NEITHERCORP PRESS

SURVIVE ANYTHING! Chapter 2: Food Crisis

27 Comments »

By Giordano Bruno

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Food production is one of the most essential concerns of any society. Without direct availability and ease of consumption, without the consistent flow of agricultural goods, every nation existing today (except the most primitive) would immediately find its infrastructure crumbling and its people in a furious panic. It's strange to me, then, that long term independent food planning is the one concern that many Americans seem to take most for granted. Firearms and ammo, camping gear and bug-out-bags, MRE's, beans, and rice; these are the easiest part of your survival foundation. The hard part is not storage of goods, but devising a solid and practical plan for sustainability in the long term. This starts with the capacity to support your own agriculture regardless of how long the grid is down, even if it is down indefinitely.

Understandably, there will be some people who do not have enough land to implement many of these strategies. They should still know the fundamentals and be ready to apply them at a retreat location or within a community should the opportunity arise.

In the first chapter of our 'Survive Anything' series, we covered all the consequences of a nuclear attack on American soil, and how to not only make it out alive, but even thrive after such an event:

http://neithercorp.us/npress/?p=273

The reason Neithercorp covered survival tactics for a nuclear strike first was simple; we wanted to make it clear that the title of this series is not an exaggeration. Truly, ANYTHING is survivable with the right knowledge and preparation. Those who promote a 'doomer' view of economic collapse or global war are on average people who have simply given up before the struggle has even started. Therefore, their opinions on survival are empty, and barely worth the effort to ignore. Life goes on after collapse, as it always has since the beginning of organized civilization. It is YOU who decides whether or not you will be a part of that life. It is you who decides your chances of

success.

With that success in mind, let's dive into the most important aspects of food survival in a country where infrastructure has ceased to function…

Emaciated Grocery Chains

Last winter, I witnessed perhaps the most incredible snow storm I have ever seen in my life. A low pressure system punished the Northeast with downpour after downpour, stopping most road travel and cutting power to millions for at least a week. Being that the average family has only a week's worth of food or less in their pantry, you can imagine the chaos that unfolded. Those grocery stores with backup power were flooded with customers buying armloads of batteries, water, ice chests, and, of course, foods that don't require refrigeration. Now, what I want you to imagine, is what would have happened if no grocery stores had been open that week. What would have happened if they had never reopened? How many people would have been in the very real position of starving to death? From what I observed that winter…far too many…

The problem of storage and backstock is widespread in the U.S. and the culprit is actually one which we have been trained to admire; efficiency. It is because of the over-application of efficiency in grocery models and in the freight sector that most outlets carry little to no backstock in goods. Instead, they order goods as quickly as they sell out, refilling shelves on a product by product basis. This means that in most grocers, what you see on the shelf, is all that they have. The speed of trucking deliveries makes this business model possible, but its operation suffers from a seriously fatal flaw…

Grocery stores may seem like a bounty of goods at first glance, but if freight shipments shut down, or even slowed, those aisles would empty within the span of a few days. Many households in America operate on the same faulty "efficiency". They rely on the weekly trip to the grocer to maintain the pantry while also attempting to save money by reducing backstock. It's a frayed rope holding up too much weight, a completely inflexible system that cannot withstand any deviation from the set routine. One unexpected disaster could render the entire food and agriculture distribution network immobile.

Many grocery chains also function on a line of credit from banks while operating at a loss. Profits are poured directly into the liabilities the companies incur from loans and then more money is

borrowed to continue ordering goods. Some stores in the chain (flagship stores) usually bring in enough money to cover the red ink of the other branches, however, what if banks were to cut off credit completely to a grocery chain? Or maybe ALL grocery chains? The cycle of debt, to sales, to profit, to debt, becomes disrupted. Any stores that rely solely on credit to stay open for business would immediately lose the ability to bring in new stock. Again, we are faced with empty shelves in less than a week.

This scenario is entirely possible in the U.S. today, especially in the event that big banks institute capital retention in order to protect themselves from a further collapse of investment markets. Banks have already restricted loans to consumers down to the bare minimum. A restriction of loans to the business sector in the near future is not that far fetched.

Food In A World Without Walmart

The above section illustrates just a few of the weaknesses in U.S. food distribution. I haven't included the catastrophe inherent in a hyperinflationary situation because I think the consequences of that are self evident. The point is, if you are not standing on solid ground in terms of not just food storage, but a plan for sustainability, then you and your family are in serious danger. This is not a game, and it is not to be taken lightly. It is not something to be shrugged off and postponed for some undefined "later date". If you have not already started the process of prepping for economic downturn or collapse, then you need to start today.

Buying food with a long term storage capacity is half the battle, and I recommend purchasing at minimum a year's supply of these goods totaling at least 2000-2500 calories a day per person. Do not forget to include salts, sugars, and ample fats, without which, your body cannot function. Being that we have covered food storage in great detail in previous articles, let's examine some practical methods for food production after your stores run out.

Squarefoot Gardening: One of the most productive styles of gardening I have ever seen is devised by Mel Bartholomew, a civil engineer who was frustrated with the immense waste involved in single row gardening. The process involves building easy to make above ground 4 foot by 4 foot soil boxes and then dividing those boxes into grids. These grids retain water and nutrients to a much greater capacity than traditional yard gardens, resulting in up to 80% less space required, 90% less water use, and 95% less seed to grow the same amount of vegetables. Fertilizer is not

necessary and existing soil can be easily used. I would not set up a survival garden any other way.

There is one downside to squarefoot gardening, however, and it is one of visibility. If you are in a situation which calls for discreet growing of crops, then the highly visible soil boxes and neat rows will stand out like a sore thumb and alert others to your presence. If you feel secure in the defense of your homestead or retreat, though, then garden visibility is irrelevant and Bartholomew's strategy is the best by far. Read his book, or check out his website here:

http://www.squarefootgardening.com/

Non-Hybrid Seeds: Non-hybrid heirloom seeds are basically the seeds nature intended to be planted. These are the only seeds you should ever consider using for your survival garden for numerous reasons. Genetically modified seeds are unreliable, give you a low production count of vegetables, and very few quality seeds can be taken from the plants for the next season. Not to mention, there is no telling what has been infused into the DNA of GMO's. A company in California called Ventria Bioscience has created a form of rice which contains HUMAN DNA, and this rice has been approved by the U.S. Department of Agriculture! The reason? Ventria claims it can be used to treat diarrhea in children, of all things…

I don't know what the direct health effects are of people consuming food made out of people, and I would rather not find out. I never thought I would see the day when the movie 'Soylent Green' was treated less like fiction and more like a documentary…

Natural Pest Control: I hate to say it, but in the event of a total collapse, it may be best to keep pesticides in stock. The first few years of a grid down scenario will likely be brutal, and if you are extremely dependent on your garden crops to keep your family fed, then you don't want to take any chances on vermin decimating your plants. That said, there will probably come a point when your pesticides will run out, and natural methods will be necessary.

Some proven tactics of organic pest control include…

Lady Bugs (ladybugs eat pest insects and are incredibly beneficial to any garden)

Organic Pesticide (often contains garlic, chilli pepper or powder, vegetable oil, and water)

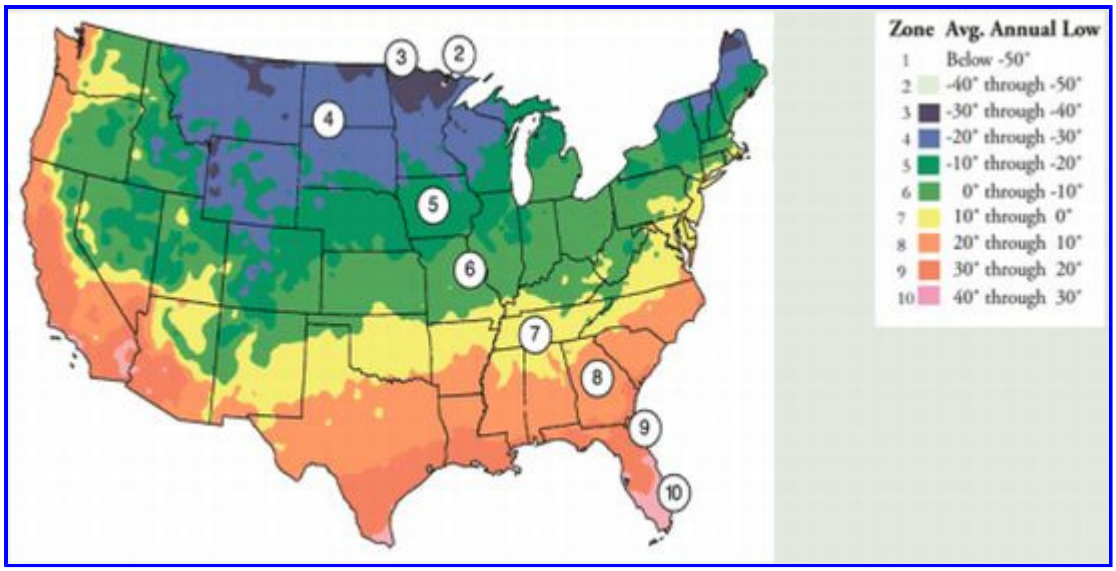
Repellent Plants (some plants naturally repel pests, like garlic, tobacco, or rhubarb. Some hot peppers are so acidic that they act as an anti-bug defense. Any peppers that contain large amounts of Capsaicin should be included in your garden plan)

Vinegar (can be used as an effective weed killer)

Cornmeal (can be applied to garden soil or turned into a juice and sprayed on crops. Cornmeal attracts fungi from the Trichoderma family, a good fungus which kills pest funguses)

Plant Daisies Around Fruit Trees (daisies attract a certain kind of wasp which is the natural predator of the bagworm, a worm that is notorious for killing crop trees. This wasp also kills locusts, an added bonus)

Herbs (strong smelling herbs repel many animals, including deer, that would attempt to feed on your veggies. Of course, you might like the idea of attracting deer to your property too…)



Grow For Your Region: The region in which you live will greatly affect the types of crops that grow well. Listed below are the various regions of the U.S. along with the vegetables that thrive best in them…

Northeast – Tomatoes, sweet peppers, snap beans, garlic, potato, bulb onion, cabbage, broccoli, mustard, spinach, eggplant, sweet corn, cucumber, radish, snow pea, asparagus

Southeast – Sweet pepper, garlic, hot pepper, broccoli, summer squash, collards, watermelon, cantaloupe, okra, scallion, lima bean, pole bean, sweet potato, potato, radish

Midwest – Corn, onion, lettuce, tomato, garlic, squash, pumpkin, turnips, beets, broccoli, cucumber, hot pepper, carrot

Central Rockies – Carrot, spinach, tomato, bush snap peas, potato, radish, fava beans, beets, shallots, leek, scallion

Northwest – Snow pea, pole bean, potato, garlic, pumpkin, squash, hot pepper, scallion, lettuce, onion, carrot

Southwest – Tomato, carrot, summer squash, bulb onion, snow pea, sweet pepper, eggplant, hot pepper, beet radish, sweet potato, southern pea, scallion

Keep in mind that these are not the only crops you can grow in your region, just some of the top producers. Many vegetables will grow almost anywhere in the U.S.

Most Nutritious Plants: The plants and vegetables with the highest nutritional content of vitamins and minerals are: Sunflower seeds, soybeans, almonds, leaf amaranth, broccoli, navy beans, collards, potatoes, dandelions (yes, the weed), lima beans, northern beans, kidney beans, okra, spinach, kale, butternut squash, sweet potato, peanuts, avocados, and watermelon (believe it or not).

Focus On Grains: Grasses that produce grains are hearty and grow almost everywhere in the U.S. Grains are the mainstay of our diets because they are so abundant and because they can be stored for years, even decades if needed. Families and communities hoping to restore food production after a breakdown in infrastructure will need personal gardens, but also reasonably sized tracks of land set aside for wheat, rice, barley, oats, etc.

Wheat is one of the few plants that can grow during the winter, but only if nitrogen content in the

soil is adequate. Growing legumes in a garden patch can add large amounts of nitrogen, after which, wheat plants can be rotated in. Wheat also needs loose soil to grow well, and compacted soil can ruin a crop. The squarefoot method can be used just as easily for wheat as with regular garden vegetables and could help avoid the soil compaction problem, along with certain space issues.

'Hard Wheat' is the best type to plant if you live in a dry temperate climate with cold winters. 'Soft Wheat' is better for climates with more moisture and mild winters. After harvest, your wheat kernels should be stored in a cool dry place (40-60 F is optimal) and sealed in containers that prevent oxygen exposure.

Grains are the single most important food item for the survivalist because of their longevity. Civilizations are built and rebuilt on grains and grain storage. The average adult requires around 275 pounds of wheat a year, and the average child requires around 175 pounds a year. A well maintained acre of plants will produce around 40 bushels or more of wheat. A bushel contains around 60 pounds of wheat, meaning a standard acre could yield around 2400 pounds of grain; more than enough for two families every year. If the squarfoot method is applied, the yield could be significantly higher and the space could be reduced tenfold. Extra grain can be easily packed away, saving you in the event of a bad crop or other unforeseen problems. Grains combined with beans also make a complete protein in the event that your diet is low on meat. The advantages of grain production for survival are endless.

Indoor Growing And Hydroponics: I realize the word "hydroponics" is synonymous with wacky weed, Maui Wowie, and that shy neighbor in the aviator shades that lives on the corner lot of your block. Of course, its none of my business what that guy is growing in his basement, nor is it the government's, but before you go out to order a subscription of 'High Times', let me assure you that my primary reason for bringing up hydroponics is one of survival, and not "mind expansion".

Hydroponics is simply a method for growing plants using electric lights that simulate the rays of the sun, and this includes vegetables. There are many benefits to growing your food indoors.

If you are in a survival situation which offers minimal protection and greater danger from looters or

others, you may want to consider the hydroponic option. This method would be a considerable edge for those who have chosen to stay within a city or suburban landscape with less open land and more people in tighter quarters. A hydroponic garden in your home or apartment might show up on infrared surveillance, but otherwise, no one would be the wiser to your food supply.

Hydroponic plants grow 30% to 50% faster than outdoor plants and their vegetable yields are often much higher. Some hydroponic systems don't even require soil for growing! 'Active Systems' use a pump to supply nutrients to your plants while 'Passive Systems' use a wick to absorb nutrient solutions and pass them on to the roots of your crop. You can build your own hydroponic system using guides available on the web, or you can purchase pre-made systems. Pre-made systems with special lights are likely to run you around $1000, though deal hunters may be able to put something together much cheaper.

The downside to hydroponic growing is that you are paying for the light that you would normally get for free from the sun. Not to mention, in a grid down scenario, you lose your light source completely (we will cover strategies for survival electricity in the next installment of this series). But, if you have the ability to produce your own electricity, then indoor growing may be a godsend. Keep in mind that with hydroponics, food growing can be done year around, even in winter. Pests are much easier to control. And, your crops are also much safer from a threat I see rising to the forefront in the near future; GMO pollen. GMO pollen has the ability to "infect" healthy non-hybrid plants and mutate their seedlings. What would happen if your acre of veggies was suddenly hit with a blast of GMO pollens from breeds that use engineered terminator seeds? Say goodbye to next year's crop, unless you have indoor gardens and extra seeds to back you up…

Sprouting: One easy way to get nutritious greens any time of year without special growing lights or fancy equipment is to sprout beans. All you need is a wide container with small holes in the bottom, and any number of sprouting beans or seeds. These include; lentils, garbanzo, mung, adzuki, pea, peanut, alfalfa, barley, pinto, and others.

The beans are spread in a thin layer across the bottom of the container and sprayed lightly with water daily. Some indirect sunlight is recommended. After around 3 to 5 days, they will begin to sprout, producing healthy greens even in the dead of winter.

The Omnivore's Advantage

Vegetarianism seems like a spartan way of dieting, but really, vegetarians have a difficult if not impossible time when it comes to survival environments. Vegetarianism is a luxury, one that you cannot afford if you hope to get through a grid down event. The key to survival is flexibility and adaptability. Forgoing a meal of meat is not an option if you wish to avoid starving.

While killing and dismembering Bambi for your stew pot is not the most pleasant of exercises for many, its something all of us might have to get used to very soon. Traditional hunting, though, is not the most practical way of obtaining meat during a collapse, and counting on hunting alone could very well end in empty plates for you and your family on a regular basis. Here are some strategies for making sure that never happens…

Raising Chickens: Chickens are some of the easiest livestock to raise. They require little space. If allowed to roam the yard they practically feed themselves, they lay eggs which are a fantastic source of protein, and, when they stop laying, they can be eaten.

One problem to watch out for with chickens is 'fowl cholera'. Symptoms include greenish yellow diarrhea, difficulty breathing, swollen joints, darkened wattles. Infected birds die quickly and there is no treatment. Destroy all infected birds, even those that survive (they become carriers and infect new birds immediately). Other diseases and sicknesses usually require some care and warm shelter, while the bird's immune system takes care of the rest.

Raising Rabbits: Rabbits are another very easy to raise meat source, though they cannot be allowed to roam like chickens and dry warm cages are necessary. As we all know, rabbits breed like there's no tomorrow, so you will have a never-ending supply of new stock. Rabbit food is relatively inexpensive to store, though veggies from your garden often work just as well. In fact, planting a couple quick producing crops just for your rabbits may be an effective feed source. Rabbits also need clean water regularly, because they dehydrate easily.

Bring The Game To You: Running around the forest with your scoped bolt action may not be the cleverest way to put meat on the table during a collapse, unless you have a lot of well armed buddies to keep watch over you while you lounge in your tree hide for half the day. There is too much wasted time and too many risks involved. During a societal breakdown, sometimes you have to work smarter, not harder.

Bringing the game to you is not so difficult as long as you know what they like. Leaving salt licks and corn on the perimeter of your land will bring deer, and in some places wild pig. Wild flower and clover patches attract rabbits which can then be snared. Wild turkeys like crabapples, beechnuts, and acorns during winter, and clover during spring.

Another more expensive option is to build a small artificial pond on your land. Animals for miles around will congregate there to drink, especially if there are no other streams or lakes nearby.

Don't Be A Liability

Preparation is not just about you, it is about all the people you save by not becoming part of the problem. The more Americans prep, the less Americans starve in the midst of calamity. Fewer empty stomachs means less fearful minds and less panic when the other shoe drops. In this sense, survival preparation is not a hobby, or a mode of self interest, it is a duty. Frankly, if we care at all about the continuity of our ideals, our belief in freedom and independence, then we should also feel obligated to become more self-sufficient. If the economy were to slip into oblivion tomorrow, would you be a pillar of strength, or just another frantic helpless man-child waiting desperately for a handout from the nearest criminal bureaucracy? Would you be a strong-point in the protection of liberty, or a weak link holding the rest of us back?

The strength of one can have reverberations in the lives of thousands. Preparation makes us strong. Adaptability and knowledge makes us unafraid. Training and experience makes us successful. These are the principles upon which America was founded, and these are the principles which will allow America to live on.

You can contact Giordano Bruno at: giordano@neithercorp.us

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27 Comments on “SURVIVE ANYTHING! Chapter 2: Food Crisis”

1 *uncooperative said at 5:04 am on November 29th, 2010:*

I started a small garden this summer, growing tomatos, peppers etc.

Initially I wanted to learn gardening as preparation for hard times, but I happily discovered that gardening is fun. It’s very sastisfying and even joyous to eat the things you grow. My first effort was reading a couple of books and planting a 10×10 foot plot. However, since I enjoyed it so much, I’m going to increase the size of the plot and the variety of plants.

2 *DaveyBoy said at 7:19 am on November 29th, 2010:*

Hooray, a new article. Thanks Gio, hope you had a very happy Thanksgiving!

3 *neo said at 8:48 am on November 29th, 2010:*

Super Article once again on a very pertinent subject. I have been giving a lot of thought lately about survival gardens and if it is possible to grow vegetables quicker. I have discovered that the sound of Crickets causes the plant stoma to open up to ostensibly accept food more readily. Another hot topic would be micro aquaculture. People are growing catfish and tilapia in their basements in small containers such as cattle water tanks.

4 *CM Dutch said at 10:14 am on November 29th, 2010:*

Rye is another grain that should be considered. While not as high in protein, it will grow in poorer, colder soils. If you have the space and fertilizer – Corn.

Forget about wild game as a source of protein. It will not be here a year after the shtf. At the turn of the last century, most of your big game was gone. The human population today is larger. I hunt and big game after opening weekend is hard to come by. After a month of everybody looking, it will be gone! Gill nets and fish traps will give a high yield of animal protein with out much input.

Might also look into safely converting human manure into fertilizer.
For long time survival, thinking outside of the box will be needed. Not reinventing the wheel, but how it is done now in some of the 3rd world countries.

 5 *xXx said at 1:30 pm on November 29th, 2010:*

Actually, Hydroponics is growing without soil, not without natural light. If done within the confines of a greenhouse most, if not all, of the artificial lighting requirements can be eliminated. Aquaponics is combining the growing of plants without soil, with growing fish (Aquaculture) to add nutrients to the water. And can be a great way to eliminate the need in Hydroponics for artificial nutrients to be added to the water.

Great article overall. I hope that it spurs more to start or shore up their food storage.

 6 *FallenTree said at 2:08 pm on November 29th, 2010:*

Che' could not start the revolution in S.America cause the people were so starved that they didn't have the time to watch their government.

So, could this be what our government is now doing to Americans? Hyperinflation will hit soon with the printing of trilions of dollars. Residing overseas, I've seen the empty shelves & having to pay $5 for 1 Coke.

For me, I'm buying all the canned food I can at each payday since the expiration dates are now 2013.

So, I buy a can of beans today for $1 & in 2013 the same can is $3. I've saved $2 & didn't have to pay capital gains. It may be the best solution for most Americans.

 7 *SaminPA said at 4:02 pm on November 29th, 2010:*

I recommend building your gardening library now while you can. There are some excellent books on survival gardens, even ones fit for cold climates. You may not be able to get these after the SHTF scenarios unfold. Collect all the containers you can on the cheap now and store them somewhere. Square foot gardening is a great idea, but even if you live in an apartment you'd be surprised how much can be grown in pots, in window boxes and on your deck.

 8 *Modern Survival Blog said at 4:34 pm on November 29th, 2010:*

I applaud your article. Nice work.

I agree wholeheartedly, especially regarding the "just in time" supply chains that exist today, in the name of efficiency!

Unfortunately, I believe that most people really have no idea how delicate the distribution system is, and how it will only take a matter of days to empty the shelves.

Most people in the developed world have grown up and lived their lives with the underlying assurance (assumption) that food will always magically appear on the grocery store shelves.

In today's uncertain world, we live right on the razor edge of a civilized society. Given a major disruption, disaster awaits the unprepared.


9 *gibby62 said at 4:46 pm on November 29th, 2010:*

Checking out books on edible plants in your location is worthwhile. You'll want to avoid those growing near the road due to contamination issues, but letting your grass grow and go to seed can be a source of nutrition. Also, plant edible landscaping. Two for the price and effort of one. With a little forethought and planning, you will be amazed at the bounty tht surrounds you!!


10 *GardenSERF said at 5:33 pm on November 29th, 2010:*

I liked the section on square foot gardening. This could be done easily throughout suburbia.


11 *Gene Bray said at 7:21 pm on November 29th, 2010:*

Thanks for the information and I am looking forward to more. I spent some time with a two term state legislator at an Ag symposium two years ago. I asked him what types of contingency plans his state had if a catastophic event shut down our grid and food or other resources were cut off from normal transportation means. His reply was shocking to me. He said that there was none. Even after alot of questioning on my part he remained aloof that there was no need for such plans by government. So I guess we should take the information in this article and others like it to heart. We will probably need to use it some day soon. I might make another observation. The sixth chapter of Revelation makes a statement that wheat and barley will be in short supply and oil (probably olive) and wine were to be left alone. Wheat and barley are annuals and are currently the target of corp/gov. manipulation and control whereas oil and wine (olive trees and grapevines) are perennials. Just something to think about.


12 *Some guy said at 7:26 pm on November 29th, 2010:*

Wheat sprouts nicely too, and is very nutritious that way.

Friendly Aquaponics, Inc. has come up with a very economically viable and easy to maintain aquaponic setup, where a LOW density fish population provides nutrients for your veggie operation. Read their FAQ about how aquaponics can be done with less fish and be more productive.

They teach a course in Hawaii, but you can also get their materials online. I haven't bought it and tried it yet; I'm waiting to move first. But I'm definitely going to give it a go, building it inside a greenhouse.


13 *giordano said at 7:38 pm on November 29th, 2010:*

xXx,

There are also growing systems that use lights that simulate the ultraviolet rays that plants need to grow. These systems are better for basement projects where no sun is available.


14 *FallenTree said at 10:17 pm on November 29th, 2010:*

Good Lord!! It was the bread riots in France that started their revolution. Could this happen in America? It only took tea tax to do it last time.

Need to read a new book out about Americans taking a stand against tyranny cause the food crisis is being caused by federal intervention in the agriculture world.

http://www.booksbyoliver.com

Where is the outrage when our families don't have food. Literally, how do we feed our children? It's a thriller book & I recommend it cause history may be calling us to our true destiny in life.

 15 *RNelson said at 10:42 pm on November 29th, 2010:*

Hello –

A good read, thank you, & good comments; — been there, done that w/ all the above …

as regards ponds, however: I made an experimental water catchment w/ pond liner in a mountain wash in the Mojave this year and was overall disappointed w/ yields. Also, I checked it last month, and found that a solitary bee had chewed a hole and made a nest underneath…

I recommend getting educated re: ElectroCulture (& numerous other agrow methods, e.g., Air Wells) @
http://www.rexresearch.com

 16 *PB said at 11:26 pm on November 29th, 2010:*

"In 1970, Henry Kissinger made a chilling comment that explains a lot about what's happening now – "Control oil and you control nations; control food and you control the people."
Pretty revealing web site -
http://www.houseofpaine.org/blog/?p=773

Be sure when growing Heirloom or non-hybrid seed to know what grows in your area. And learn to save the best of the crop for seed for planting the next year (and generations to come).

These seeds can be saved, dried, then kept in a a marked envelope (not plastic as the seed is alive and needs to breath)with the type of crop and the date it was harvested. Keep them in a cool place.

Get the kids involved in growing their own food of what they like to eat.

Be sure to purchase seed that will grow in your area. Know your USDA planting zone. This tells us the lowest temperature reached for your growing location. Also know your first (in fall/winter time frame) and last frost dates (usually around late spring) and what to do for frost protection o protect your crops. It's important to know what grows and what does not grow in your location.

Where I live the weather is too cold for growing avocados and citrus and most tender plants even with a greenhouse. That's why my Tangelo tree is now sitting in my living with 5 Tangelos on it because the outside nighttime temp is now down to about 10 degrees!!!

Be sure to know what are the cold weather seeds that can be planted in late summer and fall

for winter eating and what are the warm season seeds to plant in spring for late spring to summer eating. If you plan to grow zucchini, corn, melons or tomatoes in fall…they will not grow as these are warm season crops.

If you grow lettuces in summer they will bolt (grow quickly and flower without producing lettuces) as they like the cold weather just as much as broccoli, carrots, and the rest of the Brassica family.

Be sure to add lots of organic soil amendments like barnyard manure (not dog or cat), kitchen waste (not bones, dairy or meat products).

Build up good soil long before planting. If you plant in spring…fall is the time to build up the soil for spring planting. Add mulch to cover what you add to the soil and keep it =,oist to keep the earthworms and soil bacteria alive. If the soil dries out the good insects die off instead of feeding the soil and breaking down all the organic materials you add.

The following are excellent places, online to purchase seed and great planting information.

Being a Master Gardener and teacher of Organic growing methods…these are important things to know.

http://rareseeds.com/

http://www.botanicalinterests.com/store/index_index.php

http://www.fedcoseeds.com/

Then again you may have to contend with critters like deer, rabbits, squirrels, gophers. But these can be worked around by fencing themm out from above, below and around the sides with good wire, thin mesh fencing.

17 *Ron Brown said at 12:10 am on November 30th, 2010:*

Super article! Some thoughts . . .
1. The best single book I know of on gardening is “The New Seed-Starters Handbook” by Nancy Bubel.
2. You can’t just read about gardening, you must do it. Like sex, reading about it and doing it are quite different.
3. Fish are a very efficient source of protein. They are cold-blooded, meaning they don’t waste a lot of calories keeping their bodies warm.
4. Knowing how to store food is as important as knowing how to grow it. In season, everybody has tomatoes. Six months later, nobody. Get some canning jars, lids, pressure cooker. Practice. To can, all you need is a source of heat. A campfire will do if necessary.

18 *John said at 12:12 am on November 30th, 2010:*

Good points in the article and comments. Following a strategy of survival gardening and having long term storage food is the wisest course of action.
http://www.gardeningandfoodstorage.com

19 *marvin said at 12:47 am on November 30th, 2010:*

FYI, the living heads of lettuce (still have roots) you buy in the grocery stores can continue to grow in your garden or on your window sill. I did that after taking all the leaves off, leaving 2 little nubby leaves on it. It grew well in the garden, and I harvested more leaves off it. I also planted one in a pot on a North-facing window sill (I only have space on the North side), and it is producing more leaves and it is the dead of winter here. I am amazed. Imagine having about 10 of these babies going which otherwise would have been tossed onto the compost pile. I'd think 10 would give enough for 2-5 people maybe once every 2 weeks or so. I will be saving all those living head lettuces I buy during the winter, by planting the roots in a pot – then I'll put them all out in the Spring. It's good lettuce – like butter/bibb lettuce.

20 *Wayne said at 1:04 am on November 30th, 2010:*

Hybrid and GMO are not the same thing. Hybrids are just a cross between 2 existing varieties. This occurs naturally in many wild plants, most wild mint plants are hybrids. Even ancient wheat was a natural hybrid. Man has been creating hybrids for well over 150 years. Almost all food crops are hybrids including heirloom varieties. heirlooms are just older hybrids created 50 to 100 years ago.

21 *giordano said at 2:44 am on November 30th, 2010:*

Wayne,

Thanks for the science lesson but I think its obvious to everyone here that I am referring to patented hybrids bred by corporations like Monsanto, not hybrids that occur in nature. There is a tremendous difference in the genetic makeup of such plants, with consequences we have yet to fully understand. And yes, many of these corporate hybrids ARE genetically modified.

22 *liz said at 3:20 am on November 30th, 2010:*

Another good source of animal protein are guinea pigs (very popular fare in S. America) They are hardier than rabbits, don't bite or try to kill each other and actually breed faster than rabbits. Their diet is more diverse too and they can eat stuff that would make a rabbit sick. Good luck in the coming times. (and bon appitite!).

23 *Mira said at 6:45 am on November 30th, 2010:*

My cat keeps bringing home small baby rabbits. A few times I tried to keep them (the unbattered ones) alive but they don't survive. Any suggestions on how to keep them alive long enough to reach adulthood

24 *Ceara said at 7:15 am on November 30th, 2010:*

Generate a food forest! Look up videos on YouTube by Geoff Lawton. If he can help grow a food forest not far from the Dead Sea, then anyone can, in almost any climate. A food forest is a sprawling "garden" of sorts. Then watch Paul Stamets' "6 Ways Mushrooms Can Save the World" Mushrooms have protein, as do Stinging Nettles. Energy and tummy fillers can be found in Jerusalem Artichokes (Sunflower plant tuber – Helianthus tuberosus). Vitamin C can be found in rose hips (red berries on some rose types after the flower falls). Learn about nutritious plants that grow wild and assist in cultivating them. Because even if you don't own land, you can "grow" certain plants on unused land and go back occasionally and harvest. Especially with plants like Stinging Nettles, because they keep on giving after being cut and produce more foliage and are VERY nutritious. So learn as much as possible about wild plant

foraging, because even if you don't have a garden, chances are most people aren't going to know about wild foods, which gives you an advantage. Plus you have the added bonus that your wild food stocks may not be depleted because it doesn't look like a garden. To collect water, build an inverted pyramid out of plastic or metal and put the tip of the pyramid into a container – this will collect morning dew – clean water at least for drinking. Seeds are easy, you don't have to buy from a seed house or garden center. Network now with gardeners through the internet and you're likely to get seeds for FREE, and only have to pay postage. Also look up "window garden" on YouTube and learn about a mini hydroponic system you can set up in any sunny window, for herbs or small vegetables. This is especially good for people living in large apartment buildings. There is hope, you just have to be VERY resourceful and learn as much as possible now through the internet while it's still available. Let's also bring back the old methods of fish rearing. Watch "Edwardian Farm" from BBC if you can, there's an episode about brown trout farming in a river in Devon. Restock those rivers and lakes! (with native species, of course)

25 *The Crab said at 8:06 am on November 30th, 2010:*

For those of you in tropical zones, don't forget the coconut; The meat/water is nutritious, oil can be derived from it for cooking or soap-making, and the husks of coconuts contain a natural growth hormone which is beneficial to your garden.

Additionally, shredded husks dug into your garden soil are a great medium for helping to retain moisture. On the surface, shredded husks make a decent mulch.

26 *JC Refuge said at 9:25 am on November 30th, 2010:*

Good article all in all. Yes, folks should do everything within their power at this late date to prepare for very turbulent times dead ahead. Food storage should be priority #1 while you still have access to such foods.

It's very positive to grow and raise whatever you can. But for important context–note that on average, it takes one acre of a garden to provide the food to sustain one person for one year.

27 *PB said at 11:23 am on November 30th, 2010:*

One thing — planting everything in your seed packets all at one time will give you a whole bunch of food to be able to have to eat – all at one time….

Be sure to "succession plant".

That is planting as much seed as your family can eat (and some for sharing with others) in 2 weeks. As the little seedlings start to show their 2nd set of leaves plant more seed enough for 2 weeks and so on.

When the first batch is harvested plant a little more seed there to keep the cycle going for as long as the season will allow. That way you have a longer harvest.

Canning is such an excellent, rewarding and fun skill to learn. Be very sure to know your elevation as that is a big factor in pressure canning – 10 lbs or 15 lbs. And a time factor for boiling water bath canners. Follow directions carefully and exactly. Always use Ball, Kerr or Mason canning jars, never re-use mayonnaise jars or jars that have had store boughten food in.

Remember, all gardening is experimenting!! What works and what doesn't.

Start a garden journal of everything you do in your garden, this is very important. Record early morning temperatures, what you've added to your soil, where the sun hits at different times of the day. Observe your garden so the plants have at least 6 to 8 hours of sunlight.

Plant your food garden close to the kitchen so you will use and watch it grow. Add in flower plants to attract bees and predatory insects (97% of the insect population – the good guys) that kill off the destructive (3% of the insect population – bad guys). When you use chemicals in your garden (will be very costly) you kill off both the good and the bad guys. Not a good thing. Nature works it all out wonderfully well if left to her own devices.

DO NOT get discouraged as there are many factors that can cause crops not to grow. Or some crops grow great and others just pook along or do nothing at all.

Why seed does not grow – mainly planting the seeds too deep into the soil, weather conditions, water conditions, adequate sunlight, birds taking away your seed just as you've set it down. I use light frost or shade covers to cover over the seed to discourage birds from stealing what I've planted. Then it's removed when they become seedlings. Then the garden is caged in to keep out hungry critters!

Just keep at it. As the farmers always say "There's always next year!"

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