

Cold Weather Cooking & Axemanship

Cooking & Meal Selection in Cold Weather

General:

1. Keep it simple – select meals which require a minimal amount of clean up and utensils to prepare.
2. Avoid canned food or foods which can be difficult to thaw, to eat, to cook, or may be damaged if frozen. Examples to avoid: raw eggs; most canned foods or fruits; fresh fruit; milk; etc.
3. Dehydrated, instant, powdered, or dry foods work best. It is easy to heat water and add it to re-hydrate your meal.
4. Self-heating pre-packed meals are also a good choice.
5. Use powdered milk and eggs if required in recipes.
6. Store water in snow banks (snow is a good insulator).
7. Keep your water canteen close to your body to keep it from freezing and do not fill it to the top to allow for expansion.
8. Bring rope and a “bear bag” or locking HD 5-gallon pail to store your food in so you can keep raccoons or other animals from getting it.

Breakfast Suggestions:

1. Oat meal packets
2. Dry cereal with re-hydrated powdered milk.
3. Pre-cooked sausage links or bacon (can cook like hot dogs)
4. Bacon wrapped in foil
5. Backpacking meals
6. Granola bars
7. Hot cocoa packets
8. Powdered breakfast drinks

Lunch & Dinner Suggestions:

1. Foil meals
2. Pre-foiled grilled cheese/pizza bob sandwiches
3. Sub sandwiches – pre-wrap in foil in case it needs to be heated or thawed
4. Instant soup mixes
5. Other instant meals (not containing water)
6. Backpacking meals & energy bars
7. Self-heating pre-packaged meals
8. Hot dogs w/o ketchup, etc. Wrap in foil or use a stick to heat it over the campfire.
9. Lemonade mix
10. Jerky or meat sticks
11. Nuts, raisins, seeds - in other words, trail mixes

Cold Weather Axemanship

1. In winter, it is generally best to use camp saws instead of axes to cut wood – wood with a lot of sap in it may freeze. Chopping on it can be like trying to chop cement.
2. Hatchets and axes are best used to split the wood – know the proper/safe ways to split wood.
3. Do not overexert yourself when cutting wood. Remember to remove layers of clothing to avoid sweating.
4. Set up your axe yard in such a way as to keep wood off the ground when sawing.
5. Use the driest wood tinder and kindling possible – look for dead branches hanging in or leaning on trees, dry (brown) pine needles, etc.
6. Cut three times the amount of wood you expect to use – the odds are you will need it.
7. Stack wood close to the fire to help dry it out. Keep it off the ground if possible.
8. Place a tarp over your wood pile to keep it dry.
9. Consider setting up fire watch shifts to keep the fire going all night. Make sure you have enough fuel stockpiled to keep it going that long. This can speed up morning activities and provide warmth for anyone getting cold in the night.