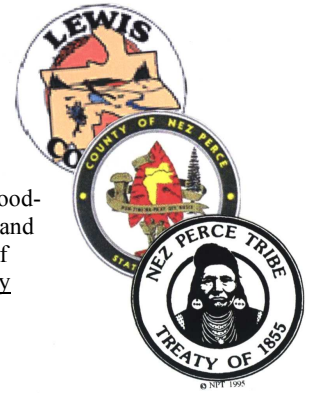
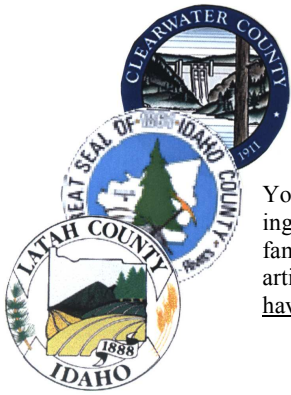


Get Pandemic Ready



Your Office of Emergency Management plans and prepares for disasters, ranging from localized flooding to worldwide events. Preparation includes local government, the private sector and individuals and families. Pandemic flu is a rapidly emerging threat affecting all of us. The purpose of this series of articles is to inform citizens of what they can do to protect themselves. We recommend each family have three months of food, water, medications, and other supplies on-hand.

Issue 7: Food - Where to Start

Department of Homeland Security, in Pandemic Influenza: Best Practices and Model Protocols (April 2007):

“The population may be directed to remain in their homes under self-quarantine for up to 90 days per wave of the outbreak to support social distancing practices.”

Figure out what your family needs to survive while staying home for up to 3 months.

Fundamental principles

1. What is food storage? It's your own personal insurance policy, which can't be canceled.
2. What kind of food? What you already eat. By doing this, you avoid adding dietary stress to an already stressful situation.
3. How do I avoid spoilage?
 - By rotating your supplies. 'Eat what you store' 'Store what you eat.' You are building your own pantry for daily use. A shelf-life guide from Kansas State University is at www.oznet.k-state.edu/humannutrition/hrap/storage/stochart.htm
 - Use containers that keep things dry and airtight. FREE food grade buckets with lids are often available from the bakery department of grocery stores. Just clean, label and date.
 - Temperature is important. The cooler the better, to extend shelf life.
4. How do I keep track of all this stuff? There are several ways to record what you buy, how much you buy, what you use and need to re-supply. A tablet works. Free food spreadsheets are on the internet.
5. How can I ever do this? Start now, but don't defeat yourself. Break it down into stages. Getting your pantry stocked for two weeks is a good initial goal. Simply write down what you eat over a two week period. Then, add a few extra items on each shopping trip. Look for specials and bulk purchases. Remember to add-in lunches for children that are normally at school, as well as infants/toddlers.

Once you've reached this goal, go for four weeks of food, then eight, and then twelve. In a few months, you will have a full pantry of your kind of food!

Preparing may seem overwhelming. Know that these feelings will diminish with each prepping action you take.

For more information, or to participate in local pandemic flu planning, contact your local Emergency Manager.

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