

Storing bulk foods in five-gallon buckets

By Joseph Parish



If you are looking for an inexpensive and simple way to store your bulk foods then search no longer. For several years now I had started obtaining the five-gallon icing buckets which were used by cake decorators for storing cake icing in. These buckets are food grade products so they are safe for just about any type of food.

If you were to price the commercially available buckets of similar quality you would be shocked at the price of them. The ones that I use cost me a mere \$1.00 each and that is complete with the lid. Not a bad price at all. I use these buckets to store my bulk items such as sugar, bread flour and regular flour.

For added protection from any sort of infestation you could add some O2 absorbers to the bucket. The recommended amount ranges from 2 to 5 per 5-gallon container. The usual recommended rule is to use "one packet per gallon," so therefore a 5-gallon bucket should require 5 packets. These packets should be placed inside a Mylar bag with your flour or whatever it is that you are storing up on. Some people recommend that you place

several of the absorbers on the outside of the Mylar bag also to help preserve your items but I find that this is not necessarily needed. I do however use several bay leaves to eliminate any pests in products such as flour, pasta, etc.

Mylar bags range from 3.5 ml up to 7 ml. in thickness. The thinner the bags the easier they are to use since they are not as stiff however they still will block any oxygen from entering the bags while using the O2 absorbers. I have personally had times where I had not used the Mylar bags in my buckets and surprisingly have experienced no negative effects but the decision to use or not to use lies directly with you.

What I generally do it simply place the Mylar bag into the five-gallon bucket and fill it with whatever it maybe that I wish to store away. As an example, suppose I wish to store flour I would then place five O2 packets in with it. You should next use a sealer to seal the bag. In the event that you do not have a sealer you should roll the Mylar bag at the top and merely tape it down.

Now that we have the basics out of the way you might want to consider being a little creative. Few people have the resources to purchase 5 gallons of pasta at a time. Usually this is accomplished on a weekly basis. However, you can place several smaller Mylar bags in a 5-gallon bucket and seal multiple items in the same bucket. This is particularly useful if the buckets will be stored in an out of the way location. Now you would only be required to get one bucket out at a time instead of one for each product that you plan to use.

Perhaps the Mylar bags may add an extra level of protection to your stored food however we must also keep in mind that these bags will add an extra level of cost as well.