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Survival Food Series: What To Eat When There Is No Food

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What will you do if your family is starving and there is no food to be found? This fear is always in the back of our minds. The answer lies in nature. Nature has all that is needed to survive. Even if wild game, berries, and plants cannot be found, there are still edible choices to be found.

Tree Bark

There are many choices of tree bark that can be eaten. In fact, the Native Americans used certain tree barks as dietary supplements. Some of the most popular edible choices would be aspen, birch, willow, maple, and pine trees which are very common in cities and forests alike. In an [article](#) ^[1] at www.survivaltopics.com, "the Eastern White Pine tree is high in vitamin C. Consuming pine needles or brewing pine needle tea is a great preventative and cure for scurvy caused by lack of vitamin C in the diet." Subsequently, gathering pine cones and roasting them over the fire, will draw out the seeds inside the cones which can be eaten. These are very tasty and again rich in Vitamins and nutrients. You can also use the cooked seeds to grind into meal for flours.

In an [article](#) ^[2] from www.essortment.com, other parts of the tree offer nutrition as well. The oak trees fruit (the acorn), has been used by American Indians for soup and pudding. The nutmeat inside should taste slightly bitter or even sweet. If the taste is unpleasantly bitter you can remove the taste by roasting. If it is so bitter you can't stand it, you will have to leach out the tannic acid. This is a long complicated process in which you use fresh water for soaking at least overnight. Also, the oak leaves (if pests are not on it) are edible raw. The article also discusses that the maple trees will provide year around food guaranteed. The seeds are edible raw or roasted and can be pounded into flour. The sap can be obtained in early spring by drilling a hole in the tree. This thin sweet sap is filled with nutrients and is moisture giving.

For the choicest strips of bark, be sure to go for the nutritious, tender inner layer known as the cambium. (Eating the outer bark would be no more pleasant than chomping into your bookshelf.) If some resin or gum oozes out as you pry off the main course, be sure to lap it up for quick energy.

Cooking Methods:

- Raw. Shred finely and chew thoroughly.
- Slice it into strips and boil it to make a rustic pasta. Top with sap, dandelion greens, or insect parts (see entry #2). Alternatively, you can add the noodles to a stew.
- Dry and grind into flour. The ground bark is pretty versatile and can be mixed with water into a breakfast gruel, baked into bread, added to soup for extra body, or even guzzled straight like Pixy Stix.

[Source – \[www.mentalflossblog.com\]\(http://www.mentalflossblog.com\)](#) ^[3]

Insects

Our earliest ancestors dined on insects. And, for some countries, it is considered a delicacy. There are suggestions that our earliest [ancestor's diet](#) ^[4] were mainly from eating insects.

The reason why humans evolved and survived was because of their limitless diet and willingness to eat anything. And as unappealing as the thought of eating insects are, they are a huge source of protein and a great food for survival.

According to the [Special Forces Survival Guide](#) ^[5]:

- Attract insects at night with a light.
- Find crawling insects under stones.
- Termites, locusts and the larvae of ants make good eating. Brush them from their undersides of stones and place them into a container of water. The larvae will float to the top.

In an article from mental floss, it was suggested:

- Avoid brightly colored bugs which have a tendency to be poisonous.
- Always remove any shells, wings or other textural offenses.
- Cook the insects before eating, to kill off parasites.

Here are a few of the more traditional cooking methods:

Crickets and grasshoppers: First, pluck off the barbed legs, because they can chafe your digestive tract. Then, roast the body for a snack that's both crunchy and nutritious.

Ants: Boil for 6 minutes to neutralize the formic acid of the stingers. After that, inhale them by the handful.

Caterpillars: They can give you a mouthful of tiny hairs, like licking a kiwi, so bite off the heads and then squeeze the insides into a pot. Boil and serve warm.

Worms: The dirt from the insides must be removed before they can be eaten. This can be done by starving them for one day, or squeezing out the dirt by hand.

[Source – www.mentalflossblog.com](#) ^[3]

It is advised to steer clear of centipedes, scorpions and caterpillars.

Grass

Chewing on grass is a great way to get some added nutrients into a starving body. Do not eat the grass. Just chew on it to get the juices out and spit it out.

Leather

Some of the early colonists of America survived solely by eating their leather clothing. Food is food, and when it is not available, anything is up for being eaten.

How To Prepare:

- Before cooking, rinse and dice the (preferably undyed) leather.
- Tenderize the pieces of leather by pounding it between stones.
- Boil in water until tender to make a soup.
- Add seasonings such as dried worms and nettles. (optional)
- Leather can also be roasted to make chips.

[Source – www.mentalflossblog.com](#) ^[3]

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[Survival Food Series: 25 Survival Seeds You Need For Your Garden](#) ^[6]

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[2] article: http://www.essortment.com/all/survivalfoods_rcnq.htm

[3] Source – www.mentalflossblog.com:

<http://www.mentalfloss.com/blogs/archives/41725>

[4] ancestor's diet : <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Entomophagy>

[5] Special Forces Survival Guide: http://www.amazon.com/Special-Forces-Survival-Guide-Wilderness/dp/1569756724/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&s=books&qid=1259474005&sr=8-1

[6] Survival Food Series: 25 Survival Seeds You Need For Your Garden:

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