**Backpack Food Strategies**

***Level 1: Cheap and Easy:*** Cold off-the-shelf food for breakfast, lunch and dinner

* Breakfasts: Granola with powdered whole milk; artisan bread with cheese; protein drink powder and energy bar, etc.
* Lunches: Artisan bread, tortillas, english muffins or crackers with cheese or peanut butter; fresh fruit; packaged cold salads (dressing packs); trail mix
* Dinners: Vacuum pack chicken or salmon on crackers with chopped celery and carrot; tortillas with cheese or peanut butter; made-at-home or purchased sandwiches; cold instant potatoes

***Pros: Inexpensive, easy to shop for, easy at camp; no stove or pot needed; no pot scrubbing***

***Cons: Often heavy and bulky; limited variety***

***Level 2. Cheap, Convenient, Hot:*** Cooked off-the-shelf food for breakfast and dinner

* Breakfasts: Cooked cereal with added dried fruit, nuts, coconut; instant polenta with cheese; pancakes with syrup; Via coffee or hot cocoa packs; scrambled eggs and cheese on a tortilla
* Dinners: Top Ramen pack with vacuum packed or smoked meats; Boxed mac and cheese or Rice a Roni; Instant mashed potatoes with cheese and salami

***Pros:*** *Inexpensive, easy to shop for*

***Cons:*** *High fuel use to cook food at camp; may need more cookware; more cleanup and cleaning supplies required; sometimes questionable nutrition*

***Level 3. Fast and Light:*** Add some dehydrated foods

* Breakfasts: Pre-packaged dehydrated scrambled eggs meal with cheese or meat, on a tortilla
* Lunches: Dehydrated hummus or bean flakes, or pre-packaged dehydrated chicken salad, rehydrated in cold water, on crackers or in a tortilla;
* Dinners: Pre-packaged dehydrated dinner

***Pros:*** *Lightweight (water is removed!), easy to shop for, easy at camp (only need hot water), minimal cleanup, minimal cookware*

***Cons:*** *Expensive, limited variety, can be bulky, sometimes questionable nutrition (very high sodium)*

***Level 4. Fast, Light, Cheap and Nutritious:*** Dehydrate some of your favorite healthy foods at home!

* Breakfasts: Scrambled eggs with meat or cheese, cooked and dehydrated at home; home-cooked & dehydrated hot grain mixes (quinoa, barley, faro) mixed with toasted coconut and home-dried fruit
* Dinners: Favorite store-bought or home-made casseroles, soup bases dehydrated at home

***Pros:*** *Lightweight (water is removed!), inexpensive, tasty with limitless variety, you control the nutrition! Easy at camp (only need hot water), minimal cleanup, minimal cookware*

***Cons:*** *More prep time at home, need a dehydrator. Longer rehydration time at camp compared to freeze-dried.*