

**INFORMATION PAPER  
PROGRAMS DIRECTORATE  
HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE, DISASTER RELIEF & MINE ACTION  
DIVISION**

**Subject:** Humanitarian Daily Rations (HDR)

**Background:**

- In April 1993, then Secretary of Defense Les Aspin approved the procurement of an alternative to the operational Meal Ready to Eat (MRE) for humanitarian purposes. The intent was to provide a low cost, easily delivered daily ration for use in foreign countries to alleviate hunger after man-made or natural disasters. The result is the Humanitarian Daily Ration (HDR).
- The HDR is designed to be used until conventional relief programs and/or other targeted feeding can be established. Each HDR pouch contains a complete day's supply of food for a moderately malnourished individual. Its caloric and nutritional content is designed for the widest acceptance and use by consumers with diverse religious and dietary restrictions.
- Each HDR pouch provides approximately 2,300 calories (not fewer than 2,200), broken down as 10-13% protein, 27-30% fat, and not less than 60% carbohydrates, and containing no animal or animal by-products (although minimal amount of dairy products, not to exceed levels considered acceptable for lactose-intolerant individuals, are permitted). In addition, products containing ethyl alcohol or ingredients derived from or containing ethyl alcohol are prohibited. Each ration consists of two vegetarian main meals and other items, such as crackers, peanut butter, jam, fruit bar, cookies, etc., as well as an accessory pack. (See next page for details.) The entrees may be eaten cold, but heating (either by immersing the entrée package in hot water or placing the contents in a pot for heating over flame) may be desirable.
- Currently, one HDR costs \$4.65. Pouches are packed ten to a case, and packaging is designed to withstand extreme environmental conditions and to allow air drops when necessary.
- The Defense Security Cooperation Agency (DSCA) manages the HDRs and distributes them from its warehouse in Albany, Georgia, where storage conditions/temperatures are maintained to maximize shelf life. The Defense Logistics Agency procures HDRs to meet DSCA requirements. The HDRs are produced by the same manufacturers that produce MREs.
- More than 18 million HDR have been delivered worldwide to countries experiencing adverse effects from man-made and/or natural disasters (most recently, for example, the Republic of Georgia in 2008 and Haiti in 2010.).

## HUMANITARIAN DAILY RATION (HDR) CONTENTS

### MENU 1

Two of the following: Bean Salad; Barley Stew; Beans & Rice in Tomato Sauce; Brown & Wild Rice w/Lentils; Lentil Stew; Herb Rice

Five to seven of the following: Crackers, Biscuits, Flatbread, Peanut Butter, Jam, Raisins, Fruit Bar, Fruit Pastry, Shortbread Cookies

Accessory Pack \*

### MENU 2

Two of the following: Bean Salad; Barley Stew; Red Beans & Rice; Rice w/Beans; Peas in Tomato Sauce; Yellow Rice

Six to seven of the following: Crackers, Biscuits, Flatbread, Peanut Butter, Jam, Raisins, Fruit Bar, Fruit Pastry, Shortbread Cookies

Accessory Pack \*

### MENU 3

Two of the following: Bean Salad; Barley Stew; Lentil Stew; Lentils & Vegetables; Rice & Vegetables in Sauce; Herb Rice

Six to seven of the following: Crackers, Biscuits, Flatbread, Peanut Butter, Jam, Raisins, Fruit Bar, Fruit Pastry, Shortbread Cookies

Accessory Pack \*

### MENU 4

Two of the following: Beans w/Potatoes; Rice & Vegetables; Pasta in Tomato Sauce; Brown & Wild Rice w/Lentils; Peas in Tomato Sauce; Yellow Rice

Five to seven of the following: Crackers, Biscuits, Flatbread, Peanut Butter, Jam, Raisins, Fruit Bar, Fruit Pastry, Shortbread Cookies

Accessory Pack \*

### MENU 5

Two of the following: Lentils & Vegetables, Lentil Stew, Beans w/Potatoes, Peas in Tomato Sauce, Red Beans & Rice

Five to seven of the following: Crackers, Biscuits, Flatbread, Peanut Butter, Jam, Raisins, Fruit Bar, Fruit Pastry, Shortbread Cookies

Accessory Pack \*

\*Accessory Pack Contents: Red Pepper, Pepper, Salt, Sugar, Spoon, Matches, Towelette (alcohol-free), Napkin