

FOOD PREP GUIDE

*A Plan for Money-Saving, Self-Sustaining
Abundance in Hard Times*



Jordan Mitchell & Stacy Farrell

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Contents

BACKGROUND & BLUEPRINT

Beginnings	8
Jordan's Journey to Frugal Food Storage	8
Stacy's Journey to All Things Food Preservation	9
How to Use This Guide	10

SHOPPING & SAVING

Gather	16
Biblical Principle: Be Watchful, Not Fearful	16
Stories & Strategies	17
Ideas & Instructions	18
My Notes:.....	23
Tools & Tips	25

STOCKING & STORING

Simplify	30
Biblical Principle: Go to the Ant and Be Wise.....	30
Stories & Strategies	32
Ideas & Instructions	33
How to Pack Food for Storage	39
How to Store Food in Small Spaces	42
How to Rotate Properly	44
How to Conduct an Inventory Check	46
Tools & Tips	49

GROWING

Cultivate	68
Biblical Principle: A Worthy Pursuit.....	68
Stories & Strategies.....	69
Ideas & Instructions	70
My Notes:.....	79
Tools & Tips	81

PRESERVING

Process.....	88
Biblical Principle: Laugh at Times to Come	88
Stories & Strategies.....	89
Water Bath Canning	90
Freezing	96
Dehydrating	97
My Notes:.....	105
Tools & Tips	107

MEAL PLANNING

Design.....	114
Biblical Principle: Stewardship	114
Stories & Strategies.....	115
Ideas & Instructions	116
My Notes:.....	127
Tools & Tips	129

RECIPES

Cook.....	140
Gravies.....	140
Magic Soup	142
Tomato Products	144
DIY Mixes	145
Bread	151
Dehydrated Scalloped Potato Side Dish.....	154
DIY Seasonings	154
My Notes:.....	156

FINAL THOUGHTS

Progress Over Perfection	160
About the Authors	162

With Appreciation

Special thanks to our dream team that read through our drafts: Lori, Joyce, and Patty. Thanks, also, to our families for their sacrifice and support. Above all, thanks to Jesus, the generous One who owns the cattle on a thousand hills (Psalm 50:10) and is the source of every good and perfect gift (James 1:17).



**BACKGROUND &
BLUEPRINT**

*“Faith is like a radar
that sees through the fog—
the reality of things at a distance
that the human eye cannot see.”*

Corrie Ten Boom

BEGINNINGS

Jordan's Journey to Frugal Food Storage

It was 2014, and we were on the verge of realizing our homesteading dreams. We signed the papers on a 3-acre property and said goodbye to the 400-sq.-ft. garage apartment that was choking our growing family of four.

We moved in with plans of making instant changes—adding a flock of chickens, herd of goats, stocked pond, greenhouse, massive garden—the works.

Then I got sick. Everything changed, and plans were postponed. My health deteriorated slowly over time until my body hit its breaking point in 2018.

I didn't have the physical capacity to do much, nor the mental acuity to continue in my work-from-home job. On top of that, we were growing more in debt by the week as medical expenses piled up.

What were we going to do?

There are two ways to put more money in your pocket:

- *Earn more*
- *Spend less*

Since I could no longer earn much of an income, I turned my attention to saving as much money as possible—with the bulk of our savings gained from frugal meal planning.

BACKGROUND & BLUEPRINT

As I began to get better, I started investing more time and brain power into overhauling the way we eat—consuming as many whole foods as possible as inexpensively as possible.

Then 2020 hit.

Upon recognizing the fragility of our supply chain, we shifted to a “cooking from food storage” strategy.

We simplified our meals, switched to shelf-stable alternatives where possible, and transitioned into once-a-month shopping.

Years of research, trial and error, disappointments, and victories have led to a food prep plan based on:

- *Saving*
- *Simplicity*
- *Sustainability*

As a bonus, it has allowed us to bless others from a place of abundance.

That plan (and much more) is presented in this guide in hopes of reducing your learning curve as you prepare, preserve, and steward your resources wisely.

Stacy's Journey to All Things Food Preservation

What do you do when you find yourself standing in your kitchen amid countless cases of perfectly-ripe (and some over-ripe) tomatoes?

Why, you learn how to water bath can them, of course!

This describes my experience back in 2019, after I joined a gleaning food co-op. In case you're not familiar with how a gleaning group works, I'll explain ours....

Our leader arranged to have a member pick up nearly-expired food from local grocery stores and drive it to the parking lot where our group met. There the food was distributed among our members.

FOOD PREP GUIDE

Whatever of the quantity, everything had to come home with us. Nothing could be left behind. So I often found myself with an abundance of ripe produce that would quickly spoil if I didn't immediately preserve it.

It was a great problem to have, no doubt. But it did require me to learn “The Art of Food Preservation.”

I knew nothing about such things, having grown up surrounded by grocery stores and fast-food restaurants. But, thankfully, the Lord placed a dear friend in my life who possessed the knowledge and skill to grow, can, and dehydrate her own food.

She took me under her wing.

(You can meet her *and* Jordan when you subscribe to [our YouTube channel](#).)

As I learned how to process various “mountains of produce,” I started working on this guide. Then, in 2021, I met Jordan.

We started writing together. After we finished our most recent project, I suggested we work on this guide. Little did I know how well equipped Jordan was to write it....

The Food Prep Guide contains her stories, systems, and strategies for more than surviving—actually thriving—despite the difficult challenges we are all beginning to face.

(All first person stories shared are from Jordan's experiences.)

How to Use This Guide

As we brainstormed how to format this guide, we wanted to create a logical path that walks through food prep from start to finish. The layout we landed on starts with the why and ends with the how to.

Each chapter is delivered in 5 parts:

BACKGROUND & BLUEPRINT

Biblical Principle

Purpose. Intention. Motive. Those are the self-checks we use to guide and define our actions. We seek to honor the Lord in all we do—even in the way we store, preserve, and serve food.

In our culture, we face a unique dilemma. All too often, those who store or preserve more than two weeks' worth of food are painted as doomsdayers, preppers, and hoarders. Perhaps you've experienced such comments from well-meaning individuals (or radio silence from those who appear blind to the days in which we live).

In any case, each chapter begins with a biblical principle that defines the "why" behind the chapter's subject matter.

Proper perspective is key to finding joy in the mundane. If we're honest with ourselves, feeding our families isn't always a thrilling task. Thankfully, a clear grasp of the "why" behind the "what" and "how" can transform chores into blessings.

Stories & Strategies

Inspiration comes in many forms. Sometimes, others' experiences can become stepping stones for our own.

This section shares personal stories and strategies that have worked for us and others. Use them as a springboard to help you along in your pantry pursuits.

Ideas & Instructions

This is where you will find detailed instructions and step-by-step tutorials for executing the tasks discussed in each chapter. Where it makes sense to do so, we've included links to research materials, products, demonstration videos, places to shop, and more.

Some of these links are affiliate links in which we may earn a small commission at no cost to you. Thank you for your support!

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Tools & Tips

Each chapter includes printables, such as trackers, reference charts, and more. Each printable is designed to make the task at hand easier to manage.

A *Supply List* is also included as a quick-reference sheet of helpful tools.

Print as many pages of printables as you need. Alternatively, laminate each sheet, and use a dry erase marker to make it reusable month after month.

My Notes

Last but not least, journaling pages are provided at the end of each chapter to record your notes, thoughts, and plans as you work through the guide.

Ready to get started?