



K-State Research and Extension Family Nutrition Program

DINING ON A DIME

Eating Better for Less

June, 2004

Organize Yourself to Savings

Sometimes just a little organization can make a big change in savings. Read on to learn how you can plan to save!



Menu Planning. Plan seven days of menus every week. For each day write down what you plan to serve for each meal and snack. Plan the meals around grocery store sale items, and buy enough of each sale item to prepare several meals. For example, if ground hamburger is on sale, buy enough to make sloppy joes, tacos, and a meatloaf. Remember to plan for left-overs too. Keep your menus for future use.

Grocery List Organization. The more time you spend looking for items in a supermarket, the more food dollars you're likely to spend. To save time and money, group your shopping list so that foods are listed by category or by aisle. Keep a list handy in your kitchen so you can note which items to buy more of as you use them throughout the week.

Coupon Organization. You may be able to cut your grocery costs if you use coupons. Good organization will help increase your savings. Before using a coupon, compare prices of different brands.

Here are some ways to keep your coupons in order so you can use them before they expire. Get a folder with sections. Label each section with a category name — canned foods, for example. Circle the expiration date on the coupon. Then circle every item on your shopping list that you have a coupon for. Gather all necessary coupons before going to the grocery store.

Price Book. Keep notes on the prices of items that you often purchase, and of your more expensive grocery items, in a notebook to track best buys. For example, record the regular price of diapers in each of your area stores — warehouse stores, discount stores and supermarkets. List the sale price as well, if there is one. You'll begin to notice where certain items are sold for less money, as well as trends in sales. Although a price book requires some extra time at first, it allows you to track deals for years on end. And you can use this method to save on products other than groceries, too!



Safe Handling of Fruits and Vegetables

Nutrition experts suggest Americans consume at least five servings of fruits and vegetables each day for good health. However, it is important to ensure these nutritious foods are handled safely to prevent food borne illness. Read on to learn how to properly store and prepare your favorite fresh fruits and vegetables.

Selection. Look for fruits and vegetables that are not bruised, shriveled, moldy, slimy, or have an unpleasant smell. Buy only what can be consumed within a few days. Apples, potatoes and citrus fruits can be stored longer. Purchase canned, frozen or dried fruits and vegetables to keep on hand.

Storage. Put produce away promptly. Keep most of your produce in the crisper. It has a slightly higher humidity, which is better for fruits and vegetables, than the rest of the refrigerator.



Washing. Germs can adhere to the surface of produce and can be passed to the flesh when cut. Rinse all fruits and vegetables before eating, even if you do not plan to eat the skin. Rinse most produce under clean running water just before you plan to use it. Warm water brings out their flavor and aroma. However, lettuce can be rinsed before refrigerating to maintain crispness. For maximum crispness, immerse the greens in a mixture of ice cubes and water about a half-hour before serving.

Spraying. Wash ripe or fragile berry fruits by spraying with a kitchen sink sprayer for best results. Use a colander so you can gently turn the fruit as you spray.

Immersion. If you do not have a sink sprayer, berries and soft fruit may be placed in a wire basket or colander and immersed in a 5-8 quart pot of warm water. Dip the basket in and out of the water several times. Change the water until it remains clear. Do this process quickly. If the fruit absorbs too much water, it will lose flavor, texture, and aroma.

Dry. Dry with a paper towel. Greens, such as spinach, chard, kale and collards, should be cooked while wet, soon after washing.

Source: Excerpted from The Ohio State University Extension's [Safe Handling of Fruits and Vegetables](http://ohioline.osu.edu/hyg-fact/5000/5353.html) [HYG-5353-99] at <http://ohioline.osu.edu/hyg-fact/5000/5353.html>

Newsletter developed by: Erin Henry, Jefferson County FNP Summer Nutrition Assistant, under the supervision of Cindy Williams, Jefferson County FNP agent. Reviewed by: Mary Meck Higgins, Ph.D., R.D., L.D., CDE, K-State Research and Extension Human Nutrition Specialist and Assistant Professor, Department of Human Nutrition. Contents of this publication may be reproduced for educational purposes. All other rights reserved. For more information about healthy eating, contact your local extension office.

Dining on a Dime Cooks' Corner

Try this very “cool” summer time treat! It’s a hit with kids and could be served as an afternoon snack or special dessert. Yummy, but still nutritious, this treat is packed with 158 mg of calcium and only 3 g of fat per serving. Enjoy!

Pudding Parfait

Ingredients

4 cups cold low fat milk, divided
12 ounce package instant vanilla pudding
12 ounce package instant chocolate pudding
2 cups thawed or prepared non-fat, non-dairy whipped topping
Sliced bananas
Chocolate syrup
Nuts or crunchy cereal

Directions

1. Pour 2 cups cold milk into a container with a tight fitting lid. Add contents of vanilla pudding and snap the lid on tightly. Shake hard for 45 seconds.
2. Prepare the chocolate pudding by the same method.
3. Refrigerate until set.
4. Place layers of each pudding into glasses with whipped topping, bananas, chocolate syrup, nuts or cereal.
5. Serve.
6. Refrigerate leftovers promptly.

Serves 10. Each serving: 127 calories, 3 g fat, 5 g protein, 21 g carbohydrate

Source: Kansas State University Research and Extension’s Mission Nutrition, at www.oznet.ksu.edu/humannutrition/pub.htm

K-State is an equal opportunity provider and employer. This material was funded by USDA’s Food Stamp Program through a contract awarded by the Kansas Department of Social and Rehabilitation Services (SRS). The Food Assistance Program can help people with low income buy nutritious foods for a better diet. To find out more, contact your local SRS Service Center or call 1-800-221-5689.



Just the Basics with Dining on a Dime ...

Want to save time and money? An organized kitchen contains the basics. Check out this list to help keep your food stocks ready when you are hungry for a quick, nourishing meal or snack!

Cold Storage

Milk
American cheese
Butter or margarine
Ice cream, ice milk
Yogurt
Eggs
Fresh, frozen fruit
Fresh, frozen vegs.
Frozen juice
Leafy greens
Carrots
Eggs
Hamburger
Poultry
Fish
Mayonnaise

Shelf Storage

Baking soda
Baking powder
Cocoa
Chocolate
Flour
Shortening
Vegetable oil
Cooking spray
Spices
Sugar
Pasta noodles
Rice
Bread
Tortillas
Crackers
Cereals

Dry beans
Canned meat
Canned fish
Canned veggies
Potatoes
Peanut butter
Soups
Canned fruits
Dried fruits
Evaporated milk
Salsa
Ketchup
Tomato sauce
Vinegar



Cooperative Extension Service

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Source: Kansas State University Research and Extension's Department of Human Nutrition.

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