

Dry-Pack Food Storage Using PETE Containers

PETE refers to a type of clear plastic bottle commonly used for many foods sold in grocery stores. The bottles are identified on the bottom, next to the recycle emblem, with the letters PETE. This type of container has good oxygen barrier qualities and can be used with oxygen absorbers to store bulk dry foods. The low oxygen content of the sealed containers protects the stored food from insect infestation and helps preserve product quality. These containers are well suited for products that are rotated on a regular basis, while still providing several years of storage capability.

Instructions:

1. Use only PETE bottles that have been previously commercially packaged with food. Bottles need to have screw-on lids with plastic, not paper, lid seals.
2. Wash and rinse bottles to remove any residue. Drain and dry bottles.
3. Place an oxygen absorber packet into each bottle.
4. Fill bottles with bulk dry products that are low in moisture and oil content.
5. Wipe top sealing edge clean.
6. Screw lids on tightly. Tape the lid edge to prevent loosening.
7. Store the products in a cool, dry location, away from sunlight.
8. Use a new oxygen absorber packet each time a bottle is refilled for storage.

Oxygen absorbers

Welfare Services absorbers packets are packaged 100 per bag.

This size of absorber can be used for containers of up to 1-gallon capacity.

When packaging products, take out of the bag the number of absorbers you plan to use in 30 minutes and store the remainder in glass canning jars with new lids. 1 pint will hold 25 absorbers.

Containers that work well for long-term storage using oxygen absorbers include:

#10 cans
Foil pouches
Glass canning jars with screw-on lids
PETE plastic containers with screw-on lids

Containers that do not work well for this type of storage include:

Translucent plastic containers such as milk bottles
Snap-on lid containers
Containers that have contained non-food products should not be used for food storage

Approved Dry-Pack Products

Dry-pack products for home storage need to be low moisture (10% moisture or less), good quality, and insect free. Packaging in foil pouches, #10 cans, glass canning jars, and PETE plastic bottles should be limited to foods that best retain flavor and nutritional value. An oxygen absorber packet should be included in each container for all products except sugar.

APPROVED PRODUCTS

- Milk Non-fat dry milk and milk/whey products such as hot cocoa
- White Flour Bleached or unbleached
- Whole Grains Wheat, white rice, dry corn, popcorn, rye, barley, etc.
Grains that are not milled or cracked and do not have an oily seed coat
- Rolled Oats Quick or regular
- Legumes Dry peas and beans, including dehydrated refried beans
- Pasta Pasta products that do not contain egg
- Fruits and Vegetables Dehydrated or freeze-dried products that are dry enough to snap.
(Best items: apples, bananas, potatoes, onions, carrots, corn, and peas
Marginal items: apricots, peaches, pears, tomatoes, and green beans)
- Sugar Granulated or powdered (Do not use oxygen absorbers in containers of sugar)
- Miscellaneous TVP (Texturized vegetable protein), Cheese powder, Gelatin,
Soup mixes (without bouillon)

NON-APPROVED PRODUCTS

The following items are examples of products that do not store well due to high moisture or oil content. These items keep best when stored in freezer bags in a freezer:

- Milled Grain Whole wheat flour, Cornmeal, Cereal, Granola
- Oily Grain/Seeds Nuts, Brown rice, Pearled barley, Sesame

The following types of products should be stored in their original containers and rotated frequently:

- Leavening Includes mixes containing leavening such as cake or biscuit mix
- Miscellaneous Spices, Oil, Bouillon, Dried Meat, Dried Eggs, Brown Sugar, Candy,
First-aid supplies

NOTE: All food items should be rotated. This may be accomplished by personal use or by sharing with others.