

Emergency Food Storage

Storage Factors

The method of preservation and the place where you store food will affect how fast it spoils or loses its nutritional value. The following considerations should be taken when storing foods:

- Shelf life: the length of time foods may be stored before becoming unfit for human consumption (see chart below).
- Light: store food in dark containers or in a dark room. Avoid glass or clear plastic containers if possible, because light can degrade food.
- Temperature: store food in a cool location, preferably where the temperature is constant, between 40 -60° F.
- Humidity: store food in areas where the humidity level is less than 10%. Food should be stored off of the floor away from anything that may raise humidity, such as dryer vents, water heaters, washers, dishwashers, sinks, showers, and sump pumps.

Storage Locations

- In the basement, away from washers/dryers, water heaters, etc.
- Closets.
- In spare bedrooms.
- Underneath beds.
- On shelves.
- In areas underneath staircases.

Food “Shelf Life”

The following table describes the *estimated shelf life* for different types of foods:

<u>Type of Food</u>	<u>Estimated Shelf Life*</u>
Dried foods (opened)	1 – year
Canned goods	2 – years
Dried Dairy Products	5 – years
Sealed dried fruits and vegetables	7 – years
Beans and other legumes	7 – years
Grains	10 – years
Wheat berries or grain	10 – 20 years

* **Note:** Shelf life will vary depending on storage conditions described above.