



# Two Cans of Corn: Home Storage for Newlyweds

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*By starting small, wisely using storage space, saving money, and gradually increasing their efforts, newly married couples can experience the blessings of peace and security that come from home storage.*

**W**hen Ron Shiflet's wedding was about a month away, he received some unexpected advice from his bishop, who encouraged him to begin storing food. The bishop explained that there was a simple and inexpensive way for his small family to succeed in home storage—even as poor college students.



“He told me to watch what was on sale each week. When we went shopping, we were to buy a couple of extra cans of food,” Ron explains. “He said the expense was so small that we would not notice it, but that over time our food storage would add up.”

Following their wedding, Ron shared the advice he had received with his wife, Lorene, and the couple decided to give it a try. On their first shopping trip together, they purchased their regular groceries and two cans of corn, which they stored in the closet of their one-room apartment. “Those two cans became a good source of humor for us,” Ron says. “Each week the joke continued as we added two more cans.”

They soon discovered that their home storage was not a laughing matter, when six months later, Ron found himself without a job—and without money for food. He and Lorene relied on the supply in the closet to sustain them, and they immediately recognized the blessings of the principle of preparation.

Now, more than 20 years later, Ron says it’s a principle that has blessed his family in numerous ways. “I am thankful for an inspired bishop who counseled us from the beginning to save food—and who showed us how to do it even with little money,” he recalls. “It has protected us many times.”

### **Beginning Now**

For many young couples, home storage falls at the bottom of a long to-do list, behind the demands of work, education, finances, church assignments, and more. For some, it may seem too time-consuming and expensive. Some assume that food storage is something they will get to later in their married life. Others may not see it as necessary at all. But like the Shiflets, couples can enjoy the blessings of choosing to obey the counsel of Church leaders and doing what they can to begin a home storage program now.

In the pamphlet *All Is Safely Gathered In: Family Home*

*Storage* (Item 04008000, available in the U.S. and Canada from Distribution Services) couples can find simplified guidelines on how to prepare for adversity by having a supply of food and water and money in savings. The First Presidency encourages all Church members to follow these guidelines, even those on a limited budget. “We realize that some of you may not have financial resources or space for such storage,” the First Presidency says. “We encourage you to store as much as circumstances allow.”<sup>1</sup>

### **Starting Small**

Members should begin their home storage by gradually building a short-term food supply of basic foods that are part of their normal, daily diet. By regularly purchasing a few extra items they would normally eat, couples can rotate their home storage into meals so that nothing is wasted. They should also store some water that is safe to drink. Purchasing bottled water or washing and filling used plastic beverage bottles with clean water will help members have a supply of drinking water should water supplies be disrupted or polluted.

Carly Dunlop and her husband, Anthony, were married in 2006, and they have obeyed the counsel of gradually building a supply of food and water ever since. By purchasing a few extra items while grocery shopping each week, they have already experienced the blessings that come from home storage.

“There have been several times when something comes up—such as our car breaking down—when it becomes financially difficult to buy food,” Carly says. “We have never needed to worry, though, because our shelves always have at least a few canned goods or something to make meals out of.”

By taking small steps to follow the First Presidency’s counsel, Carly and Anthony have experienced the blessings of home storage. “We don’t need to get overwhelmed and feel like we need to have a large supply of food in our pantries,” she says.

### **Using Your Space**

Like many young married couples, Daniel and Julie Tucker live in a small, rented basement with barely enough space

**I** t doesn't matter if you start small. The important thing is to start.

for the living essentials. So when Daniel took an institute class focused on provident living and decided to start gathering home storage, he and his wife were not sure where to store the extra food they purchased.

"I learned from the class that we needed to at least make an effort to store what we physically could," Daniel says. "Anyone can do it; it's simply a matter of taking the counsel of our prophets to heart." After discussing their options, Daniel and Julie bought a storage cabinet that fit in their small kitchen to create more space for food. Additionally, they raised their bed and began storing items under it.

Other couples have discovered that if they look at their living situation and use a little creativity, they can find the space necessary for home storage. Food can be stored under furniture or in closets. Items can even be boxed up and covered with a tablecloth and used as furniture for a television, radio, or other household appliances. Bookcases or shelves can be placed in the kitchen or other rooms and used for storage.

### **Saving More than Just Food**

The First Presidency encourages Church members to build a financial reserve, along with a supply of food and water, as part of their home storage efforts. Like storing food, saving money is a gradual process. Couples can begin building their reserve by paying their tithes, giving a generous fast offering, and setting aside a small amount of money each week (or month) for savings. Doing so demonstrates faith in the Lord and His ability to bless His children. By saving a little money on a consistent basis, couples will be amazed at how quickly their reserve grows.

After Natalie and Robbie Bartlett were married, they decided to begin saving money gradually by spending less on material items and they made paying tithing and fast offerings a priority. "Paying tithing and fast offerings helps me understand how to



manage my money," she said. "I learned a lot from my parents' example, and it has blessed my life with my husband." Natalie believes that any increase is from the Lord, and she can see that obedience to the counsel of the prophets helps her and her husband grow closer by working together.

"I have saved money my whole life by not going out to eat and putting that money into my savings account instead," Natalie explains. "Now that I am married, my husband and I save money by cutting back in other ways, like buying clothes and groceries on sale or at discount stores." As couples find ways to cut spending and save money, they will discover the blessings of building a financial reserve.

### **Increasing Your Supply**

After preparing a short-term food supply, having some drinking water on hand, and having a financial reserve, couples can increase their home storage by gradually building a longer-term supply of basic foods such as wheat, white rice, beans, and other staples that will keep them alive in case they do not have anything else to eat. Most of these items can be stored up to 30 years when packaged and stored properly.<sup>2</sup>

Increasing home storage may take some time, so couples should not become discouraged or try to do everything at once. Instead, they can make a goal to gradually build a longer-term food supply, depending on their needs and circumstances. They can take advantage of the resources the Church offers, including the welfare Web site, [providentliving.org](http://providentliving.org). Ward or stake home storage specialists can also be great resources.

### **Gaining a Testimony**

As a young wife, Kolene Mills struggled with the principle of home storage. Although she wanted to obey the counsel of Church leaders, she was overwhelmed by the task and lacked motivation to learn how to store food.

One day during her scripture study she was reading in 3 Nephi. The Nephite people were being persecuted by the Gadianton robbers, who threatened to wage war against them if they did not surrender themselves and their land to the robbers. Humbled by this threat, the Nephites obeyed specific instructions from their leaders.

“[They] reserved for themselves provisions, and horses and cattle, and flocks of every kind, that they might subsist for the space of seven years, in the which time they did hope to destroy the robbers from off the face of the land” (3 Nephi 4:4). Kolene was amazed as she realized that the Nephites had been commanded to prepare home storage.

“While reading these verses, the Spirit bore witness to me that it was important for me to prepare my family against whatever challenges might be ahead,” Kolene says. “I felt a bond with the Nephites, who had righteously listened to the counsel of their leaders in preparing themselves, and my desire to follow their example was strengthened.”

Like Kolene, some Church members may think it might be difficult to apply the principle of preparing for adversity

by establishing a home storage supply. But as she found, obedience to the commandments can bring great blessings to families and individuals.

The First Presidency has said that our Heavenly Father’s purpose is “to provide for our needs as we walk in faith and obedience. He has lovingly commanded us to ‘prepare every needful thing’ (see D&C 109:8) so that, should adversity come, we may care for ourselves and our neighbors and support bishops as they care for others.”<sup>3</sup>

Couples will be blessed as they prayerfully study the guidelines outlined in *All Is Safely Gathered In: Family Home Storage*, ask the Lord to help them to apply the principles, and then do whatever they can to obey the counsel. What may begin with a few cans in the closet or under the bed can result in blessings of peace and security now and throughout their lives. ■

For more information on how to get started on your home storage, visit [www.providentliving.org](http://www.providentliving.org).

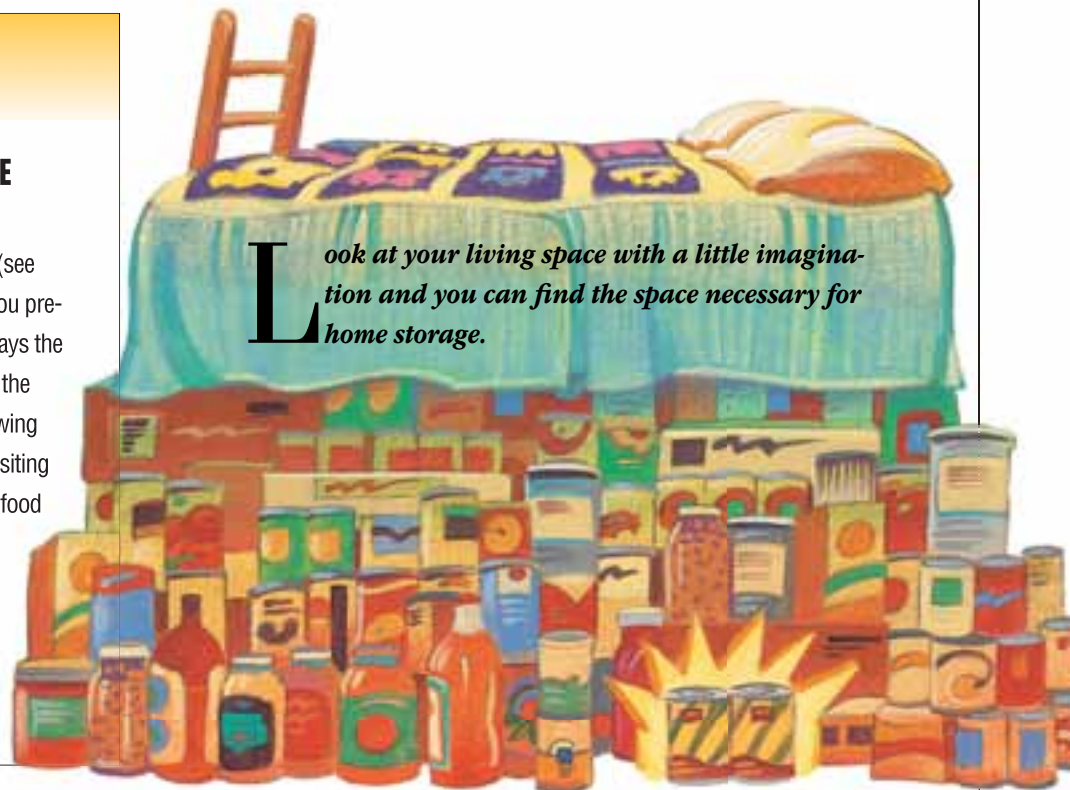
#### NOTES

1. *All is Safely Gathered In: Family Home Storage* (pamphlet, 2007).
2. For more information about food storage, including the shelf life of specific foods, visit [ndfs.byu.edu](http://ndfs.byu.edu).
3. *All is Safely Gathered In*.



## HELPS FOR HOME EVENING

Individuals learn through participation (see *Teaching, No Greater Call*, 161, 187). As you prepare a lesson on home storage, think of ways the whole family could be involved in learning the principles of provident living, such as showing your children food that you have stored, visiting areas in your home where you could store food and supplies, or planning ways to save money as a family. Consider a simple plan of action to begin storing food, like putting two cans of food in a closet or under a bed as suggested in the article.



**L**ook at your living space with a little imagination and you can find the space necessary for home storage.