

Did You Know???

A Menu That's Out Of This World

(NAPSA)—Imagine planning the meals for a camping trip. You would have to have enough food for all the campers, the right equipment to cook it, a way to store it and a method for disposing of all the trash.

Now imagine that the camping trip will take place high above the Earth in the International Space Station. That's essentially the challenge faced by astronauts and their mission planners.

Astronauts eat three meals a day—breakfast, lunch and dinner. NASA nutritionists design meals that provide astronauts with a balanced supply of vitamins and minerals.

Calorie requirements differ for astronauts. For instance, a small person would require only about 1,900 calories a day, while a larger person would require about 3,200 calories.

Meals are also planned with variety and personal preferences in mind. Astronauts can choose from foods such as fruits, nuts, peanut butter, chicken, beef, seafood, candy and brownies. Drinks range from coffee, tea, and orange juice to fruit punches and lemonade.

Some foods can be eaten without much preparation, such as brownies and fruit. Other foods require adding water, such as macaroni and cheese or spaghetti.

Ovens are available on the Space Shuttle and the Space Station so food can be heated to the proper temperature. Since there are no refrigerators—or leftovers—in space, food must be stored and prepared properly to avoid spoilage, especially on longer missions.

Condiments, such as ketchup,



Astronauts can season their food with salt and pepper, but only in liquid form.

mustard and mayonnaise, are available. Salt and pepper are also available, but only in a liquid form. This is because salt and pepper sprinkled in space would simply float away. There is a danger they could clog air vents, contaminate equipment or get stuck in an astronaut's eyes, mouth or nose.

As on Earth, space food comes in packages that must be disposed of. However, in space, the process is a bit more complicated. Astronauts aboard the Space Station load their trash on to a cargo supply craft that is later jettisoned into the atmosphere where it burns up.

Some packaging is actually designed to prevent food from flying away. The packaging is also designed to be flexible, easier to use, as well as maximize space when stowing or disposing of food containers.

To learn more, visit the Web site at <http://spaceflight.nasa.gov>.