



# MEMBERS UPDATE

April, 2019

**How to Create a  
Self-Reliance Garden**

**Top 7 Tactical Carbines**

**Protect Your Finances  
in a Long-term Crisis**



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## Top 7 Tactical Carbines

We're currently living through the golden age of the modern sporting rifle. There have never been so many excellent AR-based rifles on the market, and at such reasonable prices. But there's more to this story than just the AR-clones; innovation abounds. Warning: This article may cause you to start shopping for a new tactical carbine.



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## How to Create a Self-Reliance Garden

Sure, growing your own fruits and veggies will keep you well-nourished in a grid-down emergency. But perhaps a more practical way to think of gardening is an investment in your health. Self-reliance gardening is a purposeful hobby that allows you to take your own nutrition, security, and even mental health into your own hands.



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## Protect Your Finances in a Long-term Crisis

Think people who stockpile precious metals are crazy? Have you ever thought about how you might protect your financial stability through a period of hyper-inflation? Most people don't think of it... until it's too late (think Venezuela). We'll go over some tips you can use to make sure you're not caught flat-footed.



# BANG FOR YOUR BUCK: TOP 7 TACTICAL CARBINES FOR 2019



For about a decade now, we've been witnessing the golden age of the "Modern Sporting Rifle." It's a term that, as most of us shooting enthusiasts have come to realize, is a socially acceptable code phrase meant to replace "AR-15," one of the most successful firearm concepts to come along in many years.

And there are plenty of good reasons for this phenomenon. The AR-15 platform is reliable, accurate, and really damn fun to shoot. Sure, some shooters will always like big bore bolt rifles that kick like a mule, but lighter loads with dampened recoil that invites you to go pow, pow, pow... it's easy to see why people have so much fun with these rifles.

We like ARs and we're not afraid to say it. Heck, we like MSRs too. Truth be told, however, we're simply a fan of the tactical carbine class of firearms and we're enjoying the fact that so many great options are so readily available and well-priced.

An interesting outcome that's spun out of this tactical "sporting rifle" craze is the number of variants, imitators, and innovators that have come into the market. You've gotta hand it to them; manufacturers have made impressive strides

recently, delivering the best quality rifles for almost unbelievably reasonable prices.

In the early stages of this trend, manufacturers had to scramble to develop products to meet the red-hot market demand. They focused on rushing out a string of AR-clones, without realizing why these modular rifles were so popular.

Now that the feeding frenzy has given way to a more mature phase of the market, there seems to be a much better understanding that consumers want speed, accuracy, and tons of rails for their goodies. They don't necessarily even want an AR-15 clone at all.







## 7 SEMIAUTOMATIC CARBINES WORTH OWNING

In much the same manner that the MSR marketplace has developed, the NSRA has evolved when it comes to our approach toward these weapons. A few years ago, this article would almost certainly be titled “Best ARs to Own in 2019.” But the simple fact is that, while the AR platform is still king for lots of really compelling reasons, the best of this segment doesn’t actually begin and end with any single platform.

In that same vein, even a few older designs have been recast in a whole new tactical light, trading in their wood stocks for polymer and then, wouldn’t you know it, these timeless semi-auto carbines are once again as hot as a \$2 pistol.

What sells and what’s popular is important to us here at the NSRA, because it lets us know what shooters really appreciate (or at least think they do). Like everyone else, we shooters tend to vote with our dollars. But that’s not the whole story...

One of the most difficult parts of pulling the trigger (figuratively speaking) on a new sporting rifle is that nagging question: Will I be glad I purchased this thing?

Mixed in with all these exciting and fun tactical carbines you’ll find a surprising number of ho-hum, middle-of-the-road offerings that really don’t do anything all that well. They’re not that accurate, they’re not all that reliable, and, heck, some aren’t even all that sexy to look at.

It’s hard to know this stuff beforehand. Just about every longtime shooter has owned at least one firearm that, against all odds, turned out to be an overall pain in the ass, nothing like the brochure at all.

Shoddy reliability is only one of the fatal flaws that can make you regret buying a gun that looked really great on paper. In this day and age, poor design and low-quality construction are simply unforgivable.

Perhaps an even worse fatal flaw is discovering that a particular weapon is just not that useful or fun to shoot. A gun that consistently prints 8-inch groups at 100 yards, or an auto-loading mechanism that jams up when you shoot fast... these are the kinds of rifles that you just struggle to find any use for.



But never fear, NSRA readers, we're here to sort through the haystack and find you only the sweetest shooting and most tack-driving of tactical lead launchers. These are weapons that are a pleasure to shoot at the range, plink beer cans with, and even test your limitations as a shooter. But the bottom line is: do they put a smile on your face?

These rifles are hand picked because of their ability to do just that.

## SMITH & WESSON M&P 15 SPORT II



The fanfare that has come over tactical carbines is the true headline story here. This interest in semi-auto carbines has done wonders for the perception of shooting sports. It's also brought a few really excellent new firearms to the market.

Some of these firearms have risen to instant classic status, in fact. And none of them are a better example of an "instant classic" than the S&W M&P 15.

Nobody does the ampersand sign like good ol' Smith & Wesson. And when it comes AR based weapons from a major manufacturer, the M&P 15 proves that no one can build a value MSR for the mass market like these guys either.

In terms of budget-friendly AR's, the M&P 15 really laid down the gauntlet.

The best part is, once you become aware of the quality, accuracy, and reliability of the M&P 15, it really makes you wonder why so many people are willing to pay \$2,000 for a similar gun with a similar level of performance (sometimes a lower level of performance). The Sport II package that we recommend here received a few sweet upgrades to the original platform, including a forward assist and a dust cover -- both nice-to-haves.

The barrel configuration changed from a melonite-nitride coated 1:8 twist for the Sport I, to the Sport II's slightly less desirable (on message boards) nitride barrel in a 1:9 twist. Despite the fact that there's a strong preference for a 1:8 twist out there in the world of AR fanaticism, the Sport II's barrel prints sub-MOA groups at 100yards. You really can't beat it.



The dirty secret with the AR fan base is that most of them look down on any weapon that's not custom built, even if the build isn't DIY. The fact is, the M&P 15's performance is on par with pretty much ANY other AR build 3-5X the price if not better. Go watch the reviews and you'll get the picture pretty quick that this gun has earned a reputation for being a stone cold badass.

The M&P 15 is just a really nicely done MSR, with an A2 flash hider, standard 6-position stock, great Magpul iron sights, and a 30-round Magpul magazine. For the money, it's easily one of the best things going. One more thing to consider, this carbine is covered by S&W's lifetime service policy. You won't find that feature with any custom builds.

**Price:** \$600

## KEL-TEC SUB-2000





Perhaps you didn't expect to see anything on this list that flings lead slower than 2,500fps, but it turns out there are 3. We hope your mind is sufficiently blown, although that's not the reason we selected these excellent carbines.

Fact is, this Sub-2000 is a ferociously popular auto-loading carbine that provides shooters with a ton of flexibility, extremely crisp accuracy, as well as an epic fun factor.

Since we already alluded to it, let's get the "what does it shoot?" question out of the way. The SUB-2000 is chambered for 9mm pistol ammo or .40 SW, which means the recoil is light, the ammo is cheap, and it's not ideal for 1,000 yard sharp shooting.

If anyone gives you BS about long distance accuracy, simply remind them that their rifle doesn't share high capacity magazines with their sidearm (as long as it's a Glock, M&P, Sig Sauer P226, Beretta 92/96, CZ 75, S&W 59, or CANiK TP9); the Kel-Tec does. Nor does that guy's rifle weigh in at 4.25lbs and fold in half for easy transport... this gun folds in half, folks!

But wait... when used for the type of shooting for which it's designed, the SUB-2000 is impressively accurate. It tears up tactical courses and dominates target setups you have in the 20 to 80-yard range with great vigor and enthusiasm. And if you want to mount some optics on this thing to reach out further, the SUB-2000 has about as many rails as anything you've seen. The factory peep sights and adjustable metal front sights are actually very good.



The rearward charging handle takes some getting used to, as it reciprocates, but it's plenty functional. The stock is 3-position adjustable, and as we've said already, rails are abundant, just begging for some lasers/lights like the MCG Hellfire for instance.

If you wanna have a good time tearing through a few boxes of ammo, it's really hard to beat the SUB-2000. This gun shoots impressive groups off-hand, as it's nice and light and easy to hold. Then there's the whole folds up into a 16.25" configuration that

fits into a briefcase.

Sure, they're a bit unusual and don't have as many aftermarket options as an AR, but the SUB-2000s are just so very cool and very reliable, specially when you consider the multi-magazine options. Not to mention, the SUB-2000 can be had for under \$400; what a great value.

**Price:** \$400

## RUGER AR 556



This much-anticipated rifle from the very value-oriented minds at Sturm and Ruger Co. turned out to be just what the doctor ordered. BTW, if you're a fan of Ruger, you're going to like this list, because Ruger has really been knocking it out of the park in terms of bang for your buck.

Now, getting back to the AR 556, this gun is just a plain old high-quality AR-style weapon for those who want an MSR, but don't want to pay \$2k... or even \$1k to get one. In many ways, we'd say it's the most direct competitor to the M&P 15; that's high praise given that the AR 556 is also at the bargain basement end of the spectrum.

In terms of adaptability, this rifle is pretty much mil-spec and in-step with regard to the commercial MSR platform, which is not Ruger's typical MO. Yes, they're known for creating very solid versions of popular firearms (i.e. the Vaquero) but they typically "Ruger-ize" the designs so the parts, scope rings, etc. are not compatible with other manufacturers.

Making use of the broader AR platform is yet another sign that Ruger is tuned in to what the consumer wants. That's nice for those who take their rifles out of the box and immediately start "upgrading" all of the manufacturer's workmanship (and possibly voiding some warranty items).





Plus, the AR 556 comes with some pretty nice standard equipment like a milled sight post, bird cage style flash-hider, sling mounts, 4140 chrome-moly steel barrel with a 1:8 twist, and the highly modular components that make the AR platform so damn popular. Ruger's Rapid Deploy rear sight is a nice little adjustable iron sight, great for co-witnessing other optics.

All in all, it's just a solid AR, with an abundance of nice-to-have features like a dust cover, that can be had for around \$550 for a very reliable US-made firearm. Pretty sweet.

And while we will quickly mention a couple other very nice rifles like the Savage MSR and Springfield's Saint, we really can't see any reason to pay more for them, when the AR 556 is as good or better...

**Price:** \$550

## RUGER PC CARBINE



The Ruger PC carbine is a really exciting, "what's old is new again" type of offering for Ruger. A second swing, if you will, in which they drilled a home run after a fairly unsuccessful first at bat (1996-2006). Yes, this gun is very reminiscent of the Police Carbine that it resembles in both form and function.

But the 2017 version is simply way the hell better than its predecessor and the reception is proving that out. The Police Carbine never really caught on with consumers, or the law enforcement community at large. That said, this carbine shares some thoughtful features with its predecessor.

The "PC" in this rig's name stands for "pistol caliber," which explains why it's chambered in 9mm or .40 S&W. But what it doesn't spell out for you is that this gun can share both ammunition and magazines with your favorite sidearm, provided that firearm says Glock, SR, or Ruger American on the side. This cross-manufacturer compatibility is one critical, and very savvy departure from the Police Carbine. People love Glock magazines almost as much as they love its pistols; Ruger was very smart to acknowledge this and use it to the PC Carbine's advantage.

Another cool feature that's a bit understated is that the PC Carbine is perhaps the most well-executed takedown carbine on the market. Period. In seconds, you can pull a couple levers, twist the barrel, and stick the Ruger PC in a backpack or briefcase.



Add to that the fact that it has tons of tactical rails for all sorts of fun accessories and the accuracy to back it all up. The fluted, cold hammer-forged barrel is top-notch, but they didn't stop there; it's also tapped for suppressors, flash hiders, etc.

To push this carbine over the top, Ruger provides excellent peep sights à la the M1 Garand and an all-weather synthetic stock with spacers for adjustable pull length. The sights are so good, we've had several shooters tell us they cancelled their plans to install optics.

Is the PC a durable and reliable platform? So far so good. Since it was new for 2017, data is only just accumulating. But we're not aware of any issues with this carbine malfunctioning at all, zero.

For the light recoil, great accuracy, and the fun of burning through handgun ammo with a carbine, the PC Carbine is a fantastic weapon to own. It's also reasonably priced.

**Price:** \$500



## KEL-TEC SU-16



How about another something different from Kel-Tec? At the NSRA we're big fans of tactical carbines that offer a little something extra, something different. And as you may have noticed, our sun doesn't rise and set on the AR platform.

Which brings us to the SU-16, a carbine that's not nearly as bizarre looking as the Sub2000, yet definitely stands out. Looking somewhere between a Mini-14 and a AK-47 that got shrunk in the laundry, the SU-16 platform has amassed quite a fan base over the years. Still, it's doesn't end up on very many "best of" lists. We intend to rectify that...

First things first, the SU-16 is chambered for the classic .223/5.56 rounds familiar to AR shooters. The action is piston-operated and accepts conventional AR magazines. This is a huge bonus for at least two reasons; a.) you can share magazines if you already own an AR, and b.) there are tons of reasonably priced high-quality AR magazines out there to choose from. We really appreciate Kel-Tec's philosophy on interchangeable magazines.

Weighing in at under 5lbs (unloaded), the SU-16 delivers a really nice mix of weight, ergonomics, accuracy, and overall compactness. The other main headline for the SU-16 is the number of sub-models available.

Do you want iron-sights, a folding stock, a collapsible stock, a threaded barrel? The SU-16 has 7 variants to choose from, depending on whether you're looking for a truck gun, hog popper, or a tactical rig with rails all over the place.



It's a bit difficult to go over the features of a carbine that comes in a range of barrels from 9 to 18.5 inches in length. All of them have a 1:7 twist. For grins, the unloaded weights of these carbines range from 4.5 to 5 pounds.

Wait, did we forget to mention that 4 of these sub-models feature integrated bipod systems? Talk about bang for your buck!

Maybe ultra-lightweight carbines with integrated bipods and folding stocks interest you, and maybe they don't. The fact is, the Kel-Tec SU-16 is an excellent reliable and accurate rifle by any standard, and a very worthy AR competitor.

**Retail:** \$499

## STAG 15 MINIMALIST RIFLE



Stag Arms has carved out an excellent reputation for building high-quality firearms and having excellent customer service. With the launch of the very budget-friendly Stag 15, the guys at Stag really knocked it out of the park.

And what could be better than getting a super dependable, US-made AR for a bargain? Getting one that's decked out in some very excellent Mission First Tactical furniture.

MFT is very well known for producing high-quality, innovative, and American-made components for ARs. The Battlelink Minimalist 6-position stock is this package's namesake and it's a very lightweight, yet still solid and intuitive design. The grips, rail system, and even a 30-round magazine are part of the MFT flair you get on this rifle.

Truth be told, the Stag 15 deserves to be on this list, even without the upgraded polymer by MFT. The fact that they're offering this package really puts this option in no-brainer territory.





The Stag 15's barrel is a very nice chrome-lined 4150 steel in a 16" government profile with a 1:7 twist. The Stag 15's bolt carrier group is phosphate coated and the charging handle is pretty much mil-spec, as this gun is super adaptable.

Contrary to its name, the Stag 15 Minimalist actually has a lot of nice features built-in, e.g. the forward assist, dust cover, and MFT iron sights. It's just a really nice all-around package. In our opinion, it's a great competitive head-to-head option for the AR 556 and the M&P 15 on this list. If you're looking for a complete, off-the-rack AR that delivers tons of performance at a very excellent price point, consider the Stag 15 Minimalist.

**Retail:** \$650

## RUGER 10/22



C'mon, guys... another Ruger? Yes folks, it's true; this weapon is very likely the "most enjoyed platform" in the history of firearms: The legendary and adaptable Ruger 10/22.

Of course, this gun is old news to most longtime shooters and sadly it's often overlooked when it comes to those in the market for a semi-auto carbine. But what you may have missed is that the 10/22 has been cashing in on the MSR feeding frenzy along with all those many AR variants.

Shown in its I-TAC configuration here, the 10/22 looks so damn good in black, you could almost

mistake it for a "real" MSR. Pound for pound, in our book, there's really no better gun for your money than the Ruger 10/22.

And hell, that's the base model we're talking about. Add some cool polymer furniture, better ergonomics and a 50-round mag... now you're talking. For the vast majority of shooters, it's the ONLY rifle you're likely to put 5,000 rounds through in its lifetime.



That's partly because it's a rimfire carbine, but also because the 10/22 does such a great job chewing through .22LR ammo that you won't even notice you blew through that whole box of 550 rounds. With a tactical carbine treatment, you might find that you shoot a lot more often, spend a lot less on ammo, and you don't need another centerfire carbine at all.

Friends, patriots, countrymen... that's some money damn well spent.

## TAKEAWAY

On this list, we've covered 4 carbines that fire high powered rifle cartridges, 3 AR-based models, 2 pistol caliber carbines, and 1 rimfire gun. All in all, it's a fairly well-rounded list with something for the 'AR-or-bust crowd,' and plenty for the 'anything-but' folks too.

But the fact is, this list is far from exhaustive. There are so many excellent tactical carbines on the market these days, it's hard to keep track of them all. As usual, we do our level best to make our selections based on what we call the Bang-for-Your-Buck Factor.

It's a fairly simple calculation in which we ask, is it worth paying 20% more to get features and performance available at the next pricing tier up? If the answer is clearly "yes," then we simply recommend that option instead of the cheaper product (in this case, a carbine).



Without a doubt, these rifles are the best of what's around in their respective price points. Sure, there are more expensive carbines made with more expensive materials. But are shooters likely to ever perceive the value of these Porsches and Lamborghinis?

To us, the answer is pretty clear, which is why we recommend the Jeeps, Chevys, and F150s over the new Lamborghini Urus 4X4 (\$200K). These carbines are rock-solid reliable, easy on your pocketbook, and will plaster a big ol' grin across your gunpowder dusted face.



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## *How to Create a Self-Reliance Garden*

You've heard it in one way or another through your lifetime: get your recommended nutrients in for the day to keep the doctor away. Let's face it though, the bill can get pretty big when shopping for superfoods that have been proven to protect and boost the human body.

But what if you could get all the superfoods you need without relying on a supermarket? You never know when the supermarkets will run out of food or jack up the prices so it best to have a backup strategy and what better plan than a garden that produces you with all your daily nutrients.

For this reason, we're going to show you the best superfoods that will enhance your health, are easy to grow and will save you money in the long run.

But first...

### *What are superfoods?*



A 'superfood' is really just a nutrient-rich food that's said to be extremely beneficial to your health. You probably know it as the food you never wanted to eat as a child. But these foods have ton of benefits no matter what health issue you encounter.



Many of the superfoods we'll be talking about provide the body with nutrients that can help protect the immune system, prevent certain diseases, and keep the body running at full capacity. You'll see exactly what each food can do for your body later on.

Now you might be thinking you could get the same benefits by taking vitamin supplements, but according to Mayo Clinic, "supplements aren't intended to substitute for food. They can't replicate all of the nutrients and benefits of whole foods, such as fruits and vegetables."

- That's because whole foods have certain benefits that dietary supplements don't.
- These foods have better nutrition because they are complex and contain many micronutrients your body thrives on.
- They contain essential fiber, which can help manage constipation and prevent certain disease like heart disease and type 2 diabetes.
- They are also a great source of antioxidants, which protect the body from damage caused by free radicals. When free radicals' levels get too high, they can damage your cells.

Alright, enough of the backstory. Let's move on to the list of superfoods you'll need to create a self-reliance garden. To make this pretty simple, we'll be showing you the most prominent nutrients in each superfood that will help you stay healthy and fight off major health problems as well as the best planting practices for each one.

Let's get started...

## Tomatoes

Tomatoes go great with everything; add it to a sandwich, make a spaghetti sauce, top a salad off with it. etc. So you'll probably be happy to know that tomatoes are one of the best foods for your heart health and you should definitely keep eating them.



A recent study in middle-aged men showed that low blood levels of beta-carotene and lycopene are linked to increased risk of strokes and heart attacks. Well don't worry because tomatoes are filled with the antioxidant lycopene, and clinical trials have proven that adding lycopene to your diet can lower your LDL cholesterol (the bad cholesterol) and may decrease blood pressure, all of which will help your heart stay healthy.

Not only that, the high concentrations of carotenoids found in tomatoes may protect you against the risk of breast cancer. But don't think it's something only women deal with; it can affect men as well.

So you'll probably be happy to know that tomatoes are one of the best foods for your heart health and you should definitely keep eating them.

Tomatoes are also filled with the following beneficial nutrients:

*Vitamin C:* An essential nutrient and antioxidant that's necessary for the growth and repair of body tissues. It's also key to some of the main body functions like forming collagen, absorbing iron, protecting the immune system, healing wounds, and maintaining strong cartilage.



*Potassium:* A beneficial mineral that helps control your blood pressure and prevent cardiovascular disease. Additionally, it is essential for maintaining normal heart rhythm, water balance, digestion, and muscle contractions.

*Vitamin K1:* This vitamin helps with blood clotting and can aid in healthier bones.

*Folate (B9):* One of the very important B-vitamins that helps with normal tissue growth, including muscle tissue, and cell function. It also has the added effect of preventing the formation of certain cancers.

Now tomatoes are fairly easy to manage, but don't start growing them until both the soil and air temperatures are warm. If you live in colder temperatures, waiting until summer is best. You can even speed up the warming process by covering the planting area with black plastic a couple of weeks before you start to plant.

## Broccoli



Now you might have disliked this vegetable as child, but it can actually be extremely beneficial for your health as you age. In addition to containing potassium, vitamin K1 and folate, broccoli contains high amounts of the following vitamins:

*Vitamin C:* Not only is vitamin C important for your immune function, it is also important for skin health. Eat a half a cup of broccoli and get around 70% of the recommended daily intake.

*Iron:* Another essential mineral that plays many important roles in the body, such as transporting

but iron reduces fatigue, improves your mental focus, boosts your immunity, and improves your sleep.

Additionally, broccoli is filled with a lot of antioxidants, including:

*Sulforaphane:* This is one of the most important plant compound in broccoli, mainly because it is said to protect the body from a number of cancers.

*Indole-3-carbinol:* Yet another nutrient that can fight against cancer, including breast, lung, prostate, gastric, and pancreatic.

*Carotenoids:* Not only does broccoli contain beta-carotene which converts into vitamin A in the body, it also contains lutein and zeaxanthin; all of these have beneficial effects on eyesight.

*Kaempferol:* An antioxidant that may protect you against cancer, allergies, heart disease, and inflammation.

*Quercetin:* This antioxidant has been proven in many studies to lower blood pressure so if you suffer from high blood pressure this might be an important food to add to your daily diet.

Now you might have disliked this vegetable as child, but broccoli can actually be extremely beneficial for your health as you age.

When it comes to growing broccoli, there's a few things you should know. Unlike most vegetables, broccoli is a cool-season vegetable that enjoys daytime temperatures in the 60s. It can survive light frost and temperatures as low as the 20s. The best rule of thumb is plant it in early spring for the main harvest and leave it over the summer for the second harvest in the fall.



## Cauliflower



Not only is cauliflower packed with vitamin K, indole-3-carbinol, vitamin C, folate and potassium, one serving size contains 3 grams of fiber, which gives your gut healthy bacteria, promotes digestive health and helps reduce inflammation.

Other important nutrients in cauliflower include:

**Vitamin B6:** this vitamin is very important for keeping your immune and nervous system healthy, as well as for normal brain development.

**Pantothenic acid:** also known as vitamin B5, this vitamin is essential for your body to metabolize proteins, carbohydrates, and fats. Once these three things are metabolized, they're converted into energy, giving you an automatic boost.

**Manganese:** an essential nutrient involved in the break down of carbohydrates, protein, and cholesterol. It's also a big part of bone formation, which is why doctors recommend people suffering from osteoporosis to include it in their diets.

**Magnesium:** this mineral helps regulate a variety of biochemical reactions in the body, including blood pressure and blood sugar regulation, muscle and nerve function, and energy production.

**Phosphorus:** the second most abundant mineral in your body, phosphorus is essential in building strong healthy bones.

What's really cool about cauliflower is that you can grow it in the spring or fall. If you plant it mid spring

takes around eight to 10 weeks. If you plant it mid-summer, you'll produce a fall crop in four to five weeks.

## Cabbage



People have been growing cabbage for thousand of years for one reason and one reason only: it's low in calories and contains a lot of vitamins and minerals, including fiber, vitamin k, folate, manganese, vitamin b6, potassium, and magnesium.

It also contains powerful antioxidants, such as sulfur compounds and polyphenols, and can reduce chronic inflammation.

But the most impressive thing about cabbage is how much vitamin C it's packed with. This vitamin is extremely essential because it's job is to protect the body from damage caused by free radicals which have been linked to many chronic diseases like cancer.

On top of that, it's packed with lots of dietary fiber. It has insoluble fiber to keep your bowel movements regular and your digestive tract healthy. And it filled with soluble fiber, which increases the number of beneficial bacteria in your gut, produces other nutrients like B12 and K2 and helps protect your immune system in the process. So forget the laxatives if your clogged up and reach for some spinach instead.

And finally, it's extremely easy to plant because it thrives in cool weather, giving you more flexibility on where and when to plant it.



## Spinach



A leafy green vegetable, spinach is packed with insoluble fiber, vitamin A, vitamin C, vitamin K1, and folic acid. It also contains a high trace of calcium, which is essential for bone health, heart health, and the nervous system.

It's also full of magnesium, potassium, vitamins B6, B9, and E, and rich in the mineral iron, which helps create hemoglobin (oxygen to the body's tissues). If you're prone to low iron levels then spinach might just be your next best friend.

What is most surprising about spinach is that it has been associated with preventing and curing cancer. It is said to contain components SQDG and MGDG, both of which can potentially slow down cancer growth. Not only that, many studies have shown that by including spinach in your diet you can reduce your risk to prostate cancer and breast cancer and even stop other cancers from forming.

The main thing to remember when it comes to growing spinach is sowing your seeds six weeks before the last frost. If you can do that, you'll have no problem getting your daily servings of spinach.

What is most surprising about spinach is that it has been associated with preventing and curing cancer.

## Carrots



We've all been taught that carrots help promote good vision thanks to the nutrients and minerals it's packed with like vitamin A, vitamin K1, and potassium.

But one of its best less known benefits is the amount of soluble fiber it contains. Why is soluble fiber being talked about again? Well some of the soluble fibers found in carrots slow down the digestion of sugar and starch and the absorption of cholesterol in the digestive tract; all of which result in lower blood sugar levels for you.

And get this, it is also contains the vitamins biotin and B6. The two create a powerful team. As biotin helps your body metabolize fat and protein, it joins forces with vitamin B6 to convert the food you just ate into energy.

Now some gardeners say carrots are difficult to grow since everything is happening underneath the soil. But if you can get the soil conditions right, carrots are really easy to grow in cooler weather. The trick to great soil conditions is keeping it moist. Try not to overwater the carrots or dry them out.

## Sweet Potatoes

Green vegetables are obviously great for your overall health, but maybe you didn't know how beneficial sweet potatoes are to a healthy diet.



Just look at what you get from one serving size of a sweet potato:

Fiber: 6.6 grams  
Vitamin A: 769% of the DV  
Vitamin C: 65%  
Manganese: 50%  
Vitamin B6: 29%  
Potassium: 27%  
Copper: 16%

We've gone over the importance of fiber, vitamin A, C, B6, potassium, and manganese, but let's look at copper. You really don't hear about copper that much but it's an essential nutrient for your body. Not only does it help keep your blood vessels, immune function, nerves, and bones healthy, it also can help prevent osteoporosis and cardiovascular disease.

When it comes to growing sweet potatoes, they need at least four months of warm temperatures. If you can give them that warmth then they are extremely easy to grow. Just a few plants can yield a great amount of harvest.

## *Kale*

Out of all the superfoods available, kale is one of the most nutrient-dense foods out there. Once you add it to your diet, you'll dramatically increase your total nutrient intake.

Let's see what you get with a single cup of kale:

Vitamin A: 206% of the Daily Value (DV)  
Vitamin K: 684%

Vitamin C: 134%  
Vitamin B6: 9%  
Vitamin B1 (thiamin): 3%  
Vitamin B2 (riboflavin): 3%  
Vitamin B3 (niacin): 3%  
Manganese: 26%  
Calcium: 9%  
Copper: 10%  
Potassium: 9%  
Magnesium: 6%  
Iron: 3%  
Phosphorus: 3%

Just one serving of kale and you'll be set on your vitamin A, K, and C intake for the day!



Now most people aren't too keen on kale, but there are many ways to make it taste delicious. One way is to saute kale with garlic and a little soy sauce to make it taste better. You can also blend it in with a smoothie, which will take away the taste but still give you all its important nutrients.

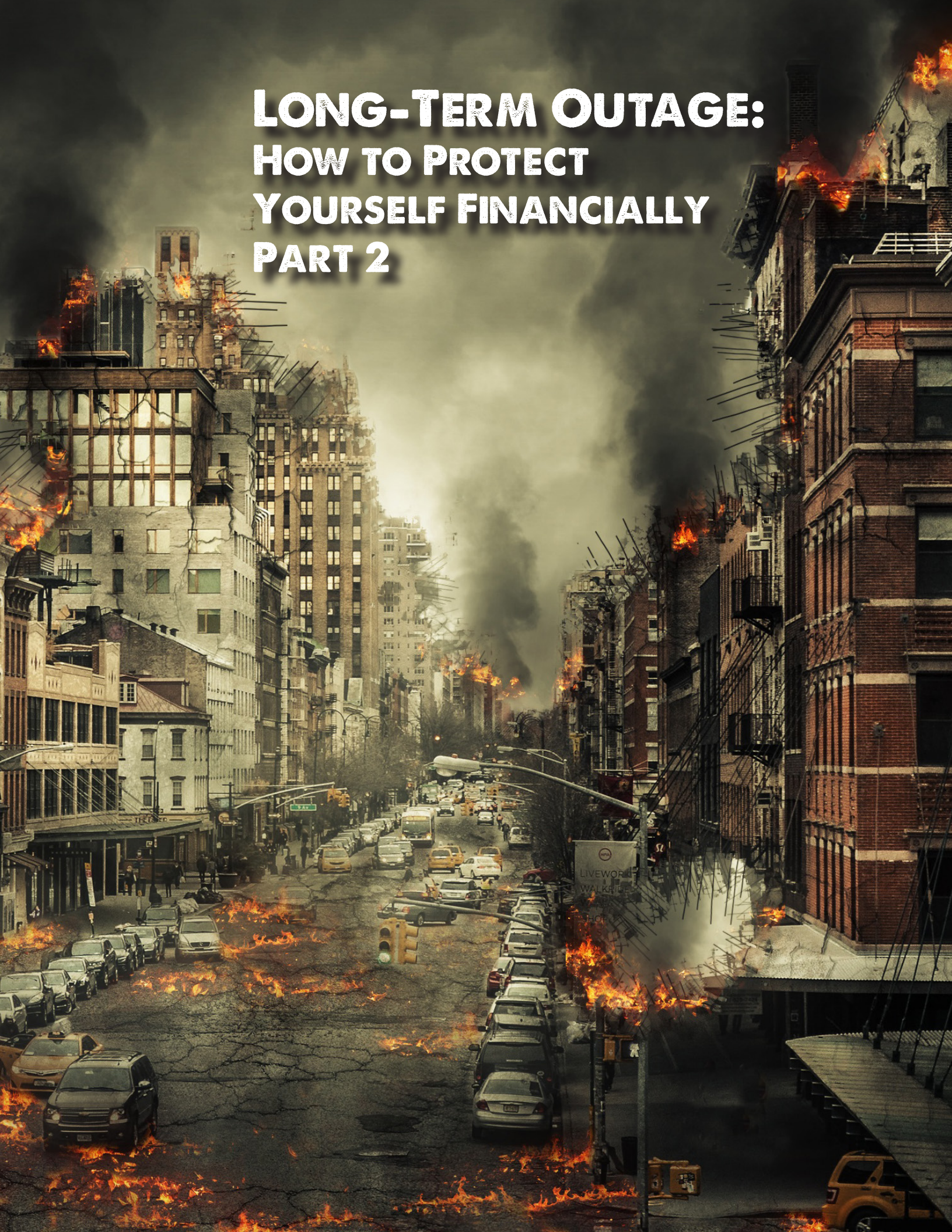
And best of all, you can grow kale in almost any temperature zone. Kale seeds will germinate even if the soil is only 45 degrees.

## *Conclusion*

There's no need to rely on the supermarket or bottled vitamins when you can take care of your health and wallet right in your own backyard. Even if you only pick one of these superfoods to grow, you will still be ahead of most people and on your way to a healthier and more economical lifestyle.



# LONG-TERM OUTAGE: HOW TO PROTECT YOURSELF FINANCIALLY PART 2





In Part 1 of this series, we took a close look at things you can do to protect your financial independence during a short-term financial outage. But what happens if a short-term blip turns into a protracted and grinding scenario? Forget bailouts here, we're talking about massive currency devaluations, bankrupt governments at the local, state, and even federal levels. In 2008, the US came closer to this type of situation than most are aware.

During this type of SHTF scenario, key everyday supplies are going to be in high demand and currencies like the dollar will be passed around like a hot potato – losing a little more purchasing power with each day. Of course there's always going to be a type of currency, it just might not look anything like what we think of as money today. After all, even penguins exchange shiny rocks for services.

In the human world, this is likely to take on the form of bartering goods and services. Those who know how to make this work will be self-reliant enough to protect themselves “financially.” Those who don't will fail to thrive and survive.

## TOP TIPS FOR SURVIVING A LONG-TERM FINANCIAL OUTAGE

Some will claim it's useless to prepare for an event that's so catastrophic and hard to comprehend. We say bull to that. While it's hard to imagine exactly how a long-term emergency may impact our financial systems, there are plenty of historical precedents we can look at to understand how events might unfold. Moreover, there are several ways we can prepare for a financial emergency of this type without doing damage to our current financial stability.

### STOCK UP ON MULTIPLE CURRENCY OPTIONS

A short-term outage requires a stockpile of cash. Even as a financial crisis transitions from short to long-term, cash will still be a desirable way to make transactions. More than likely, desperate people will begin to hoard cash as it becomes harder to access via banks and ATMs. Once that falls by the wayside, you'll need other ways to tempt people. Currency in a

metals for a while, so it's not a bad idea to put some of these items with your prepper supplies.



It's also wise to consider having an extra stockpile of bullets, knives, axes, tools, common parts for repairs, and anything else that others who aren't currently as self-reliant may find useful. For example, a chicken farmer who didn't think to stock up on bullets for hunting may be happy to exchange a box of bullets for eggs.

Be creative; don't forget that people have lots of needs aside from just the basic requirement for food and shelter. Batteries will be in high demand, and some people will make emotionally-based trades for everything from their favorite snack food to a new book.

## BITCOIN

The fact is, we're never that far from a financial crisis that could drastically alter the national economy. Bitcoin and other types of cryptocurrencies really didn't catch on until the 2008 financial crisis exposed just how shaky things could get.





That said, cryptocurrencies can be a small part of your preppers portfolio, similar to precious metals such as silver and gold. Think of it as a diversified insurance policy to help offset against political and economic risks.

There are risks associated with cryptocurrencies today, and of course there will be in times of financial upheaval. Keep in mind, too, that these digital forms of currencies need computers to access and verify; along with encryption techniques to control the generation of currency units and to verify funds have been correctly transferred from one place to another.

Bitcoin and similar cryptos have yet to be tested in a full-scale financial meltdown scenario, but the simple fact that they will require access to data networks and computing power is cause for concern. They are an interesting technique for diversifying your prepper portfolio, but we'd keep the percentage dedicated to cryptocurrencies relatively low.

## LEARN HOW TO BARTER



Having items to trade doesn't mean you'll get a good deal. The single most important thing you can do to protect yourself financially during a long-term outage is learn how to barter effectively. In order to do that, you'll need to begin by assessing a few things.

What items can you live without?

What special skills/services can you offer?

How much are you willing to offer for the item or service you need in return?

## BARTERING GUIDELINES

**1. Don't Over Offer** - You should always leave yourself room to barter back and forth. In other words, never start off by offering the most you can afford to give.

**2. Get it in Writing** - Make your finalized bartering terms clearly known. Both sides should know exactly what to expect. Put it in writing if at all possible.

**3. Follow Through** - Always deliver what you promise. Otherwise, you'll get a bad reputation and will have a difficult time finding future bartering partners.

**4. Play Hardball When Needed** - Don't be afraid to walk away if someone's demands or offers are unreasonable. Remember, if you have something they really want, they're likely to improve their offer.

**5. Always Put Your Safety First** - Protect yourself and your assets by never bartering alone or unarmed, if at all possible. This doesn't mean you have to show up with an army or have your gun trained on the other person the entire time. That's actually a very antagonistic way to do things and could easily lead to a fight. Instead, take a calm, measured approach, but have backup ready if things go south.

**6. Ask for What You Need** - There's no point in dancing around the topic. Tell potential bartering partners what you're looking for, along with what you can offer in return. If they make it clear that they're not interested - especially after you've upped your offer - be gracious about it and leave them alone. This is the best way to ensure future encounters won't be unpleasant.

## DON'T OVERLY ADVERTISE YOUR ASSETS

When you barter, you'll have to let people know about something of value that you can trade. But this doesn't mean that you should tell them about lots of other things in your possession. Even when you're not bartering, you should take a low-key approach to sharing information about your assets. Always keep in mind that some people will be happy to rob you, or even kill you, to get your stuff.

## SECURE YOUR PROPERTY



*Photo Credit: Lynn Greyling, Public Domain*

Put security measures in place to keep people from seeing, and stealing, your belongings. For instance, if you have a big supply of food and weapons, store them out of sight such as in a basement that has no windows (or with windows you've covered/blacked-out).

## DON'T BE OBVIOUS

Is everyone else rail-thin from a lack of food and wearing raggedy clothes? You don't need to starve yourself too, but if you're planning to be out in public at all, you'll want to avoid making it obvious that you still have lots of food, decent clothing, etc. Fitting in (at least in public) is a good way to protect your assets.

## LEARN A VALUABLE SKILL



*Source: USAF, af.mil*

Learning a skill that's valuable during an enduring outage is probably one of the best strategies for long-term financial security. Think doctor, nurse, vet or some other trade that's bound to get you something in turn when you apply your know-how to those who want or need it.

For instance, imagine how valuable someone that doctors animals would be to another individual say, perhaps, a farmer. A vet could administer aid to a farmer's animals and receive eggs, flour, meat, etc., in return. That's how they did it back in the old days. If things get bad enough, paper money would only be useful for wiping the stuff that hit the fan.

For starters, here are a two specific trades and areas you might want to bone up on in the event the SHTE.

## REFINING FUELS



The go-to people that can provide food or fuel are going to be more popular than the Kardashians in the event of an apocalypse, especially when it comes to the latter. And, you don't need to have knowledge about fracking or have expensive equipment, either, although it couldn't hurt if you know how to refine crude oil.

That's because low-grade fuel can be made from animal fat and cloth, and it's used to craft explosives, furnaces, lanterns, torches, medical syringes and more.

A word to the wise: guard the secret well because if you teach a man to fish, you know, as the saying goes, he learns how to fish and may not need you anymore. But, if you're good at it and manage to keep these pearls of knowledge to yourself, your stock is sure to soar in the case everything else heads south.



## ENTERTAINMENT



The apocalypse can be a boring place, and individuals and event organizers will be looking for the talented few that can keep the masses entertained. Enter those that can sing or play a musical instrument, and they will most likely be as sought after as much as a minstrel in the middle ages if not more.

Comedians may be a hot commodity, as well, and will become the new court jesters of the new world. Think about it: humor might be the only thing that gets people through a disastrous and bleak life.

Also, if you excel in athletics, you could get some form of payment for participating in events that feature baseball, football, soccer or other type of recreational sport. Continuing to keep these recreational sports in people's minds has an added bonus of keeping sports fans from de-evolving and demanding barbaric shows. If you'll recall they used to practice some pretty unsavory things at the shows at the Roman Coliseum.

## MEMORABILIA



**20** You remember how everyone said Beanie Babies would be worth tons of cash one day? That led to

a lot of collecting and ultimately many unwanted stuffed animals being sold for a pittance on eBay.

Well, if you want to be the next Jeff Bezos during the societal collapse, you'll want to cement your financial future with some hot memorabilia

So.... what will be a piece of nostalgia that people will want? Probably a lot like what people want now. Eight-track players and cassettes, pinup girl or muscle car calendars and limited edition (and we really mean limited after the SHTF) coca cola six packs, to name a few things.

## RENT OR SELL YOUR BUNKER

Apparently, there are doomsday preppers currently making cash hand over fist selling bomb shelters to people who are afraid of a SHTF scenario and want to be prepared. In fact, the construction of nuclear bunkers and similar constructs started to rise during the Obama administration and have ramped up during President Trump's administration.

What's more, according to CNBC, Clyde Scott, a nuclear bunker realtor and Texan, says that business is booming and Californians and New Yorkers, who are afraid of nuclear war, comprise most of his current clientele.

The 38-year-old Scott went on to say:

"We've had liberals coming out of the woodwork to protect themselves... Right after Trump's election, business went out the roof. I'd say 500 to 700 percent in one month," he added.

We don't know about you, but we're thinking owning a few or several doomsday bunkers in the event of an apocalypse might be one of the best financial plans out there. If they are that popular now, imagine what goodies you'd get if you had nuke-proof bunkers loaded with food and supplies at the ready when the SHTF.

Aside from all of these tips, you may also want to keep a small stash of cash on hand. You never know when things might turn around. You're also likely to occasionally happen upon an eternal optimist who still thinks things will improve and is happy to accept cash or gold for something you need.



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