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## Eating Better on a Budget

Have you ever been told that eating healthy is expensive? While sometimes this can be true; the key is knowing tips and tricks to get the best for less! There are many ways to save money on healthy foods that you'd like to eat. The three main steps are planning before you shop, purchasing the items at the best price, and preparing meals that stretch your food dollars. Here are 7 **tips** to help you stretch your food dollars and get the most for your food budget:

1. **Plan:** What meals do you want to plan for dinner? Sit down and write out your list. Before you head to the store, take an inventory of everything that you already have on hand to prevent purchasing things that you already have at home. Include meals like stews, casseroles, or stir-fries, which “stretch” your meals further by bulking them up.
2. **Get the Best Price:** Look at your local grocery stores’ weekly sales and ads! Ask about loyalty cards- or any coupons that you might be missing out on.
3. **Compare and Contrast:** Is the small bottle of ketchup really cheaper? Locate the “Unit Price” on the shelf directly below the product. Use it to compare different sizes of the same product to determine which is really the better deal.
4. **Buy in Bulk:** It is almost always cheaper to buy foods in bulk. Smart choices are family packs of chicken, steak, or fish and larger bags of potatoes and frozen vegetables.
5. **Buy in Season:** Buying fruits and vegetables in season can lower the cost and add freshness! Check out your local farmers’ market to find seasonal produce and help local vendors!
6. **Convenience Cost:** Purchasing convenience foods cost more than doing the work yourself. If time is your main struggle with eating healthy, convenience cost might be worth it for you. Just know that it does come with a heavier price tag.
7. **Year-Round Cost Saving:** Certain foods are typically low-cost options all year round. Try beans for a less expensive protein source. For vegetables, buy carrots, greens, or potatoes. As for fruits, apples and bananas are a good choice.

Visit [www.ChooseMyPlate.gov](http://www.ChooseMyPlate.gov) for more information on this topic or contact, Katherine Pinto, EFNEP and SNAP-Ed Agent, [kd Pinto@ksu.edu](mailto:kd Pinto@ksu.edu) or 620-232-1930.

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