

EATING ON A BUDGET



LORI JOHNSON, FAMILY & CONSUMER
SCIENCE AGENT, UF/IFAS EXTENSION, LAKE
COUNTY

MEAL PLANNING

Aim to include 3-5 food groups each time you eat a meal and 1-2 with snacks. Try these budget friendly ideas to maximize your meals.

- Grains
 - Choose rolled oats vs. individual packets of flavored oatmeal.
- Protein
 - Include more beans in salads, soups, and as a main source of protein in meals.
 - Use less-expensive cuts of meat in soups, stews, and slow-cooker dishes.
 - Buy a large package of meat or poultry on sale and divide into smaller packages for multiple meals.
- Fruits & Veggies
 - Choose fresh, seasonal produce.
 - Frozen vegetables without added sauces provide the same nutrition as fresh.
 - Frozen fruits allow you to take a small amount out at a time.
 - If selecting canned, rinse with water and choose fruits in water or juice instead of heavy syrup.
- Dairy
 - Buy a large container of low-fat plain yogurt instead of single serve and mix in fruit.



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FOOD WASTE

- Focus on buying only what you need for the week, use what you have on hand in your pantry, refrigerator and freezer first.
- If you have leftovers or are not going to eat an entire container of blueberries in one week, freeze a portion for a later time. Wash any fresh produce before freezing.
- If you have leftover onion or other veggies, chop and freeze for a future meal or combine and sauté with olive oil and herbs and spices for a healthy side dish.
- Cook a large batch of a whole grain, freeze them in individual servings.
- Keep fruits such as bananas, apples, pears, stone fruits and avocados away from other produce. The gas they release will cause others to ripen quickly and spoil.

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EATING SEASONAL

Avocado: June–January
Bell Pepper: November–May
Blueberry: April–May
Cabbage: December–May
Cantaloupe: April–June
Cauliflower: December–April
Cucumber: March–May, October–December
Eggplant: November–June
Grapefruit: September–May
Guava: Year-round
Mango: May–August
Oranges: September–June
Papaya: February–June
Peaches: April–May
Radish: November–May
Strawberry: December–April
Sweet Corn: October–June
Tomato: October–June

LEARN MORE

My Plate:

<https://www.myplate.gov/eat-healthy/healthy-eating-budget>

USDA:

<https://www.nutrition.gov/topics/food-security-and-access/nutrition-budget>

Fresh from Florida:

<https://www.followfreshfromflorida.com/>

