

SURVIVAL IN A BUCKET

Accounts of those who have survived tragedy and catastrophe, no matter the crisis, demonstrate that survival is as much a state of mind as a state of being. Fortitude, determination, a cool head, and confidence constitute a priceless part of any survival plan.

Wherever we live on the planet we can be suddenly and unexpectedly confronted with survival issues. Earthquake country, volcano country, tornado alley, flood, hurricane, terrorism or social unrest—we are all vulnerable and mortal. Staying alive is instinctive for most living creatures, but staying alive in a shipwreck would be difficult without a liferaft, a life buoy or a life boat. Someone planned ahead. Someone planned for the unexpected emergency. You and I need to do the same, but sensibly and affordably.

Here is a simple, affordable, do-able plan—act on it!—act immediately!

Purchase two or more 6-gallon, plastic buckets. These buckets are tall, have substantial bales (handles) and lids and they are ideal for your basic survival plan. These buckets are easily transported. By that we mean they may be tossed into the trunk or back seat of the automobile for a quick escape, or they may be carried by hand or even worn as a backpack. They are moisture- and vermin-resistant—in short they are ideal for the plan outlined below.

Every item listed here was purchased in a Wal-Mart, K-Mart (or similar discount retailer) and a large supermarket. Many of the items included cost a dollar or less!! One bucket can keep two people alive for 15-30 days. Two buckets can keep an average family alive for 30-45 days. Time is precious—*time is survival and you are buying time!* Time to travel and relocate, if necessary. Time to have power or other social services restored. Buying time for others to rescue you if necessary.

Two buckets can be completely equipped for approximately \$300.

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 or 2 6-gallon Buckets w/lids and handles Road Atlas (optional) Canteen Water Purification Tablets (150) Multi-function Survival Tool Duct Tape Folding Saw Fishing Kit (optional) Utility Razor Knife Camp Hatchet (optional) 2 Wire Coathangers 1 Small Magnifying Glass Whistle (optional) Tarpaulin Parachute Cord Small Waterproof Flashlight & Batteries Long-burn Candles Waterproof Matches Fire Sticks 2 Disposable Lighters Compass (optional) Cook Kit (Mess Kit) Plastic Cutlery (mixed) Cook Pot w/lid Sharp Paring Knife Camping Can Opener | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Long Plastic Spoon Disposable Wash Cloths Salt & Condiment Paks Dried Soups Dried Food Paks Powdered Milk 4/Cup Pans Tea Bags Sweetener Dried Beans, Rice, Lentils, etc. 2-4 Cans Tomato Paste Small Bottle Olive Oil Large Black Plastic Bags Small Plastic Bags Plastic Cups Plastic Bowls Sewing Kit 2-4 pr. Gloves/Brown Jersey 2-4 Rain Ponchos 2-4 Survival Blankets Extra Socks, Underwear, Winter Caps, etc. Survival Kit/Bandages Extra Band-Aids Multi-Vitamins w/Minerals Buffered Aspirin Tylenol or Ibuprofen Insect Repellent |
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**To Purchase Buckets:
Emergency Essentials**

Go to the Web and type in all of this:
http://beprepared.com/product.asp_Qpn_E_MS%20C201_A_name_E_6-Gallon%20Bucket%20with%20Lid
 or Phone: (800) 999-1863

Example Prices: 1 bucket with Lid = \$8.50
 Have your credit card handy

- Charcoal Capsules
 - Packs of Chewing Gum
 - Soaps (Bars, Liquid, Octagon)
 - Deodorant
 - Chapstick
 - Disposable Razor(s)
 - Fem Pads
 - Moist Towelettes
 - Mirror
 - Combs
 - 6 Small Tissue Paks
 - Pens/Paper
 - Rubber Bands
 - 1 Bible or N. Test. w/Psalms
 - 1 Daily Devotional Reading
 - Optional Items/Special Needs:**
Eyeglasses, Contact Lenses, Insulin, etc.
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Gardener Plants in Bales of Wheat Straw

BY: PATRICE STEWART
The Decatur Daily

DECATUR, AL (AP)—

Jim Templeton planted his garden in bales of wheat straw this year, and then sat back and watched it grow like crazy. He followed the plan in an old newspaper clipping a friend gave him, using ammonium nitrate (or organic rich nitrogen sources) and a mixture of topsoil and manure, and has had a bumper crop of squash, tomatoes, onions and crowder peas.

At this point in the summer, he's watching the watermelons ripen on and around the bales in his garden along the alley behind his house on Eighth Street Southeast.

His bale garden attracted interest during the Albany district garden tour in May, when he distributed copies of the directions, but it's matured and produced a lot since then.

"This is the most fun I've ever had," Templeton said. "I've virtually abandoned it now, except to walk out and gather what has ripened."

He planted several varieties of tomatoes, including Mr. Stripey and German Pink.

"I could eat tomatoes 24 hours a day. I like the low-acid pink type, the big beefsteak tomatoes on my breakfast plate."

He quit staking his tomatoes when they got too high, but they continued to produce.

"That fertilizer really turned on the tomatoes; I've never had a tomato crop like this," said Templeton, who plans to garden this way again next year.



He and his wife, Margaret Ann, ate all their small white onions and wanted to plant more but couldn't find any in town.

"We finally pulled up the squash because it was bearing so heavy and running all over the bales. And then we planted crowder peas, and they're taking over any space the watermelon left," he said.

He's also growing peppers, okra, cucumbers and several herbs, but not all of them are planted in the wheat straw.

Templeton said he got the idea when visiting a friend in Limestone County in March.

She had started planting in bales for the second year and shared with him a Southwest Georgia newspaper clipping of a County Extension agent's 1997 column. Headlined "Hay bales take stoop out of gardening," it gave him the directions for gardening in something other than rock-hard soil.

Templeton figured he'd fancy his garden up a bit, too.

"I stuck a few petunias in the cracks between the 20 or so bales, and the bales looked real pretty when I first set them out in three

rows," he said. "I did everything like the directions said, except I added a small can of fishing worms per bale."

He found bales of wheat straw (recommended over hay for the best results) at a local garden and landscape supply and bought a commercial 50-50 mix of topsoil and compost.

He wife said they might have planted too much, not realizing how well it would grow.

"But I was so hungry for something fresh when I started this, and I've really been flabbergasted at how it's taken off," Templeton said.

He said he wouldn't have dared add any extra fertilizer, or the plants would really have gotten out of control.

How To Do It...

Here are the directions Jim Templeton followed when establishing his hay-bale garden: Start with a bale of wheat straw (*hay can be used, but pine straw won't work*). Bales that have been sitting out in the weather will give you a head start, because they need to rot

before you plant. **Fresh bales will require 10 days of pretreatment.**

Place the bales in full sun where they can stay all summer, because once they start to rot, they're not very mobile. Don't remove the wire or cord around them, because you don't want them to fall apart. Using a stake at both ends will help hold twine-bound bales together when the twine rots.

Once the bales are in place, saturate them with water and keep wet, watering once or twice a day for the next three days. On the fourth day, apply a half-cup of ammonium nitrate to the top of each bale. Water it in well.

Repeat this on the fifth and sixth days (Ammonium nitrate acts as the energy source for microbes to feed on the straw and cause it to rot). On the seventh day, cut back to ¼ cup of ammonium nitrate per bale, and water it in thoroughly. Repeat this on days eight and nine. On the 10th day, apply 1 cup of 10-10-10 fertilizer per bale and water it in thoroughly. By the 11th day, the bales should be ready for planting. Mix topsoil and rotted cow manure

50-50 (or you can use a commercial mix as Templeton did).

Put about 4 inches of this mixture on top of each bale and moisten it lightly with a fine water spray. Plant your tomatoes and peppers right into the bale, using your hand to pull apart the bale and insert the roots. Each bale should accommodate two tomato or four pepper plants.

Seed other vegetables, such as cucumbers, squash, beans, cantaloupe and watermelon, into the soil mix on top. Three yellow squash, six to eight cucumbers or 12 to 15 bean seeds per bale is about the limit. Don't plant corn, okra or other tall vegetables in the bales, because they can't get firmly anchored and will fall over. Over the summer, the bales may need an application of light 10-10-10 fertilizer once a month, depending on the crop.

A liquid feed, such as 15-30-15 soluble fertilizer applied once a week, also will give good results. You can grow many annual or perennial flowers in hay bales, too. Combine an upright flower, such as salvia, on top with a trailing annual such as a petunia falling over the sides.

After the growing season is over, bales can be used again for the next crop, or they can be recycled in the compost pile or used as mulch. Hay-bale gardening is good for apartment dwellers and for the elderly and disabled, who can't stoop, and it can add a new dimension to raised-bed gardening.