

News Release
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Eating Healthy on a Budget

There are many ways to keep the costs low while eating healthy, but it does take some planning. One of the best ways to eat healthy on a budget is to cook more at home and since we are all in that situation right now – let's make a plan!

Sandy Proctor, K-State Nutrition specialist shares, “In normal times, most consumers don't think twice about a quick trip to the grocery store to pick up a few items. But these are not normal times. With the threat of the new coronavirus, COVID-19, hanging over most of the country, “social distancing” has become a commonly understood term, one that makes planning trips to the grocery more important.”

The first step is to plan out your meals, so you will know what you need to make the meals. When my kids were little we had different colors of magnets on the refrigerator of vegetables (these were all green), fruit (red), grains (orange) and heart healthy proteins (purple). The kids did not plan every meal but they did get to help. I would ask them to look at all the green magnets that had vegetable names on them and they would choose one for supper. You can find tools to help with your meal planning and grocery list at <https://www.choosemyplate.gov/eathealthy/budget>. Before making your grocery list, shop your cupboards. While many may have food staples in their pantry others may not. Then make a grocery list.

The second step in eating healthy on a budget is knowing some tricks to shop smart. These are; stick to your grocery list, do not shop when you are hungry, look for items on sale (but check the unit price), buy whole foods (check the label), buy generic brands, buy cheaper cuts of meat, replace meat with other sources of protein (i.e. beans, eggs, etc.), buy produce that is in season, and buy in bulk.

Fresh produce is great, but to avoid multiple trips to the store during the week, be sure to buy canned goods too. “Foods that are in cans or frozen are packed at their peak of nutritional value, so we know that those are healthy foods,” Procter said. “Use the fresh items first, then incorporate those that will keep longer.

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