

Gourmet Reserves® Storage and Shelf Life

About Gourmet Reserves

The **Gourmet Reserves®** product line was developed in 1989 to address the needs for emergency preparedness. **Gourmet Reserves** is suited to meet the needs of individuals or organizations who desire to be self-sufficient during a situation where normal food supplies are not readily available. Great tasting AlpineAire Foods recipes as well as everyday staples are practical and easily incorporated into the daily diet. The food systems are formulated to sustain one person for two years, one year, six months, three months, 45 days, one month, two weeks, one week, or three days. All systems are assembled to supply both long and short-term food storage needs.

Resealable plastic lids are included with all systems.

Shelf Stable Food Products and Food Systems

Gourmet Reserves has shelf stable food products and food systems designed to meet your needs with food that is nutritionally sound, convenient, and familiar. These food products are practical and easily incorporated into your daily diet. The exclusive "No Cooking Required" systems are easy to prepare. Items are eat-as-is or prepared by adding hot or cold water to reconstitute. The very best quality foods have been selected (freeze-dried, dehydrated, instant)—completely free of artificial additives. A "state of the art" oxygen absorber is placed in each can to ensure the very best shelf life.

The products and systems are assembled to supply both your long-term and short-term needs.

Freeze Drying: Freeze-dried products make up the majority of ingredients used for Gourmet Reserves. For instant or quick rehydration of certain dried foods and for products, which retain their shape and texture, freeze-drying is the preferred method. The first step in freeze-drying is to rapidly freeze the food.

The water content, now frozen, is turned directly into a gas and withdrawn from the food during the next steps, vacuum and heat, thus avoiding the shrinkage. Freeze-drying uses a very low heat temperature. Many of Gourmet Reserves products are custom freeze-dried to suit our strict quality requirements. Freeze-dried products include: grains, beans, fruits, meats, seafood, pastas, vegetables and eggs. Using this process, 98% of the moisture is removed.

Key advantages of freeze-dried products:

- Retains the original taste and nutritional value of the food due to very low heat temperature that is used
- Foods are quick and easy to prepare
- No waste
- Ideal method for maintaining flavors of meat, poultry and fish
- Extends the shelf life of the product
- No preservatives are necessary
- Results in a super-lightweight/compact product
- A wide variety of foods are available
- Use hot or cold water to rehydrate

Dehydration: The standard method of dehydrating vegetables and spices is to place the items on a conveyor belt and run them through an oven at a high temperature for a relatively short time. Between 90% and 95% of the moisture is removed.

Some vegetables are more suited to this form of drying than others. This means that with the addition of water, the product rehydrates back to its original state more easily. Preferable items include: onions, bell peppers, tomatoes, celery, carrots and mushrooms. Dehydrated items such as peas, corn and green beans do not rehydrate as well as freeze-dried.

Gourmet Reserves Food Systems (continued)

Selecting a Food Reserve System

Some day you may actually need to depend on a food reserve system. The purchase of a system represents a sizable investment. The consumer should be discriminating in selecting the manufacturer. The questions and information below provide a valuable process by which one can identify and determine the most suitable food reserve system.

The following questions will assist you in identifying a system for you and your family:

- Under what scenarios do you anticipate the need for using food reserves?
- Will you be mobile?
- Will food preparation facilities, supplies and fuel be available?
- Have you determined the length of time you desire the system to sustain you? And your family?
- How many people will be depending upon your food?
- Are there special nutritional requirements?
- How important is ease of preparation?
- Have you considered your budget?
- How many calories do you require per person?

Specific Features of a Gourmet Reserves Food System

- **Purity of Ingredients.** Gourmet Reserves foods are all natural, NO artificial preservatives, flavorings, colorings, MSG or white sugar are added.
- **Familiarity.** Your food system should be familiar, everyday foods easily recognizable and reflect a balanced diet offering good taste. Gourmet Reserve foods offer the best selection from which to choose.
- **Preparation Convenience.** Gourmet Reserves offers many convenient food systems, which can be prepared with a limited amount of fuel and water.
- **Shelf Life.** Shelf life of any food reserves is always critical. Gourmet Reserves uses the latest technologies available to insure long shelf life. Excessive heat will shorten the shelf life of all products. A rule of thumb: the cooler the better.
- **Variety.** We have over 170 selections that will prevent appetite fatigue.
- **Proper Rotation.** It is important to rotate food reserves into your daily diet. Gourmet Reserves easily integrates with other foods to meet daily dietary needs. A specialist will be happy to recommend a program that best fits your needs.
- **Serving Sizes.** All Gourmet Reserves systems offer generous serving sizes to ensure on average 2000+ calories per day. This is very important. When reviewing competitor's food systems, make sure the caloric counts are not high due to refined sugar. Gourmet Reserves does not use white sugar either in our recipes or as a supplement to increase caloric counts.

What Makes Gourmet Reserves® Food Systems Distinctive?

- The largest "No Cook" product selection available in shelf stable cans.
- An established, trusted industry leader with a distinguished reputation since 1979.
- An extensive variety of products packaged in small and large cans. Items include: complete "No Cook" entrees, breakfasts, side dishes, individual items, complete food systems from one day to one year, standard commodities and emergency systems.
- The manufacturing facilities are inspected daily by a U.S.D.A. resident inspector and comply with strict standards for wholesomeness and cleanliness.
- Federal inspection enables the manufacturer to offer a complete line of real poultry and beef products—both as individual items and in meals. State-of-the-art canning and oxygen-reducing techniques provide for long shelf life.
- Great tasting, easy-to-prepare complete meals and individual items.
- Ingredients used are of the highest quality and are nutritionally superior. Familiar, everyday foods enjoyed by adults and children.

Gourmet Reserves Food Systems (continued)

Packaging

All **Gourmet Reserves** products are packed in #10 size cans (approximately one gallon) or #2½ size cans (approximately one quart). These cans are heavy-gauge steel and enamel coated on the inside. A “state of the art” oxygen absorber is used in all cans to eliminate oxygen. This procedure ensures the very best in shelf life. Resealable plastic lids are included in all systems and on individual cans.

Why Purchase Long Range Food Reserves?

- Natural disasters
- Economic disruption
- Political instability
- Diminishing world food resources
- Inflation hedge
- Disruption of employment (loss of job)
- Corporate contingency planning
- Some Gourmet Reserves ingredients/products are organically grown, some are gluten-free
- Gourmet Reserves beef products are hormone-free

Shelf Life

What is the shelf life of preparedness foods? It is impossible to give a definitive answer without knowing how the foods are stored and in what containers.

Extended shelf life is primarily affected by oxygen, fat, moisture, heat and time - the lower the values the better. Excessive quantities of these elements will cause loss of nutritional value, off flavors, odors, and rancidity. Handling and physical damage must also be kept to a minimum. Damage to can seams and excessive rust must be avoided. Gourmet Reserves products are sealed in heavy gauge metal cans with an oxygen absorber added. Be sure to observe storage tips for best results.

Provided that proper storage procedures have been followed, we can offer general guidelines as to the shelf life expectations of our foods. Once the foods leave our facilities we have no control over storage conditions. So be conscientious and avoid high heat - the cooler the better.

NOTE: Although it is possible that some beans, grains, and other types of food will store for long periods of time in ideal conditions, we feel it is inappropriate to promise or suggest shelf lives of any longer than 15 years although shelf life may be longer when stored in ideal conditions. Alpine Aire Foods does its best, utilizing the latest canning techniques and oxygen absorber technology, to ensure the longest possible shelf life. Because of the various factors which affect shelf life, over which we have no control, we cannot guarantee that your results will match our estimates. In order to maximize shelf life, do not expose to high or freezing temperatures for an extended period of time.

Estimated shelf life of Gourmet Reserves® products in ideal storage conditions:

- Vegetables 8–10 years
- Fruits 8–10 years
- Meats 5–10 years
- Eggs..... 5 years
- Complete Entrees soups/breakfasts/desserts most recipes 5 years
- Recipes w/ shrimp, brown rice, sour cream, tuna & nuts 2–5 years
- Entrees 5–10 years
- Cheese powders..... 5 years
- Sweeteners 10 years
- Granola 5 years
- Pasta 8–10 years

Gourmet Reserves Food Systems (continued)

- Milk, Nonfat..... 8–10 years
- Beans, Textured Vegetable Protein (TVP) 8–10 years
- Pilot Bread Crackers (ready to eat) 10 years
- Sauces and Seasonings 5–10 years
- Sprouting Seeds 5–10 years
- Grains (cooking required) 10–15 years
- Beans & Peas (cooking required)..... 10–15 years
- Scrambling and Omelet Egg Mix (cooking required)..... 5 years
- Pancake Mix (cooking required) 3–5 years

Proper Food Storage Tips

It is crucial that you store food reserves properly. Please follow the following recommendations:

- Avoid exposure to heat and moisture. Make sure foods are not accessible to insects or animals.
- Never store food directly on the ground or on concrete floors — moisture can build up inside containers.
- Avoid such storage places that experience temperature build-up such as attics, garages or car trunks. Ideally, storage for Gourmet Reserves should not exceed room temperature for extended periods.
- Store in a location that is accessible so that periodic inspections are easy.
- Rotate supplies.
- Avoid excessive and rough handling of pouch and canned foods.