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## Emergency food storage: The Pallet Root Cellar

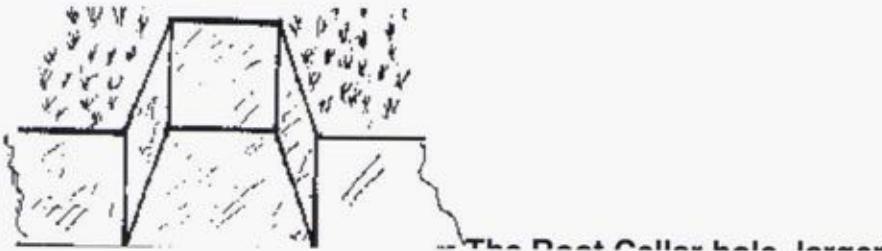
By Author and survival expert, Ted Wright!

Back in the 80's I developed my "Pallet Root cellar" to face the existing problems. This is obviously patterned after the old, rural storage system some of us still remember seeing way back when. The root cellar system allows for the storage of a great amount of food (and *some* beer, inside joke!) in a small space that is naturally regulated at a constant temperature of about 63 degrees year round. The only proviso is that the lid must be kept on at all times. Back in the old days it was a door.

All food stored in the root cellar should be of the dry variety, tightly sealed in dry containers. Rice, grains of all kinds, beans of all varieties, as well as packaged food items such as soups and similar items. The product of our food dehydrator is also stored down there. A typical meal example could be to select some beef stew base packets, boil some white beans, put in some dried carrots, tomatoes, and potatoes and with sourdough rolls enjoy a fine "backyard stew!"

Construction of the Pallet Root Cellar is very simple and can be made and put into use in a weekend. Here's how:

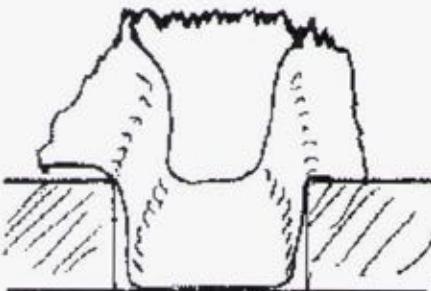
- ☛ Collect six pallets from outside stores and garbage pick up points or the local furniture movers.
- ☛ Measure your pallets (usually 4'x4') and dig a hole several inches bigger all round than the pallets. Be sure to allow enough depth for the top pallet to be below ground by 6" when it is put on.



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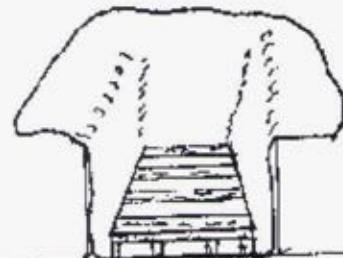
**The Root Cellar hole, larger than pallets.**

- Line the hole with a sheet of good thick plastic, the plastic should loosely drape in the hole.



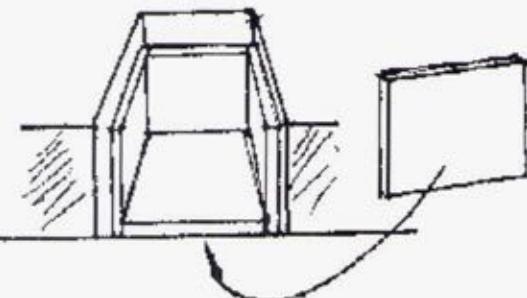
**Hole lined with plastic.**

- Place one pallet flat on the bottom for a "Floor." Be careful not to tear the plastic liner.



**The floor installed.**

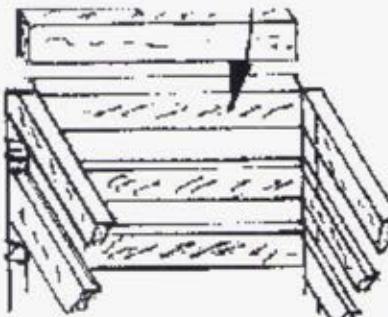
- Standing on the floor pallet in the hole place the other pallets around the sides to make "Walls." You will find that the pallets do not support each other because they are all the same size.



**Walls installed.**

- Cut 2 pieces of 2'x4' the same width as the floor pallet and attach it to the top of the end pallets or side pallets (it does not matter which) using bailing wire or thick string. Now the pallets will not cave in.





2x4s installed to hold walls.

- ☛ Secure the four corners of the pallets to each other with wire or string and you will have a sturdy box to work with.
- ☛ Pull the plastic inside the box and, as you stand inside, pull loose dirt down around the sides of the box taking up the space between the outside walls of the box and the sides of the unit. Pack the dirt down and "firm up" the box before you get out. Then, from topside, walk around the box tamping down the dirt with your feet. When finished pull the plastic back out of the box and roll it up.

Now you are ready to stock the box with food. I use 30 gal plastic trash bins as containers and fill these first. Once food is placed in the storage unit, the top pallet should be put on. Pull the rolled plastic over the top to keep the inside cool.

You may decide to put hinges on the "lid," as well as make shelves or other improvements to my basic design.

As soon as the unit is full, cover the lid with a good 3" of newspaper, pull the plastic liner back in place and cover with a good strong plastic tarp. Then put rocks, bricks, or soil over the tarp to keep it in place.

That's it. You are now the proud owner of your own "Root cellar" full of food. If you are careful in packing the items, you should have many months of food down there. This item is good for most natural disasters (except, obviously, floods) and as can be readily appreciated. Even if the house is flat, your food is still there waiting to be used. I am sure many of you have already envisioned many "Root cellars" all over the yard, some with food, some water, or clothes or?

**Good luck! And, as always, please Think Survival!**

**Ted Wright.**

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