

EAT RIGHT when MONEY'S TIGHT

Food costs are on the rise. Read on for tips on how to stretch your food dollars by planning ahead, budgeting, making smart food choices, and preparing low-cost recipes

DURING Shopping

- ▶ **Have something to eat before you go shopping.** It's easier to stick to your shopping list when you are not hungry.
- ▶ **Try store brands.** They are the same quality and cost less.
- ▶ **Compare products for the best deal.** Use unit pricing and also the Nutrition Facts labels to get the best product for your money.
- ▶ **Check "sell by" or "use by" dates.** Buy the freshest food possible.

BEFORE Shopping

- ▶ **Plan your weekly meals and snacks.** Preparing in advance will help you know what you need and also help you put leftovers to good use. See below for more on planning ahead.
- ▶ **Use store circulars and go online to look for coupons, sales, and store specials.** Only use coupons on foods you normally eat. Make sure the coupons give you the best value for your money.
- ▶ **For added savings, sign up for the store discount card or bonus card** at your local supermarket.

AFTER Shopping

- ▶ **Store food right away** in the refrigerator or freezer to keep it fresh and safe.
- ▶ **If you buy a large amount** of fresh food, like meat, poultry, or fish, divide it into meal-size packages, label the food, and freeze it for later use.
- ▶ **Use foods** with the earliest expiration dates first.

BEST BUYS for COST and NUTRITION

BREADS AND GRAINS

Choose whole-grain breads. Look for bargains on day-old varieties.

Buy regular brown rice and old-fashioned oats and grits instead of instant varieties to save money and consume less sugar, salt, and calories.

VEGETABLES

Buy large bags of frozen vegetables.

When choosing canned vegetables, look for "low sodium" or "no added salt" on the label.

FRUITS

Buy fresh fruit in season - it generally costs less.

Frozen and canned fruits are available year round, can save you money, and have similar nutrition values to fresh.

LOW-FAT OR FAT-FREE MILK PRODUCTS

Buy low-fat or fat-free milk, yogurt, and cheese in the largest size that can be used before spoiling. Larger containers cost less per serving than smaller sizes.

Ultra-pasteurized milk found on store shelves has a longer expiration date and won't spoil as fast.

MEAT AND BEANS

Dried beans and peas are a good source of protein and fiber. They can last a year or more without spoiling.

Canned tuna packed in water is an inexpensive healthy protein choice. Light tuna has less mercury than white (albacore) tuna.