

Storage of oil used for cooking

By Joseph Parish



It wasn't too many years ago that I was employed at a local oil refinery. Not the kind of refinery which processed crude oil into oil which is used in our vehicles but rather the kind of refinery which makes cooking oil. This particular refinery specialized in soybean oil. My job there was to ensure that the product that was being made was top quality and completely fit for human consumption.

Being a survivalist by heart I had previously saved some corn oil for a good many years. Upon opening the container of oil, I soon discovered that it was completely useable and had not deteriorated in the least bit. The problem which I did encounter was that the oil quickly went rancid after being opened. This was not a good indication and thus I would not recommend that corn oil be stored for any longer period of time than five years at the most.

In all reality oil should not be kept for 20 to 30 years as some people would have us believe. In fact, some oils begin to break down and to deteriorate after only about three years of storage. This 3-to-4-year life span for oil is assuming that it is stored in a cool location that is below 70 degrees Fahrenheit. The oil must be of the hydrogenated type.

I usually store a small mixture of oil such as safflower or peanut oil that one finds in the square size quarts. You should store them on their sides 3 deep and they must be kept cold. You would do well to store this oil in the back of an unused refrigerator. For safety you should rotate your oil reserve at least every five years.

There is another alternative that I have been considering, however, I have not as yet tried it out but that is to use the oils in the 5-gallon containers which are sold by the various food distributors or by Sam's club. My only concern on these containers is if I do not use them quickly enough will the oil become rancid. That experiment my friend will be a tale for another time after I try them out.