

# Food Budgeting

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## Ways to cut food costs:

- Having convenience foods that are easy and fast to prepare may be important for you. However, if you are able to make more home-made foods (such as oatmeal, casseroles or soups) you will find you will be able to cut your food costs.
- Buy small amounts of those foods that spoil quickly such as fresh fruits and vegetables.
- No-Name brands are usually cheaper.
- Compare the unit prices. The unit price sticker is on the shelf below the product. Using this you can compare the prices of different brands.
- Some foods are cheaper in the bulk bins, for example, spices. Buying from the bulk bins also allows you to buy the small amount that you need.



- Eating at home costs less than eating out or ordering in food. However, you may want some restaurant meals.
- Watch for coupons that offer real savings. Only use coupons to buy foods you usually eat.
- If your family and friends are wondering what to give you for a gift, suggest a cooked casserole.
- Rather than wasting money on unnecessary vitamin or mineral supplements or “health” foods, shop at regular grocery stores to stretch food dollars.
- Many stores have senior’s discount days.
- Items such as chips, pop, coffee, cigarettes, or alcohol are costly and cut into your food budget.

## Listed below are some good food buys:

### Grain Products

- hot cereals such as oatmeal
- rice (not parboiled or instant rice)
- macaroni and spaghetti
- plain soda crackers

### Vegetables and Fruits

- fresh fruit and vegetables that are in season
- frozen or canned fruit (when fresh produce is out of season)
- frozen fruit juice and canned tomato or vegetable juice

### Milk Products

- fresh milk, skim milk powder, canned evaporated milk
- plain yogourt (add your own fruit)
- block cheese
- cottage cheese

### **Meat and Alternatives**

- dried or canned beans, peas and lentils
- eggs, turkey and chicken (frozen poultry is usually a better buy)
- many types of fish such as frozen blue fish, canned tuna, canned pink salmon or sardines
- peanut butter
- liver and other organ meats
- less tender cuts of meat (such as pot roast and stewing meat)
- ground beef

### **Other Foods**

- Diet products are often less costly if you make them from scratch. For example, add a low-calorie sweetener to regular Kool-Aid, or add cocoa and a low-calorie sweetener to milk to make light hot cocoa.