METHODS OF FIELD COOKING HANDOUT

Cooking in the field is an important skill for people who find themselves in a survival situation. Since the human body needs nutrients and energy, cooking is essential to kill harmful bacteria. There are many different ways to cook in the field.

BAKING IN A SHALLOW PIT LINED WITH ROCKS

The best way to bake in the field is in the ground. When food is buried, it will cook faster. To do this:

1. Dig a shallow pit in the ground.

2. Line the pit with rocks.

3. Burn a small fire to get a bed of coals.

4. Place a layer of wet grass on the embers when there are no more open flames and only hot, red embers remaining (if the grass is dry, use water).

5. Place the food (already prepared to be cooked) on top of the wet grass.

6. Use a stick to move around the hot coals to get them as close to the food as possible. Try to put some coals on top of the food.

7. Cover the food with the earth that was dug from the pit.

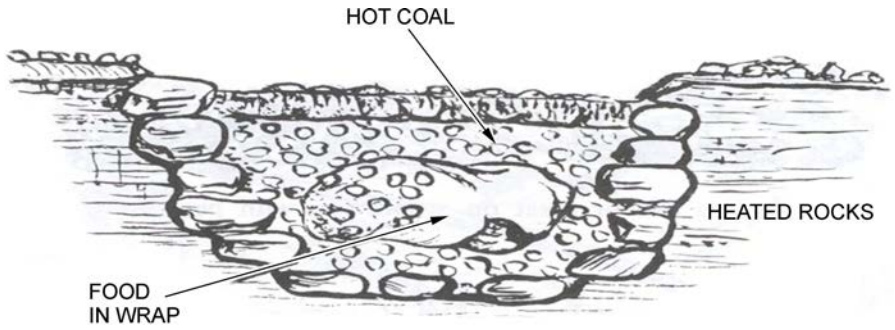

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Figure J-1 Baking in the Ground



When using this method, it is very difficult to check and see if the food is cooked. Cooking time will vary, depending on what is being cooked. Ensure food is completely cooked before consuming. Place it back in the ground and allow more time if unsure.

ROASTING WITH A STICK

Roasting is an easy method that produces tasty results. Unfortunately, it also produces a lot of grease when cooking meat. To minimize waste, place a pot or container under the roasting food to catch grease. Place the object being cooked on the end of a stick, beside an open fire. The food should not be placed directly over the fire and direct contact with smoke and flame should be avoided as much as possible.

The food will need to be rotated or turned to ensure it is cooked throughout. If hanging the food above the fire, a rotor, made with plastic or heavy paper, can be attached (see Figure J-2). The rotor will catch and turn in the wind, turning the food.

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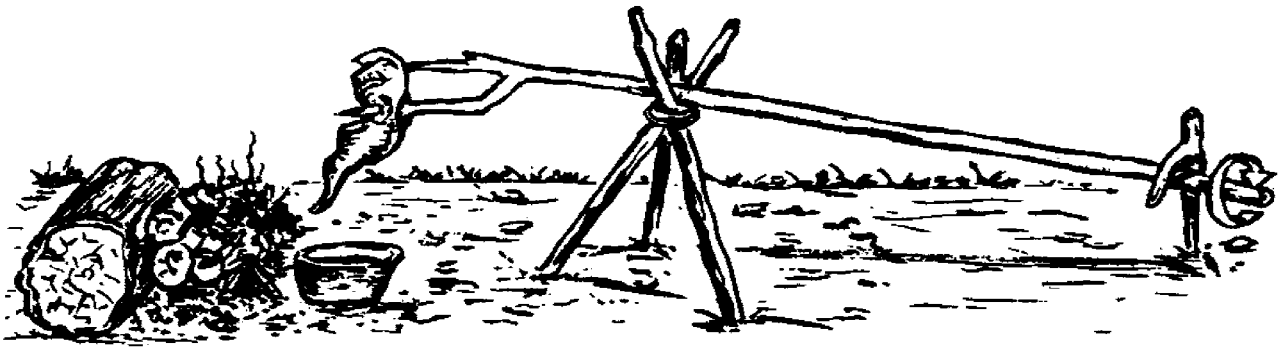

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Figure J-2 Roasting on a Stick

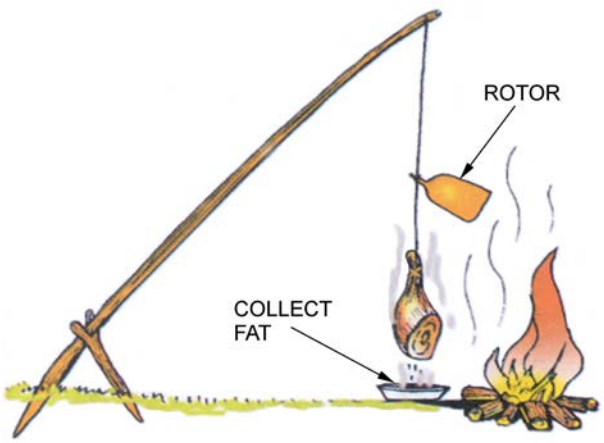

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Figure J-3 Roasting With a Rotor

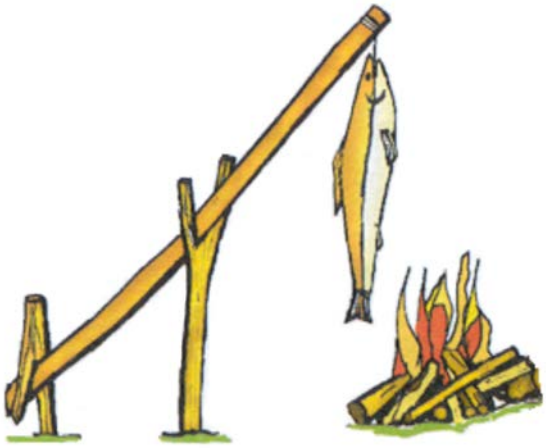

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Figure J-4 Roasting Fish

BOILING IN A POT

Boiling in a pot can be done over an open fire, the same as on a stove. When boiling in a pot, ensure the pot is sitting straight up on the fire. This can be done by using a grill, wedging it between two pieces of thick wood or placing rocks around to stabilize it. There are many ways to place a pot over a fire using wood (see Figures J-5 to J-8). It is important to ensure the pot is stable and does not have a risk of falling into the fire.

Seeing bubbles is an easy way to tell that water is boiling.

Boiling over an open fire will normally cause soot to form on the outside of the pot. A coating of soapy water on the outside of the pot will make cleaning much easier.

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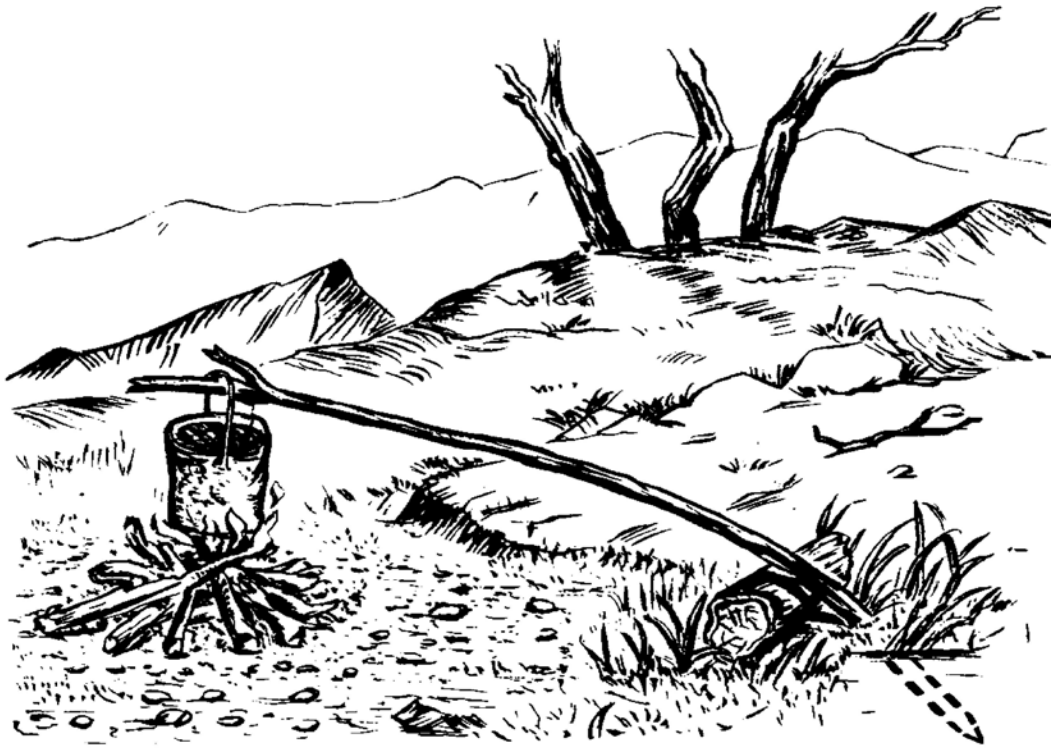

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Figure J-5 Boiling

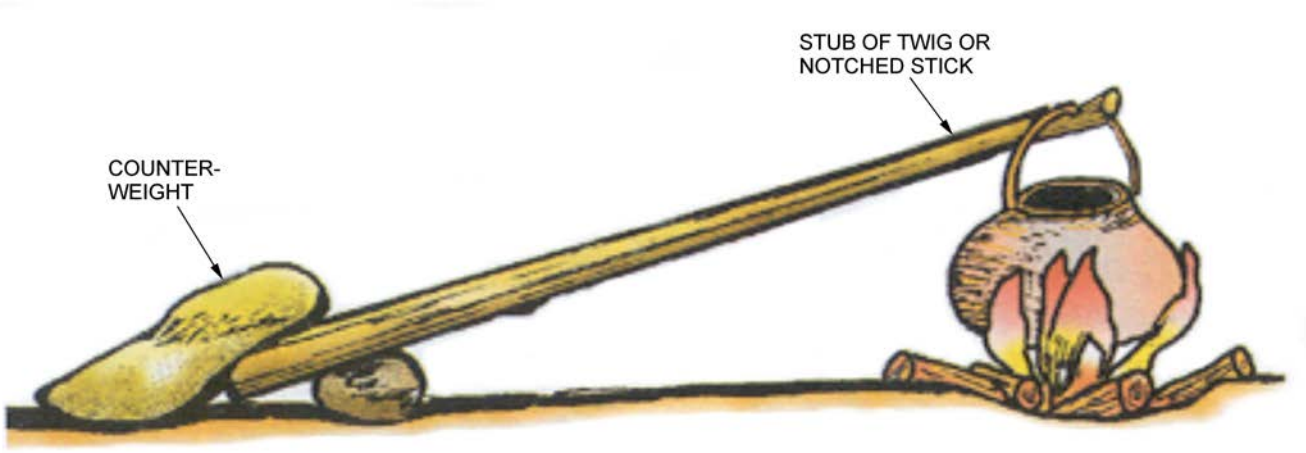

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Figure J-6 Boiling Using a Counterweight

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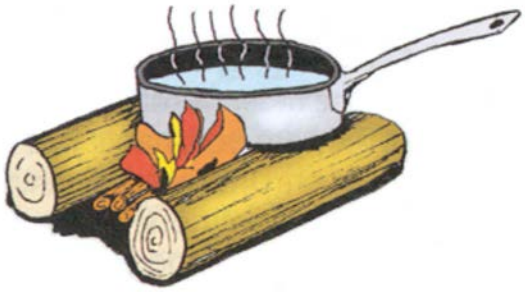

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Figure J-7 Boiling on an Open Flame With Wood



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Figure J-8 Boiling on an Open Flame With Rocks

FRYING

Food can be easily fried on a rock or sheet of metal. A rock will hold a lot of heat for a very long time. When using this method to cook, food may easily stick if there is not a sufficient amount of grease.

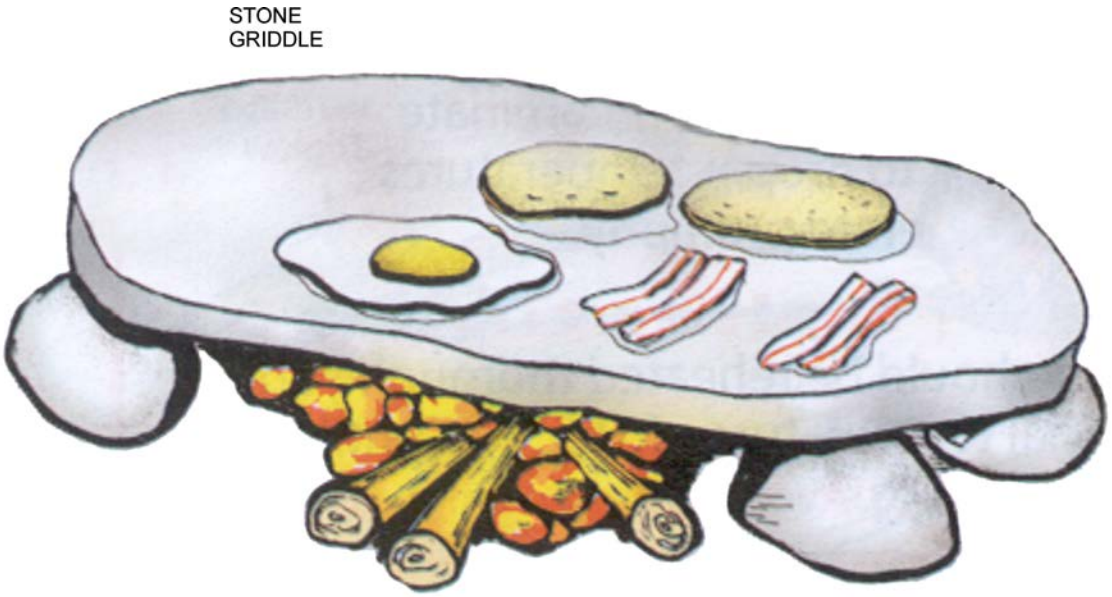

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Figure J-9 Frying on a Flat Rock

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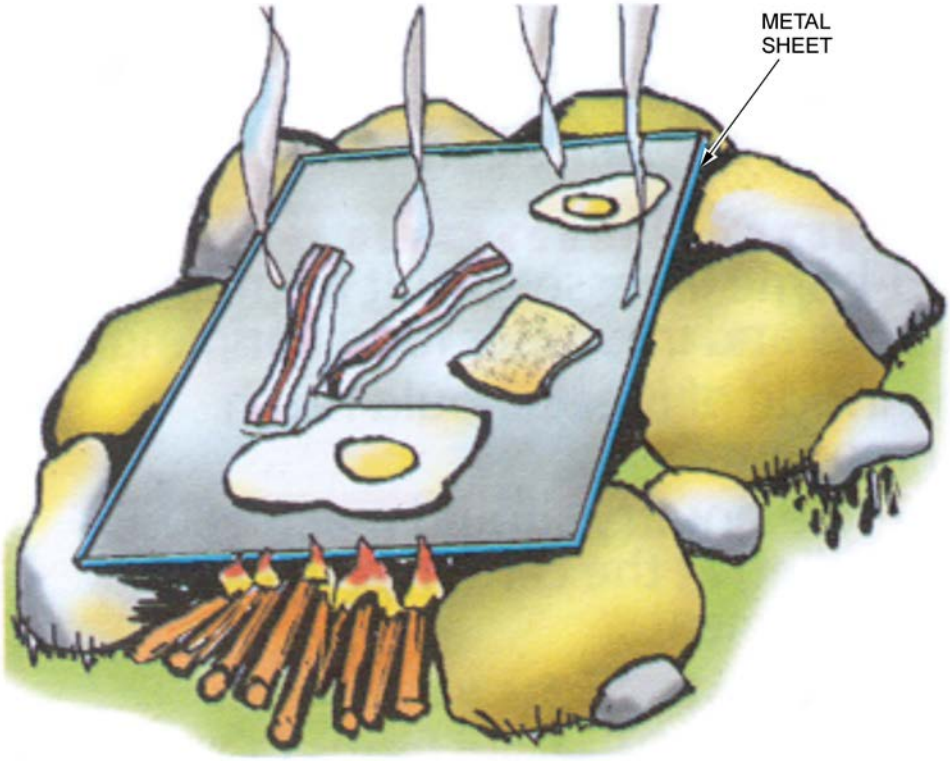

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Figure J-10 Frying With a Metal Sheet

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