

The Redrock Readiness Newsletter

Episode 20: Food Storage and the Single Adult

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“A cardinal principle of the gospel is to prepare for the day of scarcity. Work, industry, frugality are part of the royal order of life.”

--Keith B. McMullin, Conference April 2007

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Danielle: I grew up Mormon, so when you say “food storage” I picture **shining walls of #10 cans** filled with flour, rice, and other cooking staples. But these days, the food storage industry wants to sell you entire meals in cans and pouches; all you do is add hot water. Is there an advantage to this? **When should I use the cans, and when should I ditch ‘em?**

Beau: Ok, keep in mind this is just one guy’s opinion, but the **cans are only nifty if, and only if, you have some way of preparing food with electricity and an oven.** If you don’t have these two essentials, then how will you utilize what’s in those cans?

In my own kit, I’ve **divided my meals about equally between MREs and Mountain House.** I also have a small stove that uses fuel tablets and another that uses gas in order to boil water for the Mountain House-type pouches. **MREs I can just eat right out of the pouch cold**—not that they’ll taste all that great. A bottle of your favorite **hot sauce** will go a long way for adding flavor.

D: **How would you prioritize food groups,** given different situations? Should I be buying beans and other proteins first, or what?

B: You should divide your planned meals into **a 50/50 mix of protein and carbs.** Your body needs both, not just one. You should also plan on protein and meal replacement bars as well as vitamins.

D: Are military MREs specially formulated to give you that ideal mix of protein and carbs? I assume Mountain House and other commercial bags aren’t.

B: Military-style MREs will give you the RDA of protein, carbs and vitamins—supposedly anyways.

D: **What do you picture food storage looks like for singles?** For families? For on-the-go?

B: So being technically single and apartment-bound, I think a mix of Mountain House and MREs is the way to go, but **everyone's needs and likes may differ and your own ideas may work better for you.**

D: Can you give us some other options, off the top of your head?

B: Again, I would go with **protein and meal replacement bars**. Also, a company called **Mainstay does emergency lifeboat ration bars** that will do in a pinch to help keep you mobile and on the go.

D: So that's for short-term, mobile storage. **What do you think is *the number one difference to keep in mind when it comes to long-term food storage for singles*, as opposed to food storage for a family?**

Beau: **It's easy to plan your own food needs**, but much less so for a family of four or more. The way you need to tackle it from a family perspective is to **plan each meal times the number of people you need to feed.**

D: So everyone eats the same meal every day? That makes it easy to organize. **Does preparing a food store against a civic crisis look different than preparing one against personal unemployment?**

A: I don't think you need to differentiate between the two, your needs are after all needs. However, you should look at it as, **your emergency food is for emergency only.**

D: One thing though—I have heard of people, when faced with sudden unemployment, feeding their family off food storage from #10 cans—**cooking with those ingredients to to stretch their food dollar.** To me, this seems wise.

Moving on! Let's talk about **ROTATION!** How do you set a system up so your newer stuff is being stored, and your older stuff is getting eaten now? I think there's a tendency to "store it and ignore it" – but that means when you finally pull from it, the food's so old it's throwing mummy curses at you.

B: Setting up a home store is **relatively simple, just use a Sharpie to write the dates you purchase each item, that way you eat or use the oldest items first.** This will prevent you from opening a can that expired 6 years ago. Remember, **it's a shelf life, not a half-life!!!!**

D: It's easy to write dates on stuff, but for me, the problem is shelving things appropriately when you get home from the grocery store. Some commercial food storage shops in Utah have shelves that let you drop in your cans from the back (so the older stuff comes out the front—like the fancier Campbell's soup displays at the grocery store), but an apartment-dweller may not want to give up the real estate.

B: **The most important thing is to have a plan.** It may not be a great plan but it's at least a starting point. **Don't be afraid to make changes and deviate from your plan** if you have to.

D: Yeah, nobody gets it right the first time! Well, except for the Lord.

Action Steps:

- Make a plan today. Heck, make half a plan today—you can always add on!
- Think about buying some MRE's and Mountain House pouches along with your #10 cans, for a more versatile store.
- Focus your calories on proteins and carbs, because your body loves them.
- To help with rotating your store, keep a Sharpie in your pantry and write the purchase date on your food when you bring it home.
- Try not to let your food get too old before you eat it!
- Read the talk *Lay Up in Store*: <https://www.lds.org/general-conference/2007/04/lay-up-in-store?lang=eng#2->

See you next week! Be safe out there!



Ermergersh you guys I just discovered this A MAY ZING thing called *Pinterest*?? And there's like tips for EVERYTHING on there!

Some nice ladies posted baby steps on getting your food storage ready! <https://www.pinterest.com/fsme/>

Whoa! Don't get lost!