

# **PREPPERONOMICS REPORT**

**November 2017**

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## **A note from Daisy**

Welcome to the first issue of the Preppernomics Report. This has been inspired by Amy Dacyczyn's series, *The Tightwad Gazette*. Amy's books were originally print newsletters that were mailed to subscribers in the early 1990s. I discovered them during the most financially difficult time I ever went through, and her advice changed my life.

I've lived using her principles ever since. This newsletter is a tribute to the ideals she instilled in me. Times have changed, and while the basics are still extremely valid, there are some modern ways to save that weren't available back in Amy's newsletter heyday.

To keep the costs as low as possible, this newsletter will be sent to subscribers in a printable, PDF format without pictures. (The lack of pictures means you'll be using less ink if you print it out.) Each article will be separated so you can print the newsletters in part or in full.

You're getting the first issue free so you can check it out, see if you like it, and let me know what you'd like to see in future issues. (Reach me at [daisyluther2@gmail.com](mailto:daisyluther2@gmail.com)) Subscriptions will cost only \$5 per month [GO HERE TO SIGN UP](#). As a bonus, people who subscribe in November will be locked in as long as the newsletter runs at the \$5 price. You'll also get a *bonus* PDF copy of my eBook, *Have Yourself a Thrifty Little Christmas and a Debt-Free New Year* for subscribing before midnight on Nov. 30, 2017.

Have a thrifty day!  
Daisy

## 15 Ways to Turn Down the Heat and Still Be Cozy

Turning down the thermostat and using non-techie methods to stay warm can save you a bundle on your utility bills, and from a prepping point of view, using less heat will allow you to extend your fuel supply during an emergency. (Obviously, if you are totally without heat, greater measures would need to be taken than the ones listed here. For some SHTF heating ideas, be on the lookout for next month's issue.)

Having lived in the boondocks of Canada with only a woodstove in a drafty cabin, I'm channeling the ideas we used to stay cozy when the weather outside was literally -52 degrees. NEGATIVE FIFTY-TWO.

We are renters and have been for years, so it isn't feasible to insulate or replace the windows and wood stove with more efficient models. Maybe you rent too, or perhaps your budget just doesn't have room for those kinds of investments. So, in the interest of non-tech solutions, here are a few ways to keep warmer without plugging in electric space heaters or cranking up the thermostat.

**#1) Keep your wrists and ankles covered.** Wear shirts with sleeves long enough to keep your wrists covered and long socks that keep your ankles covered. You lose a great deal of heat from those two areas.

**#2) Get some long-johns.** Wearing long underwear beneath your jeans or PJs will work like insulation to keep your body heat in. I like the silky kind sold by discount stores like Wal-Mart or Target for indoor use, rather than the sturdier outdoor type sold by ski shops.

**#3) Wear slippers.** Select house shoes with a solid bottom rather than the slipper sock type. This forms a barrier between your feet and the cold floor. We keep a basket of inexpensive slippers in varying sizes by the door for visitors because it makes such a big difference. Going around in your stocking feet on a cold floor is a certain way to be chilled right through.

**#4) Get up and get moving.** Physical activity will increase your body temperature. If you're cold, get up and clean something, dance with your kids, bring in some firewood, play tug-of-war with the dog, or do a chore. Get that blood flowing!

**#5) Pile on the blankets.** If you're going to be sitting down, have some layered blankets available. Our reading area has polar fleece blankets which we top with fluffy comforters for a cozy place to relax.

**#6) Use a hot water bottle.** If you're just sitting around try placing a hot water bottle (carefully wrapped to avoid burns) under the blankets with you.

**#7) Use rice bags.** If you don't have the ready-made ones, you can simply place dry rice in a clean sock. Heat this in the microwave, if you use one, for about a minute, or place in a 100-degree oven, watching carefully, for about 10 minutes. If you have a woodstove or fireplace, keep some rice bags in a large ceramic crock beside your heat source so they are constantly warm. You can put your feet on them or tuck them under the blankets on your lap.

**#8) Insulate using items you have.** Line the exterior walls with bookcases. It makes a difference because it keeps heat in and cold air out. If you look at pictures of old castles you will see lovely tapestry wall-hangings - this was to help insulate the stone walls, which absorbed the cold and released it into the space. Channel your medieval ancestors and hang decorative quilts, tapestries, or blankets on the walls to add an extra layer of insulation.

**#9) Layer your windows.** Do you have older, single pane windows? Insulate by placing draft blockers at the bottom in the window sill, then top that with a heavy blanket, taking care to overlap the wall and window edges with it. Over that, we hung thermal curtains that remain closed. You can also pick up that plastic you apply to the windows using a blow-dryer. Be very careful that whatever method you use doesn't trap moisture near the windowsills. This can cause the wood to rot.

**#10) Get a rug.** If you have hardwood, tile or laminate flooring, an area rug is a must. Like the blankets on the walls, this is another layer of insulation between you and the great outdoors. This is particularly important if you have no basement. Area rugs will protect your feet from the chill.

**#11) Wear a scarf.** No, not like a big heavy wool scarf that you'd wear outdoors - just a small, lightweight one that won't get in your way and annoy you. This serves two purposes. First, it covers a bit more exposed skin. Secondly, it keeps body heat from escaping out the neck of your shirt.

**#12) Burn candles.** Especially in a smaller space, a burning candle can raise the temperature a couple of degrees.

**#13) Wear fingerless gloves.** If it's really cold, grab some fingerless gloves at the discount store. (Some of them have a little mitten fold-over - we pick them up for a dollar a pair and just cut off the mitten part.)

**#14) Cuddle.** Share your body heat under the blankets when you're watching movies or reading a book.

**#15) Drink warm beverages.** Sip coffee, cocoa, tea, or cider to help warm up from the inside out. Put your drinks into a travel mug with a lid to keep them warm longer.

Each home will have different quirks and drafts, but these tips will get you headed toward a cozier winter.

**Your checklist:**

- o Blankets
- o Fingerless gloves
- o Candles
- o Long socks
- o Rice bags
- o Long underwear
- o Scarves
- o Rugs
- o Window coverings
- o Draft stoppers
- o Plastic for the windows

## **In Season: Pumpkins**

If you love pumpkin, this is your month!

Right after Halloween, pumpkins go on sale dirt cheap in many areas. Sometimes, you'll even notice people piling uncarved Halloween pumpkins by their trash can. Get all the pumpkins you can get your grubby paws on and you'll have something delicious to put back for the winter at a fraction of the usual cost.

### **Pumpkins are loaded with disease-fighting nutrients.**

- A 1 cup serving of cubed pumpkin contains only 30 calories, no fat, and 8 grams of carbohydrates.
- Despite the low calorie count, pumpkins are the only food that contains 3 carotenoids - lutein, alpha-carotene, and beta-carotene, which fight disease and slow the signs of aging.
- Pumpkins are chock-full of minerals: iron, zinc, calcium and magnesium.
- Pumpkin seeds are an excellent source of zinc, manganese, and tryptophan.
- Pumpkins are very high in Vitamin A, Vitamin C, folate, and Vitamin B6.
- Pumpkin has anti-inflammatory properties.
- Pumpkin is very high in antioxidants, which fight cancer-causing free radicals.
- Pumpkin may help to prevent age-related macular disease in the elderly.

Many of the heirloom varieties will provide you with far more pumpkin than the smooth skinned classic orange varieties. We always carve our pumpkins the day of Halloween so that we can use them for food. (I just can't wrap my brain around wasting all that food!)

This year our 2 jack-o-lantern pumpkins netted us a whopping 14 quarts of canned pumpkin, 3 cups of frozen puree, and two pies.

Always wash pumpkins before slicing into them. This will help to prevent any insecticide that may have been used from being introduced to the flesh inside the hard shell.

The easiest way to remove the rind from a pumpkin is to cut it in half, remove the seeds (reserving them), and bake the halves on a cookie sheet until the flesh is tender. This will take 30-45 minutes, depending on the size of the halves.

## **Pumpkin Trivia**

- Pumpkin is part of the Cucurbita family, which also includes cucumbers and squash.
- The custom of carving pumpkins comes from Ireland, where they originally carved turnips.
- Pumpkins originated in Central America as early as 5500 BC.
- Early American settlers made a version of pumpkin pie by hollowing out a pumpkin and filling it with milk, honey, and spices, then baking it in the ashes of their cooking fire.
- Pumpkins are botanically classified as fruits, not vegetables.
- Although the classic pumpkin is orange, there are heirloom varieties that are green, yellow, red, white, blue, and tan.

## **Preserving Pumpkin**

The saddest thing to me is to see all the jack-o-lanterns discarded, rotting in the garbage when that delectable pumpkin could have been used or preserved for future goodies. Meanwhile, at Thanksgiving and Christmas, the same folks that tossed their jack-o-lanterns buy the less-than-appetizing cans of pumpkin puree to make their pies at a vastly marked up price.

If you have way more pumpkin than your family can possibly eat right now, get busy preserving it.

Preserving pumpkin is easy, and leaves you with the supplies for delectable baked goods throughout the year.

## **Freezing**

The most fool proof way to freeze pumpkin is to make pumpkin puree. Then, once it cools, fill freezer bags. Lay them flat on a cookie sheet to freeze so that you have nice, easily stackable rectangular packages of puree. Freeze them in 1 or 2 cup quantities for recipe-sized portions. (Mark on the outside of the bag how many cups of pumpkin it contains.) If you want chunks, cut the pumpkin into cubes and then blanch it for 3 minutes, dunking it immediately in an ice bath. Then, freeze the pumpkin chunks on a cookie sheet and move them to storage bags once they're frozen.

## **Dehydrating**

You can also dehydrate your pumpkin in puree form. Spread your pumpkin puree onto parchment paper and put it in the dehydrator at 125 degrees. Dehydrate for about 8 hours, then flip over the sheets so that the bottom gets as dry as the top. After you dehydrate the puree, let it cool. Then, you'll powder it for inclusion in future

deliciousness like hot beverages or recipes that would benefit from some pumpkin flavored oomph.

## **Canning**

You've probably heard that canning pumpkin is unsafe. And that's true...if it's pureed. That's because the purees are so thick that they don't heat evenly, leaving them open to the risk of botulism. It's perfectly fine to can your pumpkin in chunks in a pressure canner. Then, when you need it, pour out the pumpkin and mash it up or run it through the blender. You've got puree in seconds. I leave my home-canned pumpkin totally without seasoning so that it can be used flexibly, in either sweet or savory dishes.

Here's how to can pumpkin (or winter squash.) This is an excerpt from my book, *The Prepper's Canning Guide*, which you can find on Amazon.

### **Funky Chunk Squash or Pumpkin**

#### **Ingredients:**

- Uncooked pumpkin or winter squash
- Boiling water as needed

#### **Directions:**

1. Cut up your pumpkin or squash and remove the rind, seeds, and strings. (We always save the seeds for roasting.)
2. Cut it into 1-inch chunks.
3. You can raw pack your pumpkin or squash. Fill your quart jars with cubes, leaving 1 inch of headspace.
4. Fill the jar with hot water, keeping your inch of headspace.
5. Slide a rubber utensil around the sides of the jar to remove air pockets.
6. Lid the jars and process them in your p-canner for 90 minutes at 11 pounds of pressure, adjusting for altitude.

#### **Don't forget the pumpkin seeds!**

Do as our ancestors did and use as much of the pumpkin as possible! If you have chickens they'll love you forever if you give them the seeds. Not only does it provide them with extra essential fatty acids, but it can help them get rid of intestinal parasites.

If you don't have chickens, don't despair - you can roast those seeds for a crunchy delicious human snack! Here's how:

### **Garlic Roasted Pumpkin Seeds**

## Ingredients

- Seeds from 2 pumpkins
- 2 tbsp. of olive oil
- 1 tsp of garlic powder
- 1 tsp of sea salt or 1 tsp of seasoning salt
- Coarsely ground black pepper to taste (optional)

## Directions

1. Carefully wash the pumpkin seeds in a strainer. Don't worry if there is a little bit of pumpkin flesh still on them, but you'll want to remove the big chunks. The seeds will feel very slimy in your hands when they're washed - this is entirely normal.
2. In a large mixing bowl whisk together the seasonings and olive oil.
3. Toss the washed pumpkin seeds in the oil mixture.
4. Spread the seeds out in a thin single layer on a baking sheet.
5. Bake at 275 degrees for 1-2 hours, or until seeds are nice and dry. Stir every half hour.

Let them cool completely before putting them away. Store the pumpkin seeds in a jar with an airtight lid for up to a week. (Good luck keeping them around for a week - they last about a day in my house!)

## **Savory Ways to Eat Pumpkin**

Pumpkins are versatile - don't think you're just going to be eating pumpkin pie for months. (Although, honestly, who could argue with that?)

Pumpkin recipes don't have to be sweet. Pumpkin that was frugally obtained can be a thrifty substitute in any recipe calling for a winter squash like acorn or butternut, or even sweet potatoes.

Use your preserved pumpkin for some of these savory pumpkin ideas:

- A favorite way to use up pumpkin puree when I was a kid was to fry it up with some salt and brown sugar until it got caramelized. (Can you tell I grew up in the South?)
- Make pumpkin soup - recipes abound on the internet
- Make pumpkin and sage ravioli filling and serve with alfredo sauce
- Roast cubes of pumpkin in olive oil with some salt, pepper, thyme, and garlic.
- Blend some cooked pumpkin with cream, garlic, a dash of nutmeg, and parmesan. Mix in with al dente pasta and bake at 350 for 30 minutes, or until heated through and bubbly.

- Spice it up with cumin, salt, pepper, garlic, and onion and use it to fill empanadas or enchiladas. A green sauce highlights this autumnal Mexican feast.
- Make a side dish of mashed pumpkin. Stir in some cream or broth, butter, salt, pepper, and if you want, garlic and onion powder. Add just a dash of brown sugar and cayenne to take it to the next level.

### **Jack'o'Lantern Pie Filling**

Pumpkin pie is known as "Jack-o-Lantern Pie" in our house, since we have it every year a day or two after Halloween. As I mentioned above, we don't carve our pumpkins until Halloween Day so that they remain fresh enough to use for pies and to be preserved. This is egg-free due to my daughter's allergies and can be made completely from stockpile ingredients.

#### Ingredients

- 2 cups of fresh pumpkin puree
- 1 cup of sweetened condensed milk
- 3 tbsp. of flour
- 1 tbsp. of cinnamon powder.
- 1 tsp of powdered ginger
- 1 tsp of vanilla extract
- 3/4 tsp of nutmeg
- 3/4 tsp of allspice
- 1/2 tsp of clove
- dash of salt
- Pie shell of choice (graham cracker crust is delicious with this filling)

#### Directions

1. In a large bowl, stir vanilla extract into condensed milk.
2. Whisk flour into the vanilla and milk until it is well combined.
3. Stir in pumpkin puree and spices.
4. Pour this mixture into your pie shell.
5. Bake at 350 degrees for one hour or until the filling is firm. You may need to cover the edges of your pie crust with foil.

Allow the pie to cool for at least one hour before slicing it. Some people prefer to chill it for several hours in the refrigerator before serving. Top that baby with vanilla ice cream or whipped cream.

## Outdoor Tasks for November

Life will be better in the spring if you take care of a few outdoor tasks in the fall before the snow flies. Here's a quick checklist of those jobs:

- Rake your yard. It's a lot easier to clean up those leaves before they're soaking in the mud after the winter thaw.
- Instead of bagging them up and throwing them away use them for mulch in your vegetable gardens and flower beds.
- If you have a compost bin, throw in some leaves. Be sure to add nitrogen in the form of manure, bloodmeal, cottonseed meal, or bone meal. The rule of thumb is 5 parts leaves to 1-part nitrogen.
- Once you've added mulch, cover your garden beds with a layer of cardboard. Then top that with heavy plastic held in place by bricks, chunks of wood, or cement blocks. Use inexpensive tarps or cut up, heavy garbage bags for the top layer.
- Remove all debris from your walkways or any place you'll need to shovel when the snow flies.
- Be sure you have a sturdy shovel that doesn't need repairs and some de-icing salt well before you need it.
- Clean up your garden tools and put them away. If they're put away clean and dry, your tools will last much longer.
- Drain your hoses and sprinkler systems. If they freeze with water in the lines, it can cause them to crack.
- Clean out your gutters so that leaves don't clog them.

You've all heard that saying, "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure." Well, these maintenance tasks can help save you money by keeping your home, yard, and tools in good repair.

No one wants to be forced to buy new tools or hoses in the spring because they neglected the ones they already had. And even more costly, there's nothing worse than seeing a leak or damage that could have been prevented by just a few simple steps.

## Fall Decorating on a Dime

It's so much fun to see the gorgeous red, gold, and orange decorations that mean autumn is finally here. And if you're hosting the family for Thanksgiving, you will absolutely want to have your home showing off its harvest best!

But who can afford to go out every year and drop hundreds of dollars on fall décor? Not me! I do pick up a few things each year and store them away carefully for future Thanksgivings, but most of our décor is acquired on the cheap - or even better - for free.

### Hit up the dollar store.

- You can find all sorts of fall goodies there, but often they look cheap.
- Carefully select your items and then jazz them up with ribbons and paint that you already own.
- Load up on fall flowers like sunflowers and mums.
- Get leaf garlands. Wind several together for a lush look, or remove the leaves to use for other projects.

**Burlap and twine are the autumn decorator's friend.** They're inexpensive and can be used in all sorts of ways.

- Make table runner
- Wrap up a vase for rustic flair
- Cover a throw pillow
- Make bows to tie onto wreaths or the backs of chairs
- Tie flatware in a bundle with twine

...The list could go on and on.

**Nature is full of free "decorations."** Take the kids on a scouting walk with some sturdy tote bags.

- Put bare, fallen branches into a vase for a stark, bold look.
- Pop gathered acorns into clear glass dishes or Mason jars.
- Colorful leaves can be preserved in waxed paper. Place a leaf between 2 pieces of waxed paper. Put a towel over it and press it with a warm iron until the paper is sealed together. Carefully cut around the leaf once it cools. You can use fishing line to hang your preserved leaves from a curtain rod at varying heights.
- Gather pine cones and put them in a basket near the fireplace.
- Make picture frames from gathered twigs. Glue them onto the front of yard sale frames for a rustic, simple project.

- Paint an old board an autumnal color. Then gather sticks from the yard and glue them on to form a word like "FALL." (Letters with straight lines are the easiest for this project.)

Upcycle household trash into décor.

- Remove the labels from aluminum cans. With adult supervision, carefully poke holes in the cans in whatever design you'd like. Paint them black and orange and pop a tea light candle in them for easy, homemade luminaries. (Don't use candle's any place that a costume might catch fire. Use battery operated tea lights for places like that.)
- Turn glass bottles and jars into "pumpkins." Reuse those old salad dressing, liquor, wine, and syrup bottles. Get the kiddos to paint the bottoms orange, then wrap the tops with twine for a rustic collection.
- Stuff old clothes and make a scarecrow for your front flower garden. Top him/her with a hat. The sky is the limit for style with this idea.

Bring out your cozy belongings.

- Put pretty blankets on the arms of chairs and sofas.
- Wrap throw pillows in autumnal, knitted scarves for a warm look.
- Put up your heavier curtains.
- Add a warm, lush rug to the living room.
- Fold extra blankets on the foot of each bed.
- Bring out your apple scented candles.

Make your home warm, cozy, and inviting without spending a lot of money. Put your decorations away carefully so you can use them year after year.

## **How to Have a Frugal Feast This Thanksgiving**

The holidays are wonderful, but they sure can be expensive. Many people don't want to spend a month's grocery budget on just one meal. Other families are having a tough time financially, because of a job loss, a foreclosure, or exorbitant looming bills. When that's the case, the holidays can be a time for stress instead of enjoyment.

Contrary to what you may think, you don't have to sell a kidney on the black market to put together a memorable and delicious Thanksgiving dinner. You can make a lot of it right from your pantry, and other items from reasonably priced items at the store.

If you've been building a stockpile, then the food in your pantry contains all sorts of basics for scratch cooking, purchased at the lowest prices available. Because of this, you can focus on purchasing only a few special items, like a turkey or a must-have goodie that is a tradition in your family, while you enjoy delicious yet thrifty treats for the rest of your Thanksgiving dinner.

Break out the vintage cookbooks when looking for creative ways to use your pantry stockpile. My favorite cookbook is my old Fanny Farmer cookbook, which was written in 1896 and updated in the early 1900s. I like older cookbooks because the ingredients are simple and readily available. With these types of recipes, you won't be scurrying around looking for some of those crazy Martha Stewart-esque gourmet ingredients like the breath of a yellow garden snail, captured during the 2nd full moon of the month.

Make the presentation lovely, with fancy toothpicks in the appetizers, colorful napkins, and your nicest china. Use some of the fall décor ideas in this issue for a festive table. If served with the proper flair - think candles, cloth napkins, and a beautiful presentation - any dinner seems just a little more festive

Following are some ideas for a festive meal that will make your guests feel well-fed and pampered, without emptying your pockets. You'll discover that many of the ingredients already reside in your pantry, or are standard groceries that you'll have on hand, like eggs and cheese.

### **Thrifty Appetizers and Party Snacks**

- Crackers (Usually on sale during the holidays)
- Warm up a fruity jam and add some hot pepper flakes. Serve this over cream cheese for a deceptively elegant appetizer
- Homemade yogurt mixed with herbs to make a dip for veggies
- Breadsticks with marinara sauce
- Chex mix made with melted white chocolate
- Deviled eggs

- Garlic roasted pumpkin seeds (recipe above)
- Make hummus from canned chick peas
- Soup
- Slice a baguette and toast the slices. Serve with dishes of high quality olive oil for dipping.

### **Festive Platters**

Platters of cheeses and meats are pretty expensive choices. Simply removing things from jars and arranging them on a platter will make them look far more elegant than their humble origins.

- Place a variety of pickles on a dish for a relish tray.
- Olives and marinated vegetables create a lovely yet inexpensive antipasto
- Don't buy the readymade veggie tray from the grocery store. Instead, peel and slice your carrots and cut up other veggies that you can find at a reasonable price.
- Instead of a fruit tray with out-of-season luxuries, go with fruits that are well-priced at this time of year, like mandarin oranges, pears, apples, and grapes.

### **Thanksgiving dinner ideas**

Don't feel obligated to invest in out-of-season delicacies like fresh berries and asparagus in November. Splurge on a turkey and let the side dishes take a backseat.

And if you can't afford the fanciest of dinners this year, don't despair. Roast a chicken instead of a turkey or a ham, or make some homemade stuffing baked with drumsticks. Things like stuffing (or dressing, depending on what part of the country you hail from) were originally created as a way to use up something that would ordinarily be thrown out - stale bread.

Channel your Depression-era ancestors and make your goodies the frugal, old-fashioned way.

- Homemade rolls or biscuits
- Pasta or potato salad
- Whip butter with a touch of honey- it makes the butter go further but looks fancy
- Canned or frozen veggies will seem more festive when topped with breadcrumbs, bacon, and/or cheese
- Mashed potatoes
- Scalloped potatoes
- Dumplings (maybe this is a Southern thing but we always had dumplings with turkey dinner when I was a kid)

- Stuffing - save up your bread scraps or make a batch of homemade cornbread for the base. Skip the fancy add-ins like water chestnuts and oysters and go back to the basics
- Mashed sweet potatoes or winter squash with a sprinkle of brown sugar
- Homemade cranberry sauce (far tastier and about the same price as canned)

## **Desserts**

Don't go all out on a bakery-made dessert. Make it from scratch from basic ingredients. Consider these more humble ideas.

- Decorate a cake (or cupcakes) with fall-colored sprinkles
- Pies can be more expensive if you make the crust with pounds and pounds of butter. Try a single crust pie or make it with shortening.
- Banana bread or pumpkin bread
- Homemade cookies
- A fruit crisp
- Pudding with whipped cream
- Brownies
- Ice cream (put it in cones or add some toppings to jazz things up)

## **The most important ingredient.**

Remember, Thanksgiving is a tradition based on gratitude for a good harvest. We have so many things to be thankful for in this country, even when times are tough. The most important element of your Thanksgiving dinner isn't on the table - it's the ones sitting at your table.

## **How to Add Thanksgiving Leftovers to Your Stockpile**

The day after Thanksgiving, most people's refrigerators are so full with leftovers that getting to door shut requires the family engineer to play Tupperware Jenga with all of the containers of food. Inevitably, in many households, much of the leftovers go to waste after the 10th turkey sandwich in a row. In this economy, who can afford to let anything go to waste?

There's a lot more you can do with those Thanksgiving leftovers besides referring to your What To Do With Leftover Turkey cookbook. (Yes, there was actually an entire cookbook on this?!?) The preserving goes way past turkey - there are lots of tasty ways to preserve your other leftovers too.

Today, instead of fighting the Black Friday crowds, spend the day adding things that are frugal and delicious to your pantry.

### **Freezing**

Nearly all leftovers can be successfully frozen and used in other meals. Here are some ideas on ways to use your frozen goodies.

- Freeze vegetables in cheese sauce to be used later in a pureed soup. Cheesy cauliflower and cheesy broccoli soup are big hits in our household. Simply thaw the veggies in cheese sauce and add to some white potatoes boiled in water. Thin the mixture down as desired with milk and serve piping hot.
- Freeze chopped meat mixed with gravy as the basis for a future speedy stew. If you want, you can also add cooked carrots and roasted potatoes to the mixture.
- Freeze leftover dinner rolls. You can reheat them as needed to use as rolls or you can dice them finely and freeze them for use in stuffing.
- Freeze desserts in individual servings for brown bag treats. They'll be thawed out and delicious by lunch time.
- Freeze single servings of casseroles, lasagnas, etc. You'll have the best lunches in the office!
- Use sectioned containers to make your own version of TV dinners with your leftovers. These are great on days when there's no time to cook and can be personalized to family member's preferences.

### **Dehydrating**

Another way to preserve your leftovers is by dehydrating them. Whether you have a commercial dehydrator or you use your oven on a low setting, you can fill many jars with home-dried holiday leftovers.

- Dehydrate the remainder of your veggie tray. I find that veggies dehydrate very nicely when they are coarsely grated with the biggest holes in the cheese grater. Be sure and squeeze the excess moisture out with a paper towel to cut down on the drying time. You can powder the dried veggies to add a boost of nutrition to just about anything, or leave them grated to add to soups, casseroles, and stews.
- Dehydrate leftover turkey or ham to be added to casseroles and soups.
- Leftover fruit can be pureed and then dehydrated into homemade fruit roll-ups.
- Dehydrate mashed potatoes, then run them through the blender for instant potato flakes. You can use these to thicken soups or gravies naturally.
- Dehydrate leftover stuffing, then rehydrate ("Stovetop Stuffing"-style) with broth when it's time to serve it.

## **Canning**

Everyone knows that canning is my favorite way to preserve food. If you have some jars and fresh lids, your kitchen already contains everything you need to add an abundant amount of food to your stockpile. The following recipes are from my book, *The Prepper's Canning Guide*. Turkey, veggies, and cranberry sauce will all make beautiful additions to your home-canned goods. Use these recipes as a guideline to adapt what you have left over to nutritious homemade meals in jars.

### **Shredded Turkey**

If you have lots of turkey (or chicken) left over after a meal, you can shred the meat with two forks and then jar it up for use in recipes like enchiladas, soft tacos, casseroles, or drenched in barbecue sauce for sandwiches.

#### **Ingredients (listed per jar):**

- Roasted turkey or chicken, shredded
- 1 clove of crushed garlic
- ¼ of an onion
- ¼ teaspoon sea salt
- ½ teaspoon black pepper (or to taste)
- Water as needed
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#### **Directions:**

1. Place garlic and onion in the bottom of jars.
2. Fill the jars with shredded poultry, topping off with salt and pepper.
3. Pour hot water over the contents of the jars.

4. **IMPORTANT:** Skipping this step may cause your jars not to seal. Carefully slide a table knife or other narrow utensil down the interior sides of the jars, removing air pockets.
5. Lid the jars and process in a p-canner for 90 minutes for quarts or 75 minutes for pints at 13 pounds of pressure, adjusting for altitude.

### **Making Turkey or Chicken Stock**

After you remove the meat from the carcass to can it, you'll be left with a rather desolate-looking carcass. Don't be deterred by the ugliness of this naked bird! This is canning GOLD! Be sure and scavenge through your refrigerator for vegetables that can be added to the cooking pot.

**An important note about spices:** Sage tastes horrible when canned - if it is normally an ingredient in your chicken soup, add it at the time that you heat and serve it. It's really, really, really, REALLY bad, and even my dog wouldn't partake of the broth I had canned with sage in it. And she eats dirty shoes.

#### **Ingredients:**

- Carcass, giblets, neck, and lower quality meat
- Assorted uncooked vegetable: carrots, peppers
- 1 head of garlic
- 2-4 onions (Note: there's no need to peel the garlic and onions as long as they are organic - just wash them well.)
- 2 tablespoons salt
- Spices of choice: try whole peppercorns, salt, oregano, basil, and/or bay leaves - remember, don't go crazy!

#### **Directions for stock:**

1. Place all ingredients in the crockpot.
2. Fill the crockpot right to the top with water.
3. Put the crockpot on low for 12-14 hours and let it simmer undisturbed overnight... Zzzzzzzzzz.....
4. The next day, strain the contents of the crockpot into a large container - I use a big soup pot and a metal colander.
5. Allow the bones to cool, then remove any meat that you would like to add to your soup.

I always give our dog a big treat - a bowl of turkey with gristle, fat, and skin. She's a little on the skinny side because she runs

constantly when she's outside so I think that the occasional fat intake is good for her. She also likes the mushy carrots. I usually divide the "sludge" into a few different servings of treats for her.

#### **Directions for canning:**

1. If you have chicken or turkey you'd like to add, cut it into bite-sized pieces. I like a mixture of light meat and dark meat for this purpose.
2. Also cut up the meat you removed from the crockpot.
3. Place approximately 1 cup of turkey in each of your quart jars. (Give or take a little!)
4. Add 1-2 cloves of garlic to the jars.
5. You will have a rich, dark, beautiful stock from the overnight crockpot project. Ladle this over your cut-up turkey and garlic, leaving 1 inch of headspace at the top of the jars. (If you run out of broth, top it up with water - your broth will still be very flavorful.)
6. Wipe the lip of your jars with a cloth dipped in white vinegar.
7. Place the lids on and process them in your p-canner for 90 minutes at 10 pounds, adjusting for altitude.

These deep golden, rich meaty jars are an excellent base for turkey/chicken and dumplings, as well as any type of soup.

#### **Canning Cranberry Sauce**

If you have leftover cranberry sauce, you may can it for future use. I like to use teeny little half pint jam jars for this.

1. Heat the cranberry sauce to a simmer on the stovetop.
2. Ladle the sauce into sanitized jars, leaving 1/4 inch of headspace.
3. Wipe the rims of the jars, then place the lid on them.
4. Process in a water bath canner for 15 minutes, adjusting for altitude.

#### **Leftover Soup**

The ultimate leftover canning concoction has to be the eclectic "Leftover Soup". An example of a soup I made one year contained carrots that were cooked in honey, green beans with some butter, some diced sweet potatoes, corn with butter, and roasted chicken.

#### **Ingredients:**

- Round up whatever veggies that you have left over. Don't worry if they have some butter and seasonings on them - it will all add to the rich flavor of your soup.
- Raid your veggie drawer: chop your crudités into bite sized pieces and add them raw to your jars - they'll cook beautifully during the canning process.
- 1 cup diced meat/poultry per jar
- 1 clove garlic per jar
- 2 tablespoons chopped onion per jar
- 1 cup of stock per jar
- Diced potatoes (optional)
- Water as needed

**Directions:**

1. Place your leftovers, potatoes, and chopped crudités into a large bowl and combine them well.
2. Add one cup of your vegetable mixture to each sanitized quart jar.
3. Add 1 cup of meat/poultry to each jar.
4. Season with a clove of garlic and 1-2 tablespoons of chopped onion in each jar
5. Top your veggies and meat with one cup of the delicious stock that you made from the turkey carcass.
6. Fill the jar the rest of the way with water. The flavors will blend - don't worry!
7. Wipe the lip of your jars with a cloth dipped in white vinegar and then place the lids on.
8. Process the soup in your pressure canner for 90 minutes at 10 pounds of pressure, adjusting for altitude.

*Variations:*

- If you want a different type of soup, add 2 tablespoons of tomato paste to each jar and season with some Italian spices like basil and oregano.
- At serving time, you can add some cooked rice, barley, or pasta to your soup.

## Making the Most of Black Friday Sales (Without Getting Stabbed)

Personally, I'd rather gouge out my eyes with a melon baller than go to the mall on the day after Christmas. Every year I do a compilation of shocking videos of shoppers behaving badly, and every year it seems like they behave just a little bit worse.

Despite that, there are some AWESOME ways to save money on Black Friday, all without the risk of getting trampled by someone who is determined to get ALL the purple bath towels.

- **Shop at locally owned stores.** Everyone thinks Big Box when they think Black Friday sales, but small, locally owned businesses will also be promoting their best deals. Not only can you support your neighbors, you probably won't be fighting the crowds and you'll get items that are far more unique than the stuff at Wal-Mart.
- **Do your research ahead of time.** If you DO decide to brave the mall or the local Best Buy, know what you want before you go. Maybe even go on a little recon mission so that you know where the desired item is displayed. Be careful about getting caught up in the crush when they open the doors. Make a beeline for what you want, grab it, and get out.
- **Have a plan.** If you go to a sale without an idea of what you want to buy, you and your money will soon be parted. It's easy to get distracted by all the bright, shiny things they want you to buy and lots of people get swept up in the frenzy of everyone frantically grabbing everything in sight. Make a list of the people you want to shop for and what you want to get them. Be single-minded in your determination to stick to your plan.
- **Shop online.** Better yet, don't leave your house. Grab a turkey sandwich and your laptop while you hit your favorite online destinations. Amazon has incredible sales (check the website and Facebook page because I'll be posting lightning deals all day long!) As well, watch for great deals on your other favorite websites. I'll be running sales on prepping supplies on my site, PreppersMarket.com, and I know many other small, non-Amazon sites will be doing the same.
- **Know who is having the best online sales.** One report says that this year's best online deals will be had at the websites for Amazon, Best Buy, Kohl's, eBay, Target, and Wal-Mart.
- **Don't overspend online.** One really easy way to stay in budget is to pick up a pre-paid MasterCard or Visa and vow to use only that for your online shopping spree. I'll be giving away a PDF copy of

my book, "Have Yourself a Thrifty Little Christmas" with even more great ideas for sticking to your holiday budget.

Remember, marketing experts are paid millions of dollars every year to separate you from your money on this ONE DAY. Don't be snowed by their tactics. Make your plan and stick with it.

## On Sale and In Season This Month

If you know the sales cycles used by the retail industry, you can save a LOT of money. Below, you'll find a list of items that are traditionally great buys in the month of November. Not only are there some awesome post-Halloween sales, but other items are frequently reduced this month.

### On Sale

#### Post-Halloween sales:

- Candy
- String lights
- Decorations (paper plates, cups, napkins and disposable goods are useful during power outages)
- Costumes (fun for dress-up or save them for next Halloween)

#### Other sales:

- Baking items: Baking powder, baking soda, cornmeal, flour, white sugar, brown sugar, powdered sugar, Bisquik, cake/brownie/cookie mixes, canned frostings,
- Peanut butter
- Holiday foods: gravy, gravy mixes, seasoning packets, broth, Stove Top Stuffing, cornbread mixes, canned dried onions, canned pumpkin
- Turkey (The best deals are the week before and the week after Thanksgiving)

And of course, as we discussed above, Black Friday is full of deals.

### In-Season Fruits and Vegetables

Our ancestors would have found the American diet to be wildly confusing. Blueberries and asparagus in November? You can save a bundle by focusing on in-season produce. In some areas, the farmer's markets will still be selling these items and you can also find them inexpensively at most grocery stores.

Here's your November grocery list:

- Apples
- Bananas
- Beets
- Broccoli
- Brussels Sprouts
- Carrots
- Cauliflower

- Cranberries
- Garlic
- Ginger
- Grapes
- Mushrooms
- Parsnips
- Pears
- Pineapple
- Pumpkins
- Sweet Potatoes and Yams
- Winter Squash

## Reader Round-up

Every month, I'll be asking for your best advice for the following month's issue. Send your ideas to [daisyluther2@gmail.com](mailto:daisyluther2@gmail.com) and put "Preppernomics" in the subject line. I won't be able to use every idea, but thank you in advance for sending them in!

Would you like to see your best Christmas tips and recipes in the December Preppernomics Report?

I'm looking for thrifty holiday ideas and recipes that are festive and frugal to feature in next month's issue. Send yours in an email to [daisyluther2@gmail.com](mailto:daisyluther2@gmail.com) and put "Preppernomics" in the subject line.

### **Thank you for reading!**

I hope you've enjoyed your free issue of the Preppernomics Report.

Remember, if you subscribe this month, your price of only \$5 per month will be locked in as long as the newsletter is running. You'll also receive a free PDF copy of my book, *Have Yourself a Thrifty Little Christmas*, and you'll be able to join a Facebook group where we'll hold monthly frugal challenges and share ideas with one another.

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Until next month...