Food Resources Can Save You $$$

If you’re eligible, there are resources in your community that can help you stretch your food dollars.

**FoodShare** helps individuals and families who have limited resources buy the food they need to maintain good health. To see if you are eligible to receive FoodShare benefits, use the Am I Eligible tool at access.wi.gov.

**WIC (Women, Infants, and Children)** provides food assistance, nutrition risk screening, nutrition education and breastfeeding support to limited income pregnant and post partum women and their infants, as well as children up to age 5. To see if you are eligible for WIC benefits, contact your state or local WIC office.

**Local Community Food Pantries** are usually organized by service organizations or churches and they provide supplemental food for families. Some pantries receive distribution foods through the Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP). Contact your local UW-Extension Office for information on food pantries in your area.

Check out food resources available in your area. The money you save could help you pay other bills such as rent, heat and gas.

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**Creamy Cauliflower Salad**

Great for a pot luck!

Makes 6 servings

1. Prepare the cauliflower by rinsing well in cold water just before using it. Snap off the outer leaves and discard.
2. Use a sharp knife and cutting board to slice off stem and hollow out and remove core.
3. Cut or break cauliflower into small pieces called florets.
4. Toss cauliflower, onion, lettuce, and apples in a medium bowl.
5. Stir in dressing.

Source: IA State University, Spend Smart, Eat Smart
Brand Name vs. Generic

According to a 2012 Consumer Report, you’ll save an average of 25% of your grocery bill by switching from name brand foods to store brand or generic brand foods.

In fact, many generic or store brand foods are actually made by the same companies that produce brand name foods. Generic brands have plainer packages and have no national advertising, which makes them cost less.

**Generic brands might not always be cheaper.** For example, when a name brand item goes on sale, it may be cheaper than the store brand or generic brand. Check the unit price to make sure you are getting the best deal.

The **unit price** is the cost per unit of food, usually per ounce or pound. Some stores provide this information for you on the shelf label.

Checking and comparing prices, nutritional value and taste will ensure your money is well spent.

Sources: October 2012 Consumer Reports Nutrition for the Young at Heart

Food Storage Tips

Proper food storage is key in making sure that your food doesn’t go to waste.

**Pantry/ Cupboard Storage**

Cupboards should be clean, cool and dry and kept between 50°F to 70°F.

Label and date packages of food.

Store foods in plastic, glass or metal containers that can be tightly sealed.

Use first in, first out when rotating food.

**Refrigerator Storage**

Refrigerators should be set at 35°F to 38°F so that foods stay at or below 40°F.

Cover foods with air-tight wraps or put them in air-tight containers.

Store raw foods, like meats, separately and do not allow meat juices to drip onto other foods.

**Freezer Storage**

Freezers should be set to keep foods at 0°F or below.

Package foods to be frozen in plastic freezer containers or bags or use heavy duty aluminum foil to avoid freezer burn.

Source: Food Storage for Safety and Quality - Adapted from University of Georgia

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Teriyaki Rice Bowl

*A great homemade skillet meal.*

Makes 6 servings

- 2 teaspoons cooking oil
- 3/4 pound boneless chicken, beef, or pork, cut into strips
- 2 cloves garlic, minced or 1/4 teaspoon garlic powder
- 2 cups water
- 1/2 cup low-sodium teriyaki or soy sauce
- 2 cups uncooked minute brown rice
- 1 14- to 16-ounce package frozen stir-fry vegetables

1. Heat oil in large nonstick skillet on high heat. Add chicken or other meat and garlic. Cook and stir 5 to 10 minutes.
3. Stir in frozen vegetables. Heat until vegetables are hot, about 5 minutes.
4. Let stand 5 minutes. Fluff with fork.

Source: IA State University, Spend Smart, Eat Smart
**Fresh, Frozen or Canned?**

Are fresh fruits and vegetables better than frozen or canned? Not necessarily.

**Eat fresh produce right away.** The less time spent traveling from the field or garden to your plate, the more nutritious the produce. The longer the time between harvesting and eating, the more nutrients that are lost.

**Frozen and canned are nutritious.** Frozen and canned fruits and vegetables are often processed immediately after they are harvested, resulting in little or no loss in nutrient value.

**Canned fruits and vegetables contain added sugar and salt.** Sodium and sugar can be limited by choosing no-salt vegetable varieties, or fruits packed in 100% juice. Rinsing the vegetables and fruits in water can eliminate 40% of salt/sugar.

**Keep cooking to a minimum.** Generally, it is best to steam veggies for short periods. Use lower temperatures and cook with small amounts of water to retain the nutrient content.

**Cost varies.** Compare prices between fresh, frozen and canned. Be aware of sales and what's in season to get the best prices.

The bottom line is to purchase a combination of fresh, frozen, and canned fruits and vegetables to ensure that you have produce readily available.

Source: eXtension

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**Dear Sue,**

Our school sent home information about signing my kids up for free and reduced priced school meals. Things are really tight right now at our house, since I lost my job and I haven't always been able to send lunches or milk money for my kids to eat at school.

I was raised to believe that we should take care of ourselves and not rely on government handouts, so when we don't have money, we just go without. Is this something I should check into?

Ima Tryin

**Dear Ima,**

The National School Lunch and Breakfast Programs offer all school children healthy and nutritious meals. By completing the form, you can find out if your child will be eligible to receive school meals (including breakfast if it is offered at your school) for free or at a reduced rate. Over the school year, the savings can add up to hundreds of dollars for your family.

This program can also have a positive impact on your child’s learning. Research tells us that kids who eat breakfast and lunch are able to pay attention and learn better in school.

FoodShare is another way families can access enough food for a healthy, active life. Most people who use these resources only use them for a short time. When you are working again, your tax money helps provide this help for others!

Sue
understanding food and health benefit programs? Are you unsure what you are eligible for? ACCESS is a fast, easy-to-use internet tool for Wisconsin residents. Go to ACCESS to:

Find out which health, nutrition and other cost saving programs you might be eligible for.

BadgerCare and the Family Planning Waiver Program.

Get up-to-date information about the status of FoodShare, Medicaid/BadgerCare, Family Planning Waiver Program, SeniorCare or Caretaker Supplement benefits.

Get answers to common questions about benefits.

Check out ACCESS at: access.wisconsin.gov

**GOAL:** Write one tip that you will try in order to help you save money this month.

**Kids in the Kitchen...**

**TV Time Can Take a Toll**

Kids are influenced by ads for foods they see on TV. Many of these foods are not good choices for their health. Follow these suggestions to help your child make good food decisions.

**Watch commercials with kids.** Explain how these advertisements are encouraging them to buy these foods.

**Help kids learn more about their foods.** Teach them to read labels.

**Bring kids into the kitchen.** Show them flavors, shapes and colors of healthful foods.

**Turn off TV at mealtime.** Family meals are a time to establish eating habits and have conversations.

**Put limits on TV time.** Set guidelines for when and how much TV is ok.

Source: www.eatright.org

**MyPlate Tip**

**Eat Better on a Budget**

WNEP education is supported by the USDA Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), UW-Extension, FoodShare Wisconsin, and local partners. In Wisconsin, FoodShare can help provide a healthy diet. To apply for FoodShare benefits, go to ACCESS and apply online or contact our local FoodShare office at 746-2300.

For more information on saving a food dollar, food safety and overall healthy eating contact UW Extension Nutrition Program at 746 2260 or http://door.uwex.edu/