



January 2018

13 TIPS FOR SMART SHOPPING FOR HEALTHY EATING

1. **REDUCE WASTE.** Americans are notorious for wasting food. The USDA estimates that 31 percent of the food purchased ends up in landfills. Plan out your meals for the coming week and make a grocery list. You'll be less likely to overbuy and end up wasting food.
2. **USE YOUR SMARTPHONE OR TABLET.** Shopping lists, coupons, recipes, nutrition info ... you can load them all onto your device to access while shopping.
3. **DON'T SHOP HUNGRY.** Have an apple or another healthy snack before you head to the supermarket. Shopping after eating will make it easier to roll on by the tempting snack foods.
4. **BUY IN-SEASON PRODUCE WHENEVER YOU CAN.** It's likely to be less expensive and lots tastier. Don't go overboard though; buy only what you can use before it spoils.
5. **BUY VEGETABLES AND FRUITS IN THEIR SIMPLEST FORMS.** Cut, washed, and ready-to-eat foods are convenient, but often cost much more than when purchased in their basic forms.
6. **CONSIDER LEGUMES.** Some great low-cost choices include dried or canned beans or lentils; use these good sources of protein for main or side dishes. They cost far less than a similar amount of other protein foods.
7. **TO LOWER MEAT COSTS, BUY VALUE PACKS.** Freeze what you don't plan to use right away. Choose lean meats like chicken or turkey. Select lean ground beef (at least 93% lean).
8. **SEAFOOD DOESN'T HAVE TO BE EXPENSIVE.** We've been encouraged to eat more fish for better heart health. Look for specials at the fish counter and ask the manager for preparation tips. Try frozen seafood; often it is caught and frozen at sea to preserve its freshness. Canned tuna, salmon or sardines are all good, lower-cost options as well.

QUICKTAKES



YOUR GUIDE TO BUYING FOOD ONLINE

According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Americans spend, on average, about 5.5 percent of their budget on food. Increasingly, some of those dollars are being spent online. Ordering food and household supplies online is certainly convenient. Today's e-grocers offer:

- 24- to 48-hour delivery of a huge variety of products.
- Easy-to-navigate sites with search filters for diet preferences, everything from organic to vegan to paleo to gluten-free.
- Free shopping apps.

Prices are becoming more competitive as warehouse stores and giant retailers enter the online grocery business. Budget-minded shoppers compare prices while factoring in delivery fees and subscription fees.

The bulk of food dollars continue to be spent at brick-and-mortar stores. This month's newsletter takes a fresh look at grocery shopping habits. We offer a baker's dozen of tips for how to find the healthiest foods and save the most money at your local supermarket.

9. **READ LABELS.** The ingredients list and nutrition facts label contain vital information about contents, calories, saturated fat, and sodium to help you make better choices.
10. **LIMIT FOODS WITH ADDED SUGARS.** Sweetened breakfast cereals, sweetened sodas and energy drinks, and flavored yogurts are just some of the foods that can contain a lot of added sugars, which translates into a lot of empty calories.
11. **IN-STORE BRANDS SAVE \$\$\$.** Paying more for brand-name food product is no guarantee of superior quality compared to a similar generic product. Don't hesitate to buy in-store brands. You can save serious money, particularly when you find a product you like.
12. **FROZEN IS YOUR FRIEND.** Frozen fruits and veggies offer value and quality. IQF (individually quick frozen) is best.
13. **BUY WHAT YOU NEED – AND NOT MORE – FROM THE BULK BINS.** Remember that grains, nuts, seeds and dried fruits don't last forever. Purchase reasonable quantities to avoid spoilage. At home, transfer these goods to containers with tight-fitting lids and keep in a cool, dry location.

Sources:

USDA, Food expenditures by families and individuals as a share of disposable personal income <https://www.ers.usda.gov/data-products/food-expenditures.aspx> Accessed 11/2/2017

USDA Food Waste Challenge, FAQs <https://www.usda.gov/oce/foodwaste/faqs.htm> Accessed 11/2/2017

USDA, Choose My Plate, Tips for every aisle <https://www.choosemyplate.gov/tips-for-every-aisle> Accessed 10/30/2017

USDA, Choose My Plate, Create a grocery game plan <https://www.choosemyplate.gov/budget-create-grocery-game-plan>
Accessed 10/27/2017

PASTA E FAGIOLI (PASTA AND BEAN SOUP)

SERVES 4

The fiber-rich combo of pasta, beans and veggies makes for heart-healthy, rib-sticking goodness. Look for no-salt-added or low-sodium brands when buying the tomatoes, beans and broth.

INGREDIENTS

1 tablespoon olive oil
 1 large onion, chopped
 1 can (14 oz.) no-salt-added diced tomatoes
 1 can (15 oz.) low-sodium Great Northern or cannellini beans, drained and rinsed
 3 cups low-sodium chicken or vegetable broth
 ½ teaspoon mixed dried Italian herbs
 1 bay leaf
 Freshly ground black pepper
 1 cup whole-grain elbows or other small pasta
 2 tablespoons chopped fresh parsley or basil
 2 teaspoons balsamic vinegar
 ½ cup freshly grated Parmesan or pecorino



NUTRITIONAL INFORMATION

356 Calories
 7 g Fat
 2 g Saturated fat
 17 g Protein
 47 g Carbohydrates
 9 g Fiber
 393 mg Sodium
 150 mg Calcium

DIRECTIONS

Heat olive oil in a large saucepan set over medium heat. Add onions and cook, stirring, until they begin to soften, about 5 minutes.

Stir in tomatoes and their juices, drained beans, broth, dried herbs and bay leaf. Add a generous grinding of black pepper. Bring to a simmer and cook for 5 minutes.

Stir in pasta and cook until tender but firm, about 12 minutes. Add more broth if needed.

Remove and discard the bay leaf. Stir in fresh herbs and balsamic vinegar. Ladle the soup into bowls and sprinkle with grated cheese.