

# FitFUTURE

Strategies for  
Better Living.



## Stretching Your Food Dollar



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**M**ost of us can change our food spending habits in ways that make each food dollar go further and still improve nutrition. Before dashing out to the supermarket, it's important to "do your home-work."

- ✓ **Have a plan.** Use a blank calendar for every day of the week filling in main dish items first. Since the main dish is usually the most expensive part of the meal, make your plan around that food. Use the website [www.choosemyplate.gov](http://www.choosemyplate.gov) to help you plan nutritious meals and snacks for your family.
- ✓ **Check for special sales.** Lower cost foods can be enticing but just be sure it is something you and your family can use. Using coupons for coffee, prepared foods, cereals, flour and flour mix products can save about 10 percent in most food budgets.
- ✓ **Take advantage of seasonal specials.** Fresh fruits and vegetables, are generally less expensive when in season, and are at their peak quality and nutrient dense.

- ✓ **Consider food preferences.** When you serve popular foods, you increase eating pleasure. Make a collection of economical, nutritious recipes that your family likes and serve them often.
- ✓ **Plan the use of leftovers.** They can be used in casseroles, soups, for snacks and in lunch boxes.
- ✓ **Make a List.** One of the best ways to control spending is to make a list. Keep an ongoing list and jot down items as your supply gets low. Organize your list according to the store layout. This will save you time and reduce the temptation to buy foods not on your list.
- ✓ **Avoid shopping when hungry.** This will reduce impulse buying.
- ✓ **Shop alone.** When family members are along, you tend to buy more.
- ✓ **Be alert for unadvertised specials in the store.** However, not all items displayed at the end of aisles are necessarily on special.

- ✓ **Compare.** If the quality is similar choose the lowest cost item.
- ✓ **Take advantage of unit pricing.** The unit price is the per-unit measure (the number of cents per ounce/gram) which is often posted on the shelf below the product.
- ✓ **Buy only amounts you can store and use.** The large packages may be less expensive, but not a bargain if you can't use them before they become stale or spoiled.
- ✓ **Pay attention at the checkout.** Be sure the correct price is scanned.



SOURCE:  
Oregon State University Cooperative Extension  
<http://extension.oregonstate.edu>  
Clemson University Cooperative Extension:  
<http://www.clemson.edu/extension/>