HOW LONG DOES EMERGENCY FOOD LAST?

It depends on the food. Ready.gov says to keep canned goods cool and dry and swap out expired items. One maker, Augason Farms, states up to 25 years for its 30-day kit. Check the date and the maker's own claim, and rotate your supplies so nothing sits unused.

THE STEPS

01 Read the date and the storage directions on each item.

02 Keep canned goods cool and dry, and swap out expired items (Ready.gov).

03 For freeze-dried packs, use the maker's stated shelf life. Augason Farms states up to 25 years for its 30-day kit; ReadyWise and Valley Food Storage state 25 years.

04 Rotate: use the oldest first and replace it.

05 Review your needs once a year (Ready.gov).

THE CHECKLIST

- ☐ Dates written on cans and packs
- ☐ A cool, dry shelf
- ☐ A yearly review date
- ☐ A replacement list

How we write it into your plan. A shelf-life claim is the maker's. A cool, dry, dark place helps any food last.

Sources: Ready.gov, Build a Kit; Ready.gov, Food. Last reviewed November 17, 2026. General planning information, not medical, legal or financial advice.