

Setting up a Food Storage Program - Fats & Oils

A most important part of the food storage program as far as the children are concerned. It is critical to store enough fats and / or oils so their diet will not be lacking in essential fats. It also extends your options for cooking, there is a world of difference between boiled rice and fried rice and provides extra calories for the colder times of the year.

Vegetable oil

This is available in 20 litre tins for bulk purchases, but unless you use a hell of a lot of oil it might be rancid before you got to the end of the drum. If the oil is packed off into smaller containers (say 2 litres) as soon as you get it the problem of rancidity caused by exposure of the oil to the air would be prevented. We used to buy the blended vegetable oil in 4 litre rectangular tins, it is a bit more expensive but the tins protect the oil and are easily storable. Pure olive oil has the longest shelf life but this presupposes that you like olive oil, it is quite expensive but we have found the health benefits outweigh the extra cost and now it is the main type of oil we store and use.

Shortening

This is pure vegetable oil which has been hydrogenated until it is a solid at room temperature , shortening is also called "cophera" (just think of chocolate crackles). Australians don't use it much but the Americans use it quite a bit in cooking, it can substitute for butter or margarine in biscuits or cakes. It is available from continental delicatessens in 700 gm sealed tins and has a long shelf life.

Tinned Ghee type unknown

Ghee

This is pure butterfat ie butter with all the water and emulsifiers removed, it is used in place of vegetable oil in Indian cooking. It has a flavour all its own and as such may take a bit of getting used to but it has a very long shelf life - ten years plus in the unopened tin . Once the tin is opened it will last about six months before slowly going rancid. Ghee is only used in cooking , not as a spread , it cannot be mixed with water and reconstituted into butter. Ghee is a pure fat so, unlike the original butter, it has a sharp melting point going from solid directly to liquid with no soft spreadable phase in between . Also when you finally do apply a bit to bread it tastes revolting , very fatty and unpleasant , but then I don't like bread and dripping either .

Ghee is available from Asian, Middle Eastern and Indian food shops in sealed tins ranging from 250 gm up to 2 Kg sizes , don't be fooled by the Arabic writing on the side of the tin it's all Aussie produce . There is also a 10 Kg pail but it is not so well sealed.

Tinned Butter type unknown

Butter and Cheese

Also in Asian food stores you will see tinned butter and cheese, produced for the export market. According to the manufacturers of this type of tinned butter only has a storage life of two years (the cheese has a shelf life of

12 months) and so is not suitable for long term storage but a spare tin or two can be handy in times of electrical failure. I have noticed that the Australian produced butter is getting more difficult to find and is being replaced by New Zealand tinned butter. A dehydrated "butter concentrate" was produced for the Queensland Butter Marketing Board but is no longer available although you do occasionally see small tubes of it in camping shops.

Tinned Cheese

Image not found or type unknown