

# 3

# FOOD PLAN



## ACTIVITY 10: CREATE YOUR FOOD PLAN



*Goal: Build preparedness by gathering and storing a two-week food supply.*

Refer back to your Food and Water Tracker from Activity 2 to make your Food Plan. As you develop your plan, remember that following a disaster that knocks out power, you'll only be able to keep food properly chilled and safe to consume for a few days, provided you have enough ice and a cooler. It's best to stock food items that don't require refrigeration and have a long shelf life. Food in cans and jars or dried foods, like jerky or fruit leather, are best. Keep these foods in a cool, dry place away from animals.

The Emergency Pantry Items List helps you identify and track your progress in food storage. It includes a sample selection of the major food groups and intake recommendations. Consider printing it out and posting it on your fridge, pantry door or wherever you'll stash your *2 Weeks Ready* food supply. If you don't want to use a computer, a handwritten list will do just fine! This will be a visual reminder of the great progress you're making. Be sure to also check out the emergency food items shopping list offered in this skills-building lesson.

## ACTIVITY 11: GROW YOUR OWN FOOD



*Goal: Expand your options to access food.*

### INDOOR GARDENS

Food preparation without a fully stocked kitchen can be a challenge during disasters. One of the easiest ways to spice up bland foods is to add fresh herbs. Basil, parsley, thyme and oregano grow well indoors in Oregon and are easy to grow yourself. Start a garden in your kitchen or on a south-facing windowsill to make sure the herbs get enough sunlight. You can use existing plastic, fiberglass, metal, basketry, rot-resistant wood, glazed pottery and glass containers for pots, as long as they have drainage holes. Pick up some already growing herbs at your local grocery or hardware store or grab some packages of seeds and soil. You can also find seeds online. Choose plants that will mature quickly and stay compact, so they don't outgrow their container. The best way to keep them compact is to use them!



## PERSONAL OUTDOOR GARDENS

Foods including asparagus, broccoli, carrots, corn, lettuce, peas, potatoes and tomatoes grow really well in most areas of the Pacific Northwest. Consider growing beans in your garden and keep a bag of rice in storage. These two food items eaten together create an easy, quality source of protein. Check out OSU Extension's Growing Your Own resource page at <https://catalog.extension.oregonstate.edu/em9027> for more ideas.

## COMMUNITY GARDENS

Community gardens are a great way to grow healthy food you can share with others. They're also a great way to meet new people and grow friendships, as well as crops. Families or individuals can rent space in a community garden and buy the seeds and plants, then tend to their plots with water and overall maintenance. Some gardens donate their harvests to local community food organizations, while others allow community members to freely pick the food being grown. Do an internet search to find a community garden near you or start one for you and your neighbors. The good news is you don't have to be a gardening pro to get involved in a community garden! You can help by providing land, building sheds, or donating tools, seeds and plants.

## ACTIVITY 12: ALTERNATIVE COOKING METHODS



*Goal: Find new ways to cook without power.*

While you're building up your 2 Weeks Ready food supply, consider how you might cook indoors without traditional appliances that require power and how you might cook outdoors. Whatever alternative cooking methods you prefer, it's best to have more than one in mind and stock the necessary fuel sources.

You'll need fire-starting and suppressions supplies:

- Weatherproof matches
- Butane lighters
- Flints
- Fire-suppressing foam
- Fire extinguisher



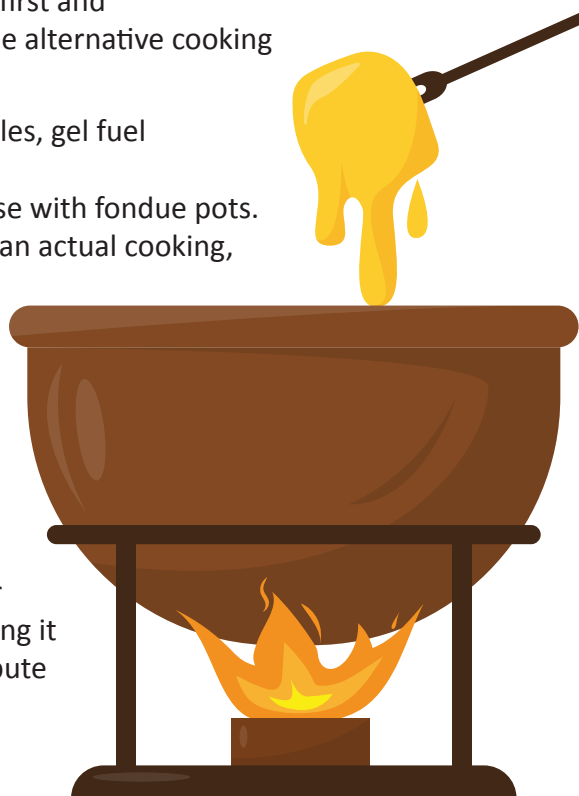
## AFFORDABLE WAYS TO STASH GOOD EATS

- Buy in bulk and set a small amount aside in a food-safe container. Share!
- Dehydrate foods; fruits and vegetables are good for this.
- Buy or make your own jerky.
- Use grocery coupons.
- Buy in-season produce from local farmers markets, roadside stands or food cooperatives, then freeze, can, dry or pickle it.
- Root cellars offer a way to preserve cold weather crops, such as potatoes, cabbage and beets.
- Buy day-old bread from the grocery store to freeze; buy directly from the bakery or wholesale outlet or make your own bread and freeze it.
- Grow your own garden, even if it's in porch or patio pots or a countertop herb garden. Join a community garden. Share!
- If you hunt, this can be ready source of lean protein.
- Depending on codes in your community, consider a chicken coop for fresh eggs.

## COOKING INDOORS WITHOUT ELECTRICITY OR GAS

When using fuel sources inside, always put your safety first and remember to properly ventilate. Consider some of these alternative cooking sources during disasters:

- **Fondue pots:** Use heating elements, such as candles, gel fuel and liquid fuel to heat the fondue pot.
- **Votive candles:** Ensure the brand is suitable for use with fondue pots.
- **Tealight candles:** These are better for warming than actual cooking, because they do not get hot enough to cook things such as meat, but they will keep your food warm.
- **Sterno:** Gelled alcohol substance that comes in a small can. When ignited, Sterno can be used to heat fondue pots and camp stoves. You may need a few cans to cook food thoroughly.
- **Wood-burning fireplaces:** Food can be skewered (think marshmallows or meat), wrapped in foil, or placed in a heavy pot or cast-iron pan before setting it on the fire. Rotate the pot or pan to evenly distribute the heat.
- **Wood-burning stove:** These burn wood inside a compartment surrounded by fireproof materials. Food can be cooked on top of the stove (unless it's a designated cook stove with a metal box oven for baking).
- **Alcohol burners:** These small metal burners are filled with alcohol, lit and placed under a portable folding stove. Alcohol burns clean, lights easily and stores indefinitely in a tightly sealed container. Two ounces of alcohol can burn for 10-15 minutes.



**CAUTION:** Only use an indoor fireplace or wood-burning stove if it's been regularly cleaned and maintained. Otherwise, it can cause a fire, carbon monoxide poisoning, or both. Burning any fuel in a low-oxygen environment, where windows are closed and there's little or no ventilation, can result in the production of dangerous carbon monoxide. **NEVER** use camp stoves or other cooking sources meant for outdoor use only indoors. If that's all you can use, go outside to do your cooking.



## COOKING TIPS

- Always keep aluminum foil around. It can serve as an oven, broiler, frying pan, and many other vessels for cooking if you have food and a cooking fire.
- Use skewers to cook meat over a fire and get the heat evenly distributed on all sides. The skewers must be green, non-toxic wood, otherwise, they'll burn up and drop the food. If using metal skewers, make sure they're non-toxic; don't use galvanized metal over a fire or in direct contact with food. Keep potholders or similar items in your kit, as metal conducts heat.

## COOKING OUTDOORS FUEL SOURCES

- Charcoal briquettes are engineered to be a convenient and consistent fuel source.
- Butane is a highly flammable, colorless, easily liquidized gas that quickly vaporizes at room temperature.
- All-natural wood pellets are made from a variety of trees to pair well with different meats.
- Liquid propane tanks can be purchased at many different locations, including grocery and hardware stores.
- Solar fuels technologies use sunlight, water, carbon dioxide and nitrogen from the air to produce fuels.
- Wood is consistent, abundant and packs a lot of flavor.

## COOKING INDOORS AFTER A DISASTER

Only cook indoors after a disaster IF you're certain the fireplace and gas or electric stove are not damaged and if there are no gas leaks. If in doubt, cook outdoors. Do not use grills indoors (or in the garage) and only use camp stoves that use gel fuel in open, ventilated areas away from carpeting, draperies, bedding and anything that can catch on fire. Cooking outdoors is the safer option, even if you shelter indoors.

## ACTIVITY 13: PIZZA BOX SOLAR OVEN COOKING



*Goal: Try a fun new way to explore alternative cooking.*

Try making your own solar oven using a pizza box, aluminum foil and plastic wrap! Solar ovens are a low-cost, ecologically friendly way to cook. In this activity from Scientific American, you'll learn how to build a simple solar oven from a pizza box to gather the sun's rays and cook! Consider other similarly shaped boxes if you don't have a pizza box. Watch the YouTube video at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nhgNh3BdMsc>.



## SUPPLIES NEEDED

- Pizza box (the larger the box, the better the oven should work)
- Pencil or pen
- Ruler
- Utility knife (always make sure you have adult help when using knives and other sharp objects)
- Aluminum foil
- White school glue
- Plastic wrap
- Shipping tape or black electrical tape
- A sheet of black paper
- A wooden skewer or pencil
- A warm, sunny day with no wind (temperatures above 85 degrees are recommended; the hotter the better)
- Optional s'mores ingredients: graham crackers, marshmallows and a chocolate bar

## ASSEMBLY INSTRUCTIONS

**Step 1:** Clean out the pizza box so it's ready to become a solar oven. Remove any box liners.

**Step 2:** On the box lid, draw a square about one-inch inward from each edge.

**Step 3:** (Adults only) Use a utility knife and ruler as a straight edge to carefully cut along each side of the square you just drew, except for the side that runs along the hinge of the box. Cut all the way through the cardboard on those three sides of the square. Then fold the flap back slightly along the attached side.

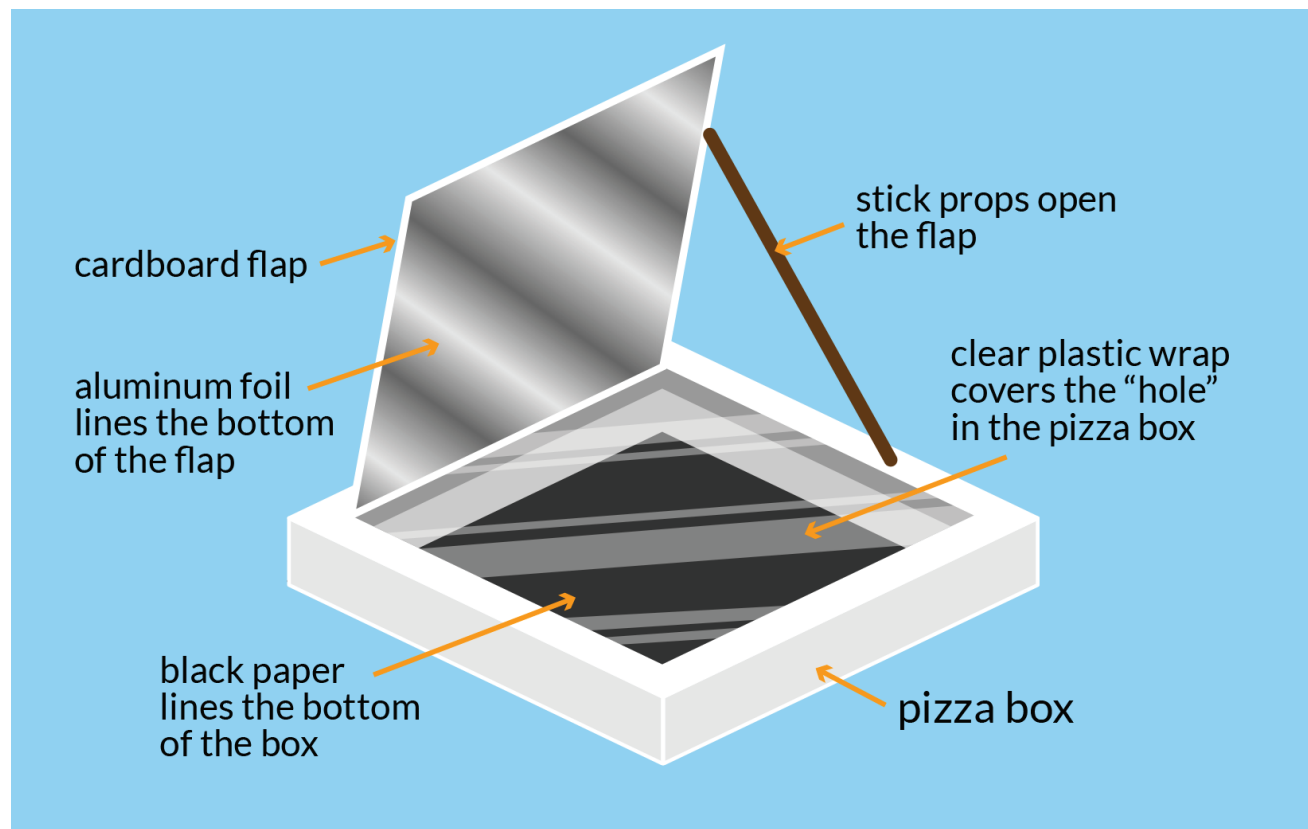
**Step 4:** Line the inside of the cardboard flap with aluminum foil. Fold the edges of the foil over the flap to help hold the foil in place and glue the foil onto the flap. Keep the foil as smooth as possible.

**Step 5:** Cover the opening made by the flap (in the lid) with a layer of plastic wrap. Attach the plastic wrap to the opening's edges using shipping tape or black electrical tape. Make sure there are no holes in the plastic wrap and that all its edges are completely attached to the lid.

**Step 6:** Line the inside of the box with aluminum foil so when the box is shut, the entire interior is coated with foil. It's easiest to do this by covering the bottom of the box with foil, then covering the inside part of the lid (going around the plastic-covered opening) with foil, too. Glue the foil in place.

**Step 7:** Glue or tape a sheet of black paper to the bottom of the box, centered there. This will act as your solar oven's heat sink.

**Step 8:** Lastly, use a wooden skewer or pencil (and some tape) to prop the solar oven's lid up, at about a 90-degree angle from the rest of the box. Leave the solar oven outside on a hot day. Clearly, this is a slow method of heating or melting.



## TIPS

The weather outside can significantly affect how well a solar oven performs. How well does it cook on a warm day versus a very hot day? What about a sunny day versus an overcast one?

**See the Food Plan on page 9 for guidance on food safety and sanitation.**

## FOOD CANNING AND PRESERVING

Canning for longer-term food preservation is a traditional method of food storage. However, special equipment is required and great care must be taken when canning foods to avoid botulism and other bacteria that can make food unsafe to eat. Refer to the resources provided in this module and follow all instructions carefully. Canning is not for beginners or those without proper equipment. It's always helpful to try this method of food preservation first under the guidance of someone who has done it before successfully. It can be a fun thing to do together as you learn!

## SHARE WITH YOUR NEIGHBORS

One of the best things about having an abundant harvest or food stash is sharing your bounty with friends and neighbors. It's also a great way to meet and get to know them.

## SUPPORT YOUR LOCAL FOOD BANK

Once you've taken care of your needs, those in your household and any neighbors, consider supporting your local food bank. These amazing organizations help historically marginalized and underserved communities and are also great partners during disasters. You can donate food, money or time; all are excellent ways to give back to your community. Someday, it could be you who needs their services in the wake of a disaster.

## EMERGENCY FOOD PREP SHOPPING TIPS

- Plan to store at least a one-week supply of non-perishable food.
- Choose healthy foods your household will eat!
- Remember special dietary needs.
- Avoid salty foods that will make you thirsty.
- Use disposable or inexpensive dinnerware and utensils that are easy to clean with minimal water (non-breakable is advised).
- Stock a non-electric can opener.
- Have household bleach to disinfect cans.
- Include paper towels, sponges, and old towels or rags.
- Stock a variety of alternative fuel sources to use when preparing food, such as gel fuel for camp stoves, charcoal for BBQs, propane for gas grills, or wood for fire pits or chimineas.
- Stock hot pads or oven mitts for hot item handling and heavy gloves to handle wood for campfires and dry ice.
- Consider food-grade moisture absorber packs for food storage.

## REFERENCES AND RESOURCES



FOR ADDITIONAL RESOURCES ON THIS UNIT, VISIT OEM'S BE 2 WEEKS READY WEBPAGE AT  
[www.oregon.gov/oem/be2weeksready](http://www.oregon.gov/oem/be2weeksready)

