

Pizza Option Coming Soon With Meals Ready To Eat (MREs)

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. (Feb. 9, 2018) — Wounded Warrior Project® (WWP) encourages you to enjoy National Pizza Day on Feb. 9, but try to be selective about your toppings. Pizza can be healthier by avoiding meaty pizza add-ons, adding vegetables, and using low-fat cheeses.

According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, 13 percent of Americans, including members of the armed forces, consume pizza on any given day. But when our nation's servicemen and women are unable to have hot meals during missions, they rely on MREs for nutrition. The Department of Defense (DoD) has finally recognized America's pizza obsession and is currently in mass-production mode to supply pizza MREs.



In 2014, the DoD authorized a pizza entree for MREs, based on feedback they received from service members. The plain cheese or pepperoni pizza MRE will stay edible for up to three years and does not require refrigeration or freezing. The U.S. Army Natick Soldier Research, Development and Engineering Center began field-testing the new MREs that same year.

Each MRE provides about 1200 Calories, an amount that will support the body's needs under strenuous circumstances. The issue is that many service members don't eat the entire MRE. They often trade or discard portions of the ration. To encourage service members to eat the entire meal, MRE developers are constantly making and testing new improvements, like adding pizza.

The center is now tackling normal quality issues discovered during large-scale industrial production, before they can release the pizza MREs to service members. For example, the latest pizza prototypes met all safety-testing scenarios, but became too brown when quality tested under certain high-temperature storage conditions. Further product development is needed before the new MREs can be shipped out worldwide.

Currently, MREs must remain safe for consumption for up to three years of storage in adverse conditions. This is simulated in the laboratory by placing MREs in 100-degree boxes for six months. The dedicated team of specialists at the research facility are confident this browning issue will be resolved in a timely manner so service members can have the nutritious pizza MRE they desire.

To learn and see more about how WWP's programs and services connect, serve, and empower wounded warriors, visit <http://newsroom.woundedwarriorproject.org>, and click on multimedia.

About Wounded Warrior Project

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