



Food Safety in a Power Outage

Recently, we've seen that spring and summer storms often have serious consequences, such as power outages from wind and water damage. If your power goes out, knowing what to do with the food in your refrigerator and freezer can help you stay healthy. The last thing you need after a weather emergency is a case of food poisoning!

Be Prepared

- Make sure that you have appliance thermometers in both the refrigerator and the freezer. That's the best way to be sure that your food is safe after a power outage.
- Know where you can get dry ice or block ice.
- Keep on hand a few days worth of ready-to-eat foods that do not require cooking or cooling.
- If your power is out due to a snowstorm, do not place food out in the snow. Instead, take advantage of the cold temperatures by making ice outside. Fill buckets, empty milk cartons, or cans with clean water and leave them outside to freeze. Then put the "homemade ice" in your refrigerator, freezer, or coolers.

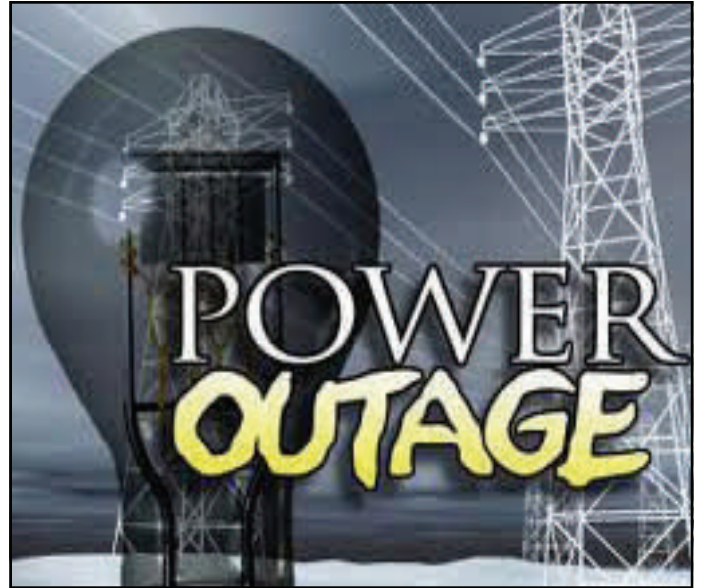
When the Power Goes Out

The most important thing to remember is: keep the refrigerator and freezer doors closed!

- A refrigerator will keep food cold for about 4 hours if the door is kept closed.
- A full freezer will keep temperature for about 48 hours (24 hours if half-full). If your freezer is not full, group packages so they form an "igloo" to protect each other. Place them to one side or on a tray so that if they begin thawing, their juices won't get on other foods.
- If the power is going to be out for an extended period of time, buy dry or block ice to keep the refrigerator as cold as possible. Fifty pounds of dry ice should keep a fully-stocked 18-cubic-foot freezer cold for two days.

When the Power Returns

- Check the temperature inside of your refrigerator and freezer. Discard any perishable food (such as meat, poultry, seafood, eggs, or leftovers) that has been above 40° F for two hours or more.
- You will have to evaluate each item separately. Discard any food that has an unusual odor, color, or texture, or feels warm to the touch. When in doubt, throw it out!
- With frozen food, check for ice crystals! The food in your freezer that is partially or completely thawed may be safely refrozen if it still contains ice crystals or is 40 °F or below.
- Never taste a food to determine its safety!



INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Food Safety in a Power Outage

Page 1

Everyday Grocery Items Then & Now

Page 2

What's Hot

Page 3

Coffee Prices on the Rise

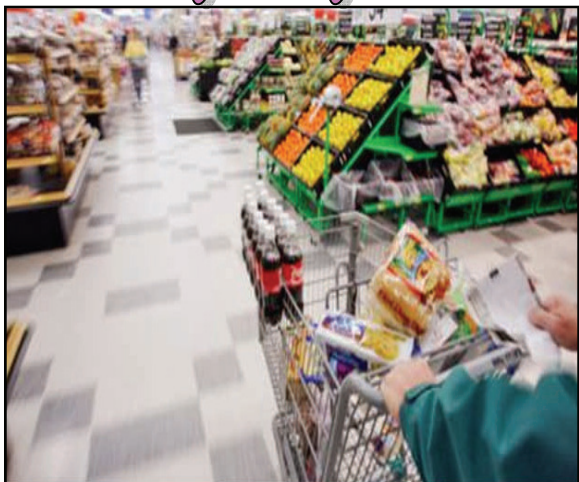
Page 3

Diabetic Recipes: Baked Ziti with Meatballs

Page 4

The Cedar Culinary is a monthly newsletter published by Cedar County Health Dept.

Everyday Grocery Items: Then & Now



Inflation has a way of making your everyday purchases look like little luxuries. If you need proof, look no further than the Bureau of Labor Statistics' latest report on consumer prices, which showed prices rose by a seasonally-adjusted 0.5% in March, with food and energy prices accounting for nearly three-quarters of the increase. All six categories of grocery store food groups saw increases during the month – a reading on fresh vegetables, for instance, climbed by 4.7% after jumping 6.7% in February, and a reading on meats, poultry, fish and eggs rose 1.1% after climbing 1.2% in February.

Rising prices may be top of mind for consumers right now, but they're nothing new. Here's a look at how the price tags on these 10 basic items have changed over the last three decades:

1. Bread (avg. price for a pound of white bread)

What you pay now: \$1.41

What you paid...

Last year: \$1.37

5 years ago: \$1.08

10 years ago: \$1.00

20 years ago: \$0.71

2. Butter (avg. price for a pound of salted butter)

What you pay now: \$3.69

What you paid...

Last year: \$3.13

5 years ago: \$2.92

10 years ago: \$3.30

20 years ago: \$1.94



3. Eggs (avg. price for a dozen Grade-A eggs)

What you pay now: \$1.73

What you paid...

Last year: \$1.66

5 years ago: \$1.31

10 years ago: \$0.93

20 years ago: \$0.99

4. Steak (avg. price per pound of USDA choice steak)

What you pay now: \$4.46

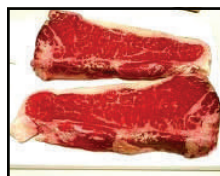
What you paid...

Last year: \$4.28

5 years ago: \$4.00

10 years ago: \$3.50

20 years ago: \$3.41



5. Bananas (avg. price for a pound of bananas)

What you pay now: \$0.62

What you paid...

Last year: \$0.58

5 years ago: \$0.50

10 years ago: \$0.51

20 years ago: \$0.48

6. Potato Chips (avg. price for a 16-ounce bag)

What you pay now: \$4.84

What you paid...

Last year: \$4.64

5 years ago: \$3.47

10 years ago: \$3.43

20 years ago: \$2.96



7. Chocolate Chip Cookies (avg. price of a pound)

What you pay now: \$3.22

What you paid...

Last year: \$3.25

5 years ago: \$2.88

10 years ago: \$2.44

20 years ago: \$2.69

8. Bacon (avg. price of a pound of sliced bacon)

What you pay now: \$4.54

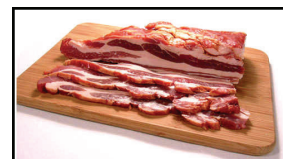
What you paid...

Last year: \$4.11

5 years ago: \$3.44

10 years ago: \$3.26

20 years ago: \$2.22



9. Tomatoes (avg. price for a pound of tomatoes)

What you pay now: \$2.09

What you paid...

Last year: \$1.69

5 years ago: \$1.73

10 years ago: \$1.32

20 years ago: \$1.01

10. Ice Cream (avg. price for a 1/2 gl. of ice cream)

What you pay now: \$4.92

What you paid...

Last year: \$4.47

5 years ago: \$3.75

10 years ago: \$3.70

20 years ago: \$2.58



Coffee Prices Are Getting A Jolt

By Sharon Bernstein, Los Angeles Times

The price of your morning buzz is about to get even higher. Hit with wildly increasing costs for beans from growers, coffee roasters are charging more to supermarkets and other retailers — and those folks are passing the higher prices on to consumers.

J.M. Smucker Co., which distributes the Folgers and Dunkin' Donuts coffee sold at stores, said last week it was hiking prices for a pound by 11% — the company's fourth and biggest increase in a year. A few days later, Starbucks — which had already raised prices on some coffee drinks in the fall — said it would raise prices for bags of coffee beans sold at its cafes by 17%.

Prices for coffee have been rising steadily. According to the U.S. Department of Labor, a 1-pound can of ground coffee sold for an average of \$5.10 in the U.S. in April, up from \$3.64 the year before.

Over the last 12 months, the price of green, unroasted coffee on the big commodities exchanges has gone up nearly 92%.

"These are big increases — and I don't think we're done with it," said food industry expert Phil Lempert, who edits the blog Super-

marketGuru.com. "We're going to see higher prices on coffee for a very, very long time."

Spurring the run-up in bean prices is a combination of bad weather in coffee-growing regions, increased demand from developing countries such as China and intense speculation in the commodities markets, experts said.

Chuck Jones, co-owner of Jones Coffee Roasters in Pasadena, said his costs for high-grade beans have nearly doubled. "At this time last year I was paying \$1.85 for coffee that I'm now paying \$3.60 for," Jones said. His company sells gourmet green beans to roasters around the world, including Starbucks.

The rising prices, with no end in sight, could have long-term repercussions for the industry. But don't expect people to give up something as addictive as caffeine, said Harry Balzer, chief food industry analyst for NPD Group.

So far, consumers have not significantly slowed their buying habits or switched to cheaper brands. One reason for that could be that it's far cheaper to buy coffee to brew at home than it is to purchase it by the cup.

What's HOT

www.restaurant.org/foodtrends

Keeping up with food and beverage trends is crucial to develop the right menu mix. That's why restaurateurs turn to the National Restaurant Association to help them stay abreast of the hottest menu trends. The Association each year surveys professional chef members of the American Culinary Federation. The latest survey, conducted in 2009, was based on the input of more than 1,800 chefs. Respondents ranked 214 items by how trendy they would be.

Appetizers/Starters

1. Appetizer salads
2. Mini-burgers/sliders
3. Appetizer combos/ platters

Main Dishes/ Center of the Plate

1. Locally sourced meats and seafood
2. Half-portions/smaller portion for a smaller price
3. Newly fabricated cuts of meat (ex. Denver steak, pork flat iron)

Sides/Starches

1. Steamed/grilled/roasted vegetables
2. Braised vegetables
3. Brown/wild rice

Desserts

1. Bite-size/mini desserts
2. Artisan/house-made ice cream
3. Gelato/sorbet

Kids' Meals

1. Nutritionally balanced kid's dishes
2. Fruit/vegetable kid's side items
3. "Kid cuisine"/gourmet kid's dishes

Alcohol and Cocktails

1. Locally-produced wine and beer
2. Culinary cocktails (e.g. savory, fresh ingredients)
3. Food-beer pairings

Culinary Themes

1. Simplicity/back to basics
2. Farm/estate-branded ingredients
3. Gluten-free/food allergy conscious

Nonalcoholic Beverages

1. Specialty iced tea (e.g. Thai-style, Southern/ sweet, flavored)
2. Flavored/enhanced water
3. Green tea

Produce

1. Locally grown produce
2. Super fruits (e.g. acai, goji berry)
3. Micro-vegetables/ micro-greens

Diabetic Recipe: Baked Ziti with Meatballs

Servings: 6

Ingredients:

10 ounces ziti or penne pasta
1 15-ounce container low-fat ricotta cheese
1 cup non-fat mozzarella cheese, grated
1 tablespoon Parmesan cheese
1 28-ounce can pureed tomatoes with basil
1/8 teaspoon garlic powder
1/8 teaspoon dried red pepper flakes
1 pound ground sirloin
1/8 teaspoon garlic powder
1/8 teaspoon onion powder
1/4 cup quick oats
2 ounces egg substitute (or 1 large egg)
1 tablespoon water
1/8 teaspoon salt
Freshly ground pepper (to taste)
Cooking spray

Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 375°F.
2. In a bowl, stir together the ground sirloin, garlic and onion powder, quick oats, egg substitute, water, salt, and pepper.
3. Make 1-inch in diameter meatballs.
4. Coat a non-stick skillet with cooking spray, and



then sauté meatballs in batches until browned and cooked through. Set aside. (You can make the meatballs in advance and freeze them.)

5. Cook the pasta according to package directions for al dente. Put in 1 cup of cold water after removing from the heat, then drain and set aside.
6. In a bowl, combine the ricotta, mozzarella and Parmesan cheeses.
7. Add the garlic powder and red pepper flakes to the canned tomato puree.
8. Place 1/4 cup tomato puree in the bottom of a casserole. Top with a layer of meatballs, dollops of cheese mixture, and tomato puree.
9. Layer up the casserole, topping with a few dollops of cheese mixture. (You can freeze the casserole at this point, if you'd like.)
10. Bake in oven for 45 minutes until the ricotta is browned and the casserole is hot.

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