

# Nutrition News

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A COMMUNITY NUTRITION PROGRAMS NEWSLETTER

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## Food Budgeting Be a Penny Pincher!

Saving money at the grocery store can be a challenge. It can also be fun! It feels good to save money, and saving money helps our grocery dollars go a long way.

### Here are some ideas to get you started:

- Plan, plan and plan! Check the ads in your local newspaper to see what is on sale. Plan meals for the week. Plan healthy snacks for the week.
- Check your refrigerator and cabinets BEFORE going to the store. Plan meals using the foods that you have. Don't throw away what you could use. The most expensive food we buy is the food we throw away.
- Collect low-cost recipes. Get a notebook and write down your favorite recipes. Include your simple meal ideas. You may not forget how to make these meals but you may forget to make them.
- Get friendly with your kitchen. Eat meals at home more often. More than half of our food dollars are spent on food eaten away from home. You can save a lot of money by cooking at home.
- Shop with a list. Make a list and stick to it. Grocery stores want you to buy food on impulse. Your shopping list will keep you on track and within your budget.
- Shop around. Check out the specials at different grocery stores. Remember the price of gas – don't drive long distances to a store if the savings are not worth it.
- Avoid habit buying. You may be missing some bargains if you always buy the same items at the grocery store. Look at all the shelves. There may be new products that are cheaper.
- Try store brands of your favorite foods. Store brands are an easy way to save money. They usually cost less than name brands and tastes as good.
- Buy food at the grocery store. Check the prices at your local stores. Cleaning products and paper products may be cheaper at stores other than the grocery store.

### Save with Unit Pricing!

Unit pricing will tell you how much the food costs per unit (ounce, pound, etc.). These labels are posted by each food item in your grocery store.

Frozen broccoli  
\$1.83 for 16-ounce bag  
Unit price = \$.11 per ounce

Frozen broccoli  
\$.83 for 8-ounce bag  
Unit price = \$.10 per ounce

Frozen broccoli  
\$1.37 for 16-ounce bag  
Unit price = \$.08 per ounce

Compare and buy the best deal. You can save a lot of money when you read the unit pricing.



Example of grocery store shelf tag with unit price information.

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- Shop when you have time. Do your major grocery shopping on early Saturday or Sunday morning. The store will be well-stocked and not crowded.
- Look at the top and bottom shelves in the grocery store. Store brands and the best buys are often placed away from your eye level.
- Look at the displays near the front of the store where you may find super-sale items for the week.
- Buy weekly sale items if you will use them, even if they are not on your list. Change your meal plan for the week, or plan next week's meals using the sale items.

Reference: Smart Food, Low Cost & Healthy Eating. Nu Matters, Inc. [www.numatters.com](http://www.numatters.com).

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To find out more, contact your parish agent.