

Food PRESERVING FOOD

Why This is Important

The pandemic flu virus may be circulating in our communities for up to three months per wave. Resulting illness and absenteeism may disrupt grocery store deliveries, food production, and your source of income. Learning how to preserve food may be an important skill, especially between pandemic waves when you are trying to re-supply your pantry.

Preserving Food

Your pantry should be augmented with fresh food. We recommend regionally-grown food, whether from your own garden, grocery store, farmers market, truck farm, or community-supported agriculture.

Get a copy of "*How to Grow More Vegetables*", by John Jeavons. This is an indispensable book for both beginning and experienced gardeners.

There are many food preservation methods available. Criteria for selection are flavor and safety.

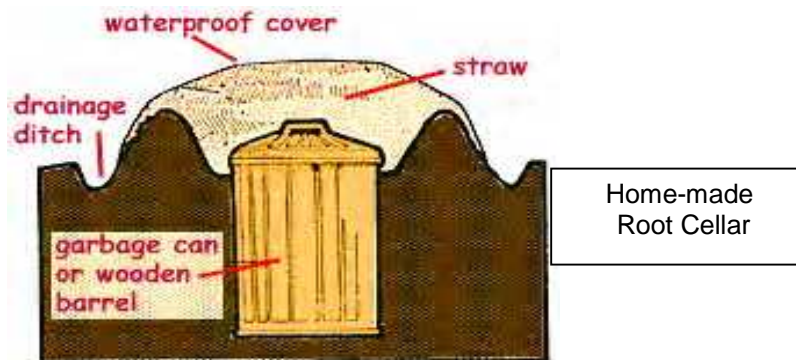
- **Root Cellar or other outdoor storage system:**

1. Advantages: non-electric; good for root crops, squash family, cabbage family and some fruits.
2. Disadvantages: requires space
3. To learn how to build a basement root cellar go to:

<http://www.motherearthnews.com/Green-Home-Building/2004-12-01/Build-a-Basement-Root-Cellar.aspx>

4. To learn more about small root cellars, go to:

<http://www.agf.gov.bc.ca/resmgmt/publist/Leaflets/FruitVeg/331-50.pdf>



- **Dehydration**

1. Advantages: Saves space, light weight, non-electric (if using a solar dryer).
2. Disadvantage: Needs additional water for reconstitution.
3. To learn how to build a solar dehydrator, go to: <http://www.i4at.org/surv/soldehyd.htm>



Dehydrator

- **Canning**

1. Advantages: variety - from vegetables to meat to complete meals. Some liquids can augment your water supply.
 2. Disadvantages: requires canning equipment. Get extra lids now.
 3. See your County Extension Service for additional information on food preservation. Some offices can test pressure cooker gauges.
 4. You **MUST** use a pressure canner for meats, vegetables, and most tomatoes. Also, a pressure canner must be used if one item in a blend would require pressure canning on its own. A classic and inexpensive how-to reference is the "*Ball Blue Book of Preserving*". See also freshpreserving.com (a Ball site) for illustrated, step-by-step instructions, including PDF downloads.
- There are additional food preservation methods, and detailed instruction on using them. **See this Important Resource:** "*Prudent Food Storage FAQ*," written, copyrighted and courtesy of Alan Hagan, available in the downloads section of this site.



Pressure Canner