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Week 31 of 52: Inventory Management

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Category: 52 Weeks to Preparedness

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Keeping your preps organized can be very challenging to say the least. Most of us do not have ideal storage areas and are putting our preparedness and food supplies in every free nook and cranny that is available to us. If you're not careful, this can lead to an unorganized mess. However, in order to know how much you have and how much more you need, you must be able to account for it. The reality of this situation is if you are ever truly in an emergency, you want these preparedness items and equipment to be accessible and easy to find when you need it the most.

There is no clear cut way to store preparedness supplies. Some store their like preparedness items in groups (i.e. stored foods, tools, equipment, tack and household items), while others store them according to need (baking needs, short-term food supply, long-term supply, etc.) Whichever way you choose to organize, ensure that the area chosen is free from natural elements and insects. This also helps reduce other [pest issues](#) ^[1]. The best way to keep track of your preps is with a master inventory list. Here are some suggestions for organization and for creating a Master List.

Organizing the Storage Area:

- Take out all your preparedness items from the area they are being stored in.
- Thoroughly clean the area you are storing your preparedness items and food.
- Ensure that the area you are choosing to store your food is free of the [enemies](#) ^[2] (natural elements and insects).
- Label each container, bucket, tub or package with it's contents, pack date/year and any necessary instructions.
- Assign locations in storage area helps to keep items more organized (Med. Supplies, Baking, Sanitation, Breakfast, Canned Goods, etc.).
- Grouping items that are used together can be convenient. For example, keep baking needs such as flour, sugar, baking soda, salt, etc. next to one another for easy access.
- Place goods with the longest expiration date in the back and work forward to the closest expiration date.
- Systematically rotate and organize your storage.
- Food storage inventory should be checked every 6 months to make sure that food items are properly rotated and are used within their expiration date.

Creating a Master List:

- Use Excel or a spreadsheet software program to better organize and categorize your preps.
- List everything! Nothing should be exempt from your inventory list.
- Add the location of where the prep items are stored.
- Alphabetizing the list and including the location of where it is stored can be helpful when you're in a pinch.
- Store your Master List in your Emergency Binder.

As you have found in the last 30 weeks, preparedness involves acquiring a lot of gear, tools and food. Knowing what you have, how much you have and where to find it is imperative in keeping track of your preparedness supplies.

To learn more tips for organizing your emergency preps, [click here](#) ^[3].

To find out how to better inventory your preparedness supplies, [click here](#) ^[4].

Action Items:

1. Take all of your preparedness items out of the storage area and thoroughly clean the area.
2. Organize your preparedness supplies.
3. Develop a master list of your inventory supplies.
4. Store the master list in your [Emergency Binder](#) ^[5].

Preps to Buy:

- Three Ring Binder (the larger the better)
- Dividers
- Printer Paper
- Highlighter Pen (optional)
- Printed Out Information
- Pens
- Labels
- Plastic containers or bins or under bed storage containers
- Shelving units

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URLs in this post:

[1] pest issues: http://readynutrition.com/resources/rat-proofing-your-food-storage-pantry-in-5-easy-steps_26102011/

[2] enemies: http://readynutrition.com/resources/meet-your-emergency-foods-worst-enemies_06042011/

[3] click here: http://readynutrition.com/resources/6simple-techniques-to-organize-your-preps_22032010/

[4] click here: http://readynutrition.com/resources/inventory-management-for-survival-supplies_15022010/

[5] Emergency Binder: http://readynutrition.com/resources/good-manuals-every-family-should-have-one_22102009/

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