

USING A ROTATING MENU PLAN TO DETERMINE A NUTRITIONALLY BALANCED SUPPLY OF FOOD

In 2007, The First Presidency of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints released the pamphlet "All is Safely Gathered In: Family Home Storage." In it, members of the Church were asked to "Build a small supply of food that is part of your normal, daily diet...until it is sufficient for three months." There are many ways that request may be accomplished.

The following method will help determine what and how much to store when planning a nutritionally balanced menu for three months, or for three weeks or a year. Before starting, remember these considerations:

- Eating habits
- Likes and dislikes
- The number of people to be fed
- The ages of those to be fed
- Food varieties available
- Any allergies or food sensitivities
- Shelf life of the food to be stored (see chart on pages ?)
- Balanced nutrition

Store the kinds of foods that are currently eaten or slowly change eating habits so that what is stored will be eaten. Always apply the motto, "Store what you eat and eat what you store." In this way, supplies can be rotated regularly.

To begin a personalized food storage program, locate recipes that include ingredients or substitute ingredients¹ that can be stored in the pantry. (Recipes are easiest to find in cookbooks or booklets based on boxed or canned foods, such as soup, tuna, or gelatin, and in those that concentrate on pasta, whole grains, legumes, or quick and easy meals. Package labels also provide many usable recipes.) Then, make sure family members will eat the prepared food. Next, work the recipes into a nutritionally balanced menu plan. MINIMUM nutritional guidelines² are as follows:

Breakfast - Milk (1 cup)
Fruit (1/2 cup) or juice (3/4 cup)
Bread or cereal (2 servings)

Lunch - Milk (1 cup)
Fruit or vegetable (1/2 cup)
Meat or meat equivalent (2 ounces)
Bread, rice, or pasta (2 servings)

¹ An extensive list of substitute ingredients can be found on pages 1 through 11 in *Pantry Cooking: Unlocking Your Pantry's Potential* by Cheryl F. Driggs.

² Based on recommendations at <https://www.choosemyplate.gov/>

Snack - Fruit or vegetable (1/2 cup)

Dinner - Fruit (1/2 cup)
Vegetable (1/2 cup)
Meat or meat equivalent (2 ounces)
Bread, rice, or pasta (2 servings)

Next, decide how many times each recipe will be used – once a week, every 2 weeks, once a month, etc.

Now comes the time-consuming work, but it is worth the time for the ease that results. Take each recipe and menu and break them down by ingredients. Multiply each ingredient by the number of times it will be used. Next, convert to the weights and measures in which the ingredients are purchased so that you will know what you need to purchase to prepare that recipe or menu for the planned length of time.³

Add together all like ingredients from each recipe and menu for a grand total of needed supplies.

Don't forget snacks, desserts, beverages, etc. if you want the ingredients to be available.

Figure bread, milk, jam, jelly, etc. on a monthly basis rather than by meal because the amount used per meal will vary. Also, as a general rule, store 5 pounds of salt per person per year.

Obtain at least a week's supplies at a time so that a balanced diet will always be on hand. (Exception: take advantage of super bargains to get as much as possible up to a year's supply.)

When setting up a supply of food this way, remember to NEVER plan to use a recipe your family does not like now. Rotate supplies frequently. Don't limit current meals to the planned recipes but do incorporate the ingredients into other recipes that use fresh foods when they are available.

Taking a day's worth of menus out of a three-week rotating menu plan for a family of 4, a three-month supply (12 weeks) is figured as follows:

Breakfast - Milk
Orange drink
Summer Oatmeal*
Toast with jam

Lunch - Quick Vegetable Soup*
Peanut butter and jam sandwich
Milk

³ A simple list of equivalent measures is found on pages ? through ?. An extensive list of equivalent measures can be found on pages 25 through 36 in *Pantry Cooking: Unlocking Your Pantry's Potential* by Cheryl F. Driggs.

Snack - Popcorn

Dinner - Tuna Casserole*
Canned peaches
French-style green beans
Milk
Apple Crisp*

*Recipes in *Pantry Cooking: Unlocking Your Pantry's Potential* by Cheryl Driggs

Breakfast

ORANGE DRINK: $3/4$ cup serving x 4 people = 3 cups drink
3 cups drink x 4 meals = 12 cups drink
12 cups x quart/ 4 cups = 3 quarts of orange drink

SUMMER OATMEAL: 2 cups oats x 4 meals = 8 cups oats
8 cups x 42 ounces/ 14 cups = 24 ounces

$1/2$ cup dried apples x 4 meals = 2 cups apples
2 cups x pound/ 4 cups = .5 pounds dried apples

$1/2$ cup apple juice x 4 meals = 2 cups juice
2 cups x pint/ 2 cups = 1 pint apple juice

$1/3$ cup oat bran x 4 meals = 1.34 cups
1.34 cups x 2.83 ounces/cup = 3.8 ounces oat bran

3 tablespoons honey x 4 meals = 12 tablespoons
12 tablespoons x cup/ 16 tablespoons = .75 cups
.75 cups x 12 ounces/cup = 9 ounces honey

$1/2$ teaspoon cinnamon x 4 meals = 2 teaspoons
2 teaspoons x 1 tablespoon/ 3 teaspoons = $2/3$ tablespoon
 $2/3$ tablespoon x small can/ 4 tablespoons = .17 small can cinnamon

OTHER: Salt
Milk
Walnuts
Bread
Jam
Sugar

Lunch

QUICK VEGETABLE SOUP: 1 (15-ounce) can mixed vegetables x 4 meals = 4 (15-ounce) cans mixed vegetables

2-1/4 cups vegetable juice cocktail x 4 meals = 9 cups
9 cups x 46 ounces/5.75 cups = 1.56 (46-ounce) cans vegetable juice cocktail

SANDWICHES: 3 tablespoons peanut butter x 4 people = 12 tablespoons
12 tablespoons x 4 meals = 48 tablespoons
48 tablespoons x cup/16 tablespoons = 3 cups
3 cups x 8.9 ounces/cup peanut butter = 26.7 ounces

OTHER: Jam
Bread
Milk

Snack

POPCORN: 2/3 cup x 4 = 2-2/3 cups
2-2/3 cups x pound/3 cups = .89 pounds of popcorn

OIL: 1/8 cup x 4 = .5 cups
.5 cups x 8 ounces/cup = 4 ounces of oil

OTHER: Salt

Dinner

CASSEROLE: 1 (5-ounce) can tuna x 4 meals = 4 (5-ounce) cans tuna

2 cups macaroni x 4 meals = 8 cups macaroni
8 cups x pound/4 cups = 2 pounds of macaroni

1 (10-3/4 ounce) can condensed cream of mushroom soup x 4 meals = 4 (10-3/4 ounce) cans soup

PEACHES: 1/2 cup x 4 people = 2 cups
2 cups x 4 meals = 8 cups
8 cups x 16-ounce can/2 cups = 4 (16-ounce) cans
OR 8 cups x 29-ounce can/3-1/2 = about 2 (29-ounce) cans of peaches

GREEN BEANS: $1/2$ cup x 4 people = 2 cups
2 cups x 4 meals = 8 cups
 8 cups x 14.5-ounce can/ $1-3/4$ cups = 4 to 5 (14.5-ounce) cans of beans

APPLE CRISP: $2-1/2$ cups apples x 4 meals = 10 cups
10 cups x pint/ 2 cups = 5 pints
OR 10 cups x 20 ounces/ $2-1/2$ cups = 4 (20-ounce) cans of apples

$3/4$ cup quick oats x 4 meals = 3 cups
3 cups x 3 ounces/cup = 9 ounces

$3/4$ cup brown sugar x 4 meals = 3 cups
3 cups x pound/ 2.25 cups = 1.33 pounds of brown sugar

$1/2$ cup flour x 4 meals = 2 cups
2 cups x pound/ 4 cups = .5 pounds of flour

1 teaspoon cinnamon x 4 meals = 4 teaspoons
4 teaspoons x tablespoon/ 3 teaspoons = 1.33 tablespoons
1.33 tablespoons x small can/ 4 tablespoons = .33 small cans cinnamon

$1/2$ cup shortening x 4 meals = 2 cups
2 cups x pound/ 2 cups = 1 pound of shortening

OTHER: Milk
 Salt

Now you know that to prepare these meals once every three weeks for three months the following are needed:

4 (15-ounce) cans of mixed vegetables
4 (20-ounce) cans of sliced apples
4 to 5 (14.5-ounce) cans of green beans
4 (16-ounce) cans of peaches
2 (46-ounce) cans of vegetable juice cocktail
16 ounces apple juice
4 ($10-3/4$ ounce) cans condensed cream of mushroom soup
4 (5-ounce) cans of tuna
.5 pounds dried apples
Orange drink powder to make 3 quarts
1 pound of popcorn

27 ounces of peanut butter
2 pounds of macaroni
 $24 + 9 = 33$ ounces of oats
4 ounces oat bran
.5 pounds of white flour
 $.17 + .33 = .5$ small can cinnamon
4 ounces of vegetable oil
1 pound of shortening
1.33 pounds of brown sugar
9 ounces honey
White sugar
Bread ingredients
Jam
Walnuts
Salt
Powdered milk

This method does take time to set up, but it has definite advantages. You will know what a three-month supply of a particular item is. There is no guess work, so there is no underbuying. The variety of stored food is nutritionally balanced and, most importantly, the family will eat what is stored. In most cases, this is also a very economical way to feed a family.

Last of all, keep a current record of your inventory, then cans won't have to be counted every time shopping is done and the contents of the pantry will always be known.

To summarize:

1. Collect recipes your family likes that use ingredients or substitute ingredients that can be stored.
2. Create menus.
3. Decide how many times recipes will be used during the three months.
4. Break the recipes and menus down by ingredients.
5. Multiply the ingredient amounts by the number of times to be used and convert to equivalent package amounts.
6. Add together the same ingredients from all recipes used for a grand total of each ingredient.
7. Develop plans for breakfast, lunch, and dinner and don't forget desserts, snacks, bread, drinks, etc.
8. Obtain a week's supplies at a time so that you always have a nutritionally balanced food storage.