

I Can Do It

In the beginning of the Book of Mormon we learn of a family who suddenly picked up what they needed and left for the wilderness. Part of the family grumbled and complained the whole way, making the journey more difficult for everyone. The other part of the family found ways to deal with the challenges they faced. I doubt it was really fun for any of them. However, those who relied on the Lord did a lot better than those who didn't.

I have heard that the most important thing in a difficult situation is attitude. Our attitude can make or break us. This year's theme, "*I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.*" (Philippians 4:13), is a great place to start when we see something as hard, inconvenient, unappealing, or disagreeable to us. We can do what we need to do when we humble ourselves and turn to Christ.

Upcoming Event—Off-Grid Cooking

June 17, at the Fort Canyon Building, 11:am—3:00pm.

Anyone in the stake can participate by bringing your own sun oven and something to cook in it. There will also be instruction regarding a rocket stove and thermal cooking. It is sponsored by the Cove Ward.

Alternative Cooking

Suppose there was an earthquake and the power and gas were out. If you had a pound of dry beans how would you cook them?

Lesson from History

Twelve years ago I returned from a trip to Hong Kong. There I had seen a presentation at the library about Hong Kong history. One section of the presentation made a deep impression on me. It showed pictures of how Hong Kong looked during World War II. The landscape, usually a lush green jungle, was completely bare and void of any vegetation. After the Japanese attacked and destroyed the island, people had stripped it completely in an effort to have cooking fires. Trees and bushes went first. Then they burned what was left of homes and shelters. Dung was burned, and then anything that would create heat. There was even a picture of children trying just to find dry blades of grass and bits of cloth to cook something as small as a grasshopper. There were no trees or homes to shelter people from the hot sun or the rain, and they were all camped out in the open, barren hills that are Hong Kong. It was astounding to me that land could be so completely stripped in just weeks, and mostly for the want of cooking fuel. It is amazing what people will do when they are cold and hungry.

This experience caused me to think deeply. It is important to have food storage, but even better if you have an alternative way to cook that food and boil water that does not require a lot of fuel should the time ever come that there is no electricity. That time could come over night in the event of an earthquake or other disaster, and it could last several weeks or even months depending on how severe and widespread it is or what the political and social conditions are like at the time. Are you prepared with an alternative cooking method (besides an open fire that takes a lot of fuel)? What can you do to cook food without cutting down all your vegetation or sacrificing your home and clothing, becoming even more vulnerable to the elements?

Some Options

There are a lot of options for alternative cooking if you choose to search for them on line. Most knowledgeable people recommend that you have three different options. Here are some of the favorites of our stake preparedness committee:

1. Rocket Stove (can pair with thermal cooking)
2. Small Butane Stove and fuel reserves—paired with a thermal cooker of your choice
3. Sun Oven
4. Dutch Oven with stored briquettes
5. Wood-burning Stove *This one can be good for heat in the winter as well, but requires a good supply of wood

A method of thermal cooking is a great idea to reduce the amount of fuel or energy needed in either regular times or during a crisis. However it does require that you have another heating method in order to use it.

Some people plan to use a camp stove or BBQ grill. These are fine as long as you have fuel for them, but over time they require quite a bit of fuel, so you should have a backup as well.

All of these things have their advantages and disadvantages. They also have a learning curve, so it is wise to learn how to use the ones you have well before a crisis.

June and July—what great months for learning and practicing alternative cooking!

Things to Try

Buddy Burners—Few kids forget a good experience cooking over a “buddy burner.” Girl scouts and cub scouts alike have used these for many years. You need a large #10 can (about a gallon) and a tuna or chicken can. Prepare the tuna can as the burner by rolling corrugated cardboard (good quality US kind—often that from China contains plastics and burns with thick black smoke). YouTube has a lot of videos on Buddy Burners. I liked this one with fewer holes in the can.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c2U-8ZwtWCs>

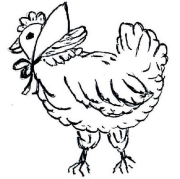
*Adult supervision is wise for this activity.

Indian Fry Bread—one of my favorite things to cook on a rocket stove. It is good for making Navajo Tacos or as a side to soup and stews (all great things to make with food storage).

1 cup all purpose flour
1 tsp baking powder
¼ tsp salt
⅓ cup milk

Knead well until dough comes together in a smooth ball and bowl is clean. Cover and let rest for 15 minutes. Cut in 2–4 pieces and form into balls. Pat flat or roll out to ¼–½". Fry in oil over medium-high heat (about ½" deep) until both sides are browned.

Notes from Red Hen



Dear Red,

I am so glad as a chicken that we don't have to cook our food. We just go around and eat what looks good. Last week the kids on our farm were roasting hot dogs and marshmallows in a big pot made for fires. That pot was hot. I can tell you now I don't like fires. One of the kids was waving a burning stick around with a burning marshmallow on it and the blob flew off and hit my tail feathers. They started to burn. The farmer's wife grabbed me and pushed me into a trough of cold water. Then I had white goo on my tail for a long time, and when I took a dust bath the dirt stuck to it. Then my coop mates picked at the mess. I have several fewer feathers in my tail now. What an ordeal it was! Next time they have a “cook out” as they call it I am going to hide until they are done.

Love,
Your Sister, Rosie