

CHARACTERISTICS OF POTENTIALLY USEFUL FOODS

1 = best, 3 = worst in comparison to the others.

	COST	PORTABILITY	USE ON THE GO	WATER NEEDS	FUEL NEEDS	COOKING TIME	COOKING SKILL	COOKING LABOR	FAMILIARITY	PALATABILITY	NUTRITION	STORAGE LIFE
CANNED FOODS (wet packed—cooked)	2	3	2	1	1	2	2	2	—	—	3	3
TRADITIONAL STORAGE FOODS (grain, beans, peas, etc.—uncooked)	1	2	3	3	3	3	3	3	—	—	1	2
FREEZE DRIED FOODS (in cans or pouches—cooked)	3	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	—	—	2	1

Adding up grand totals for each of the three categories is tempting but probably meaningless for most individuals who will have greater need for subtotals based upon factors which apply to their particular situations. Example: a single urban person will probably weigh cooking time and skill heavier than will a farm family. Also, for some people a single factor may provide a ruling reason for selecting a particular food. Example: an individual with an unreliable water supply and no ability to store water may reject certain foods on the basis of water needs alone. The point is, you must know your requirements and then select foods which satisfy them.

FOOD REQUIREMENTS BASED ON PERSONAL STATUS AND NEEDS

SITUATION	CHARACTERISTICS	GOAL	NEEDS TO GOAL	FOOD REQUIREMENTS
WORKING FARM WITH FAMILY	Presently growing crops and/or raising livestock. Owner knowledgeable about farming. Farming tools and equipment present.	Self sufficiency.	Change farming emphasis from specialized to diverse. Acquire means to preserve harvested crops. Acquire knowledge of organic farming if not known.	Enough of everything to last until first crop plus a cushion. Enough supplemental foods for nonfarm grown items for a year.
SMALL NON-WORKING FARM WITH FAMILY	Owner not knowledgeable about farming—earns living elsewhere. Small garden for family recreation if present.	Self sufficiency.	Acquire knowledge of organic farming and tools to do it. Expand garden. Acquire means to preserve harvested crops.	Store everything to first harvest plus one season for a buffer in case of failure. Store supplemental foods in greater quantity.
SUBURBAN WITH FAMILY	Yard present. Owners not knowledgeable gardeners though small recreation plot may be present.	Ongoing supplemental capacity to feed.	Acquire organic farming knowledge with special emphasis on maximum yields from small plot. Acquire good hand gardening tools.	Store food items supplemental to garden supplies: proteins, etc. Store at least one year supply of all foods to allow for possible gardening failure.
SUBURBAN NO FAMILY	As above.	Limited ongoing supplemental capacity to feed.	As above.	One person will not do as well as a family at gardening so plan to store all foods needed and use whatever garden goods as grown as a bonus.
URBAN WITH OR WITHOUT FAMILY	Apartment or other habitation without land for possible garden. No capacity to raise food whatever.	Survival or escape to area capable of supporting life.	Acquire means to preserve fresh foods as they become available. Plan to acquire retreat or arrange to live on productive land during emergency.	Must have virtually everything needed to eat for as long as the emergency lasts. Special emphasis on portable foods using little fuel, water, time.

FOOD REQUIREMENTS BASED ON ECONOMIC FACTORS

CONDITION	CHARACTERISTICS	LENGTH	FOOD REQUIREMENTS
COMPLETE BREAKDOWN	Fuel, water, electricity not available. Food unavailable except for extremely limited quantities of locally-grown items. Violence rampant and uncontrollable.	Three months probably a maximum—two or three weeks more likely.	Virtually all food, fuel, water needed must be stored ahead of time.
RECURRING BREAKDOWNS	Fuel, water, electricity available some of the time but may not be counted upon. Food in very short supply: not near enough. Violence under better control than above: periodic riots followed by calm.	Condition could last several months while attempts to restore stability gradually take hold.	To be safe, all needed foods as well as fuel and water should be stored. Consider fresh food, and functioning public utilities a bonus—don't count on them. Possess capability to preserve fresh food when available.
ECONOMIC DESPERATION (extreme depression)	Fuel, water, electricity available most of the time. Food also available but severe shortages exist with many important items especially those brought in from other areas. Violence mostly under control.	Could be in excess of a year—perhaps quite a bit more.	Store selected foods needed to supplement those available. High grade proteins likely to be scarce. Store wide selection of foods which will be needed if your income may fail.
DEPRESSION	Fuel, water, electricity available. Violence level low.	Possibly many years.	Foods are generally available in quantity. However, plan supplies for periods during which you may be out of work.