all the stored food you have. Start learning how to make various types of bread now, learn how to make different soups, noodles and other foods from scratch, these are the sort of skills you will need.

**Here's why you should start preparing
for an EMP right now**

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*This article has been written by **Gaia Rady** for [Survivopedia](#).*