

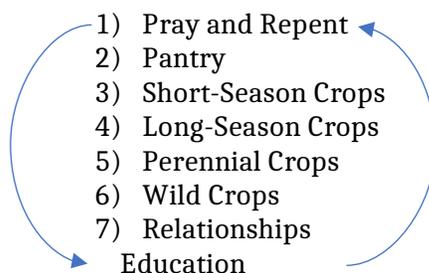


## The Joseph Seven-Step Process Toward Food Resilience

Confidence and hope are two things society needs right now. No one can predict the future; however, history shows us that disasters happen on a regular basis. I have photos of empty grocery shelves and seed racks from stores during April, 2020. The Covid-19 Crisis is causing dire food shortages in parts of the world. This doesn't need to happen to us if we invest in preparation. The Joseph account in Genesis 41 outlines a number of critical points in crisis survival. While God allows disasters to strike for various reasons, He provides us with wisdom to survive such times by planning and preparing in advance.

You can control a surprising amount of resilience and security with a bit of knowledge and organization. Few people understand how much food exists in North America. Despite the diverse climate zones and soils, nearly the entire continental United States contains ideal growing conditions. It's a survivor's paradise. Even the big cities contain acres of idle space and wild foods. While I don't wish to create a false sense of security, the goal of this brief document is to give you a measure of confidence and hope that even if this pandemic reaches a catastrophic level, we can get through this. We live in a place where worry, anxiety, and fear are simply not warranted.

The concepts outlined here really need to be fleshed out in a thick book that I don't have time to write, and most people don't have two years to peruse the internet to self-teach these concepts. So, I've taken my 46 years of survival and agronomy expertise and condensed them into this brief document to save my friends a lot of time. From this document you can flesh out the seven points using internet searches or books as time and need dictate. Regardless of where you fall on the worry scale, or how intense the pandemic and economic backlash becomes, this is a great exercise for parents to take their kids through on even a basic level. It's also an excellent time to improve your gardening skills. The following seven-step process provides a framework and order of operations to quickly build food security and confidence in an unstable world.



### 1) Pray and Repent

The most difficult hurdle to prosperity is a nation or individual whose heart is closed to God by sin. All the wise, moral, economic, environmental, and sustainable

practices in the world will not help us if our hearts are not right before God. Now is the critical time to refresh our individual and society's relationship with God:

"Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord" (Acts 3:19, King James Version).



"Repent, and turn yourselves from all your transgressions; so iniquity shall not be your ruin" (Ezekiel 18:30b).

"We have sinned, and have committed iniquity, and have done wickedly, and have rebelled, even by departing from thy precepts and from thy judgments" (Daniel 9:5).

"We have dealt very corruptly against thee, and have not kept the commandments, nor the statutes, nor the judgments, which thou commandedst thy servant Moses" (Nehemiah 1:7).

"If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land" (2 Chronicles 7:14).

## 2) Pantry

My Granddad was one of the first four Americans to step into Hiroshima after the atomic bomb created our first nuclear holocaust. When I recall his description of the total destruction, the hair raises on my arms. He thrived through the Great Depression. He's been there. If you could ask Granddad, he'd say, "Have supplies in your pantry. Then trust the Lord for the rest!" There is a lot of science behind having at least a couple month's supply of non-perishable food waiting in your pantry, but I'll over-simplify by saying, clear out a closet or cupboard and get it filled with items appropriate for your food tolerances such as nut butter, canned vegetables, canned fish, jerky, hominy, canned beans, canned fruit, dried fruit, sauerkraut, dry milk, dry eggs, whey powder, Ovaltine, bouillon, flour, cornmeal, rice, pancake mix, salt, cooking oil, protein shakes, bars (Luna, Clif, granola, etc.), and key spices (yes, I can make the nastiest, gamiest meat taste like grass fed beef). It feels REALLY GOOD knowing if I'm on my back sick or the stores empty out, my family has a couple month's worth of food ready to go! And if the pandemic and economic aftermath passes, you're all set for some serious camping trips or easy meals after work!

## 3) Short-Season Crops

Short-season crops are quick, easy, and fun. Forget the "experts'" definition; I'm talking get the seed in the ground and you have food within 45 days, preferably 30! Look for the shortest "days-to-harvest" for each crop category. **RADISHES**, *Market Express* **TURNIPS**, beets, *Grand Duke* **KOHLRABI**, zucchini, spinach, lettuce, *Rapini Sorento* broccoli, Swiss chard, *Courgette Cocozelle* squash, *Snow King* cauliflower, *Salad King* endive, *Russian Red* kale, *White Bunching* onions, pak choi, tatsoi, and yellow crookneck squash, and sprouts (sunflower, alfalfa, bean, etc.). Did I mention radishes, turnips, and kohlrabi? Don't hesitate to get creative. I grow this stuff in pots and even six-foot vertical drainpipes tied to my fence!

Experience Hint: Seed and plants are typically much cheaper at local nurseries. But if they don't have what you want, make a list and then order online.

#### 4) Long-Season Crops

These are the rest of your garden and grocery store crops that take 45 to 120 days to produce. Keep in mind that cool overcast or high altitude areas extend the required growing season. Amaranth, beans, carrots, corn, cucumbers, melons, okra, onions, parsnips, peas, peppers, potatoes, strawberries, **RUTABAGAS**, summer squash, **SUNCHOKES**, tomatoes, **WINTER SQUASH**, etc. comprise this category. Many of the general plant categories listed under Short-Season Crops contain varieties that fall within the Long-Season Crop category, as well. Like the Short-Season Crops, I grow many of these in pots or vertical pipes. Did I mention rutabagas, sunchokes, and winter squash? These are excellent survival crop examples for nutrition, taste, and shelf-life.



#### 5) Perennial Crops

These crops comprise the 401(k) of your garden, the long-term investment. Some, like strawberries, may produce the first year, while fruit trees typically take seven years. Artichokes, rhubarb, blueberries, strawberries, raspberries, apples, European plums, pie cherries, etc. comprise standard perennial fare. With perennials you can enter the elite class of gardening with goumi, Aronia, Luma, Chilean guava, Chilean wintergreen, Autumn olive (a berry, not an olive), Gualnettya, serviceberry (saskatoon), honeyberry (haskap), and Cornelian cherry (edible dogwood). The old saying never becomes cliché, "The best time to plant a tree is 20 years ago. The second-best time is now." Do your research to find out which varieties perform in your climate. It's terribly disheartening to waste your time and money trying to grow apricots on the coast, or frost-sensitive crops in the mountains!

#### 6) Wild Crops

Fun! I love the twisted faces and questioning looks when I tell people that I guzzle stinging nettle soup between January and April. There's obviously some technique to it, but when you have your first bowl of roux-based stinging nettle soup you'll be a changed person. This is super nutritious, and a great place to begin your wild cuisine adventure. Few people understand how much food surrounds us. Obviously caution is required, but some plants are just unmistakable. Like stinging nettle! Dandelion, plantain, chicory, mallow, mustard, dock, and salsify are amazing wild edibles. Depending on location, we are tremendously blessed with edible berries like black raspberry, blackberry, salmonberry, thimbleberry, salal, huckleberry, wild currants, and gooseberries. Our family forages on acorns (leaching required), chinquapin nuts, and pine nuts. The supply of many of these seems almost unlimited deep in the mountains. Careful study and checking in with friends who know their plants before consumption can produce a new level of health, variety, and adventure in your diet. Don't overwhelm yourself and try to become a survival expert overnight. Just pick a few, study up on identification, handling, and preparation; if your uncertain have a knowledgeable friend confirm the species, then try a little in your kitchen. Go slow and try one at a time to test for allergic reactions. Having a few survival crops in your intellectual bank before you need them is an investment in health.



### 7) Relationships

Now is the time to build or strengthen relationships with neighbors. As the Covid-19 crisis hit, my neighbors texts and conversations took on a new level of meaning in next-door support. One of my neighbors has soil and perennial plants for cuttings, another has wood, I have soil science knowledge and seed, so we work together. We all know if one family is laid up, we can rely on each other to make a supply run or provide support. We periodically check in with each other with a simple text, “U guys doin okay?” Sometimes we don’t realize what an encouraging word, or showing we care, can do. One day I left my office and passed a homeless guy digging through our garbage can. When he looked up at me, I looked him in the eye and asked, “Hey Bro, how are you today?” He was shocked and his countenance completely changed. He replied, “Now that you asked...not so bad. Most people couldn’t care less. Thanks man.” It brought tears to my eyes to see how much it meant to him that I cared.

### Education

“The Arctic Ghost Child” has haunted me since I read it in *Arctic Memories*, by Fred Bruemmer. An epidemic (I think it was smallpox) had wiped out an entire Inuit village in Eastern Canada. A group of explorers came through and noticed a wild pack of sled dogs surrounding one sod hut. After chasing the dogs away and opening the hut, they were startled to find a small, white, ghost-like child greeting them. This toddler had sense enough when her family died, to lock herself inside and live off the supplies her family had stored before they died. Her ghost-like appearance was the bleached flour that covered her face as she ate everything edible without having washed herself. Who says toddlers can’t learn advanced survival? The account of this girl’s survival illustrates how important it is to pass our knowledge and wisdom along as quickly as possible. This story stuck with me; I’ve used it as a model to train my kids. I figure as soon as they can walk, they can garden!

Education represents the circle that closes the seven-step loop. With each of the seven steps, we can take a few moments to study up, expand our knowledge, address the step, act on it, and teach others. With each step, those of us with kids can make life lessons, particularly in a time when school has become essentially mandated homeschooling. Pantry stocking becomes economics, nutrition, food microbiology, food preservation, survival prepping, mathematics, space efficiency, and many other lessons. If you reach out to neighbors or others to network during this time, be sure the kids see this and experience how to build community. The seven-step process becomes a learning ground for kids to work through a potentially disastrous situation with a well-formed framework, looking at the big picture to take control of controllables, rather than worrying. While kids learn some of the facts such as carrot varieties or planting technique (WHAT to think), more importantly, the 7-step framework nurtures them to learn HOW to think through the situation in a systematic fashion, customize it to their conditions, and gain some control over the situation. In other words, they learn a thinking process that can be used, adapted, and improved for future situations.

This control brings a measure of confidence and peace. (And this document can save you thousands of hours and dollars, since this represents decades of experience between my family and a handful of colleagues.) One of the best aspects of

preparation is the family-building component; working together, discussing best approaches and which items to purchase or grow, designing and planting a garden together, foraging together...these are priceless times we'll never forget. It's all part of building a legacy. And hopefully somewhere along the line people will embrace the first and most important step that our society has drifted so far from: receiving divine wisdom from God as Joseph did. Getting right with God as Daniel and Nehemiah did. And being renewed as recorded in Acts 3:19.



“He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name” (John 1:11-12).