

## **Backcountry Kitchen/Food System**

“A Patrol cooking its own meals is playing one of the most fascinating games in Scouting.”

Boy Scout Handbook

Cooking and Eating as a Patrol is a critical element of both the Boy Scout Patrol Method and a key to traveling well in the Backcountry. Having a group kitchen saves weight, shares the workload, and fosters a sense of group spirit and unity.

Planning food for a group for a long expedition is beyond the scope of this guide. Here are some suggestions for planning food for a simple overnight backpacking trip.

- (1) The Patrol should plan on cooking only Dinner and Breakfast together. The Patrol Leader should assign two Scouts as cooks and 2 Scouts as cleanup for every meal.
- (2) Scouts should be responsible for their own lunches.
- (3) Dinner should revolve around simple one pot group meals. Ramen is a great first course. Mac and Cheese is a great main meal. Or, try some sort of grilled dinner, if it is possible, given LNT, to build a low impact cooking fire. Consider carrying in a small bag of self light charcoal. There is nothing like cooking your own shish kebob over an open fire (I mean coals). “Over the fire” type of cooking is much more time consuming, but also much more rewarding. Patrols are encouraged to experiment with both stove based and fire based cooking on Backcountry Trips. However, always remember LNT.
- (4) Breakfast should be “hot water” based: instant oatmeal, jerky, cheese, hot chocolate, dried fruit.
- (5) Each Patrol member should consider bringing enough lemonade or Gatorade in a plastic baggie to make one quart, as well as some small snacks.
- (6) Always practice LNT principles with trash and extra or leftover food. Do not burn it. Carry it out in the Trash Bag System!
- (7) For dishwashing, one sink is for soap and water, and the second sink is for rinsing. Each Scout should clean his own cup, bowl and spoon, and the Patrol Cleanup Crew is responsible for cleaning the Patrol Kitchen Gear and putting trash and leftover food in the Trash Bag.