
HOW TO EAT ON A BUDGET AS A COLLEGE STUDENT

Miriam Jirari MPH, RD, CPT
Kim Fitzgerald RD Intern

UC San Diego

HOUSING • DINING • HOSPITALITY
Wellness and Engagement



TABLE OF CONTENT

Tips & Tricks

Food Resources

CSA Boxes and
Farmer's Markets

Recipes



TIPS AND TRICKS



MEAL PREP AND COOKING TIPS



Cook at home

- Eating out adds up quickly, cooking at home allows you to stretch your food budget

Cook enough for leftovers

- This lets you cook less and have something yummy to eat ready to go as soon as you are hungry

Plan meals for the week

- Knowing what you will eat will help you shop smarter, buying only what you need and know that you will eat (wasting food is expensive!)

Pack your lunch

- Eating a yummy home made meal will save you from spending more at restaurants

Plan your daily snacks

- Buy snacks everyday can add up quick, bring snacks with you from home to satisfy those mid-day cravings

Invest in a toaster oven or microwave

- Faster cooking time means you get to eat that much sooner










Grow your own vegetables

- A small herb garden can be grown on a windowsill or a kitchen counter

2

MAKE MOST OF YOUR MEALS

Buying ready-to-eat prepared foods is generally much more expensive than buying whole ingredients, which you can then prepare yourself.

RESTAURANT	GROCERY	MAKE IT FROM SCRATCH
 <p>\$4.19</p> <p>TIM HORTONS CHILI</p>	 <p>\$3.49</p> <p>AMY'S ORGANIC CHILI - CAN - 398ML</p>	 <p>\$2.25</p> <p>DR. JOHN'S CHILI*</p>
 <p>\$8.99</p> <p>BOOSTER JUICE 16OZ SMOOTHIE</p>	 <p>\$2.49</p> <p>BOLTHOUSE FARMS B-LINE SMOOTHIE 15OZ</p>	 <p>\$2.00</p> <p>PN SUPER SHAKE</p>
 <p>\$16.99</p> <p>SPINACH SALAD WITH GRILLED CHICKEN</p>	 <p>\$6.99</p> <p>WHOLE FOODS SALAD BAR</p>	 <p>\$2.25</p> <p>SPINACH SALAD WITH LEFTOVER ROASTED CHICKEN</p>

For more ideas on how to build simple, delicious meals from scratch:

<https://www.precisionnutrition.com/create-the-perfect-meal-infographic>

*For Dr. John's Chili recipe:

<https://www.precisionnutrition.com/weekly-meal-prep-infographic>

3

PRE-PREP YOUR MEALS

A little more time in the kitchen can yield big money-saving results by keeping you out of your take-out app or the drive-thru lane.

COST OF EATING OUT

Eating out is typically more expensive than cooking from home.

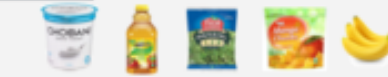
EATING OUT VS EATING IN

Jamba Juice's Kale-ribbean Breeze | Homemade Tropi-kale Smoothie

Size small 16oz  **\$5.40** **COST** **\$1.40**  16oz

INGREDIENTS

Passionfruit mango juice blend, kale, mangos, nonfat Greek yogurt, chia seeds



1/2 cup nonfat plain Greek yogurt (\$0.62) + 1 cup apple juice (\$0.41) + 1 cup kale (\$0.74) + 1 cup frozen mango (\$0.81) + banana, frozen (\$0.23) = \$2.81 for 2 servings (each avg 16oz).

What else could you do with smoothie ingredients?

- Fruit as an on-the-go snack
- Fruit and yogurt parfait for on-the-go breakfast or snack. Add crunchy cereal or granola for crunch
- Kale as a base to make a salad, can add leftover protein + dressing + fruit + cheese + veggie

<https://uhs.berkeley.edu/news/eating-budgetcollege-edition>

HOMEMADE VS. TAKE-OUT BURRITOS

	HOMEMADE	TAKE-OUT
	35 minutes (includes cook, assembly, and clean up)	19 minutes (includes drive and wait time)
	\$1.34/burrito	\$6.86/burrito
	710 calories 990 mg sodium	835 calories 2215 mg sodium
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6 burritos in the freezer ready to be thawed, reheated and enjoyed for lunch in the future • Able to customize burritos 	

SPENDSMART EATSMART

<https://blogs.extension.iastate.edu/spendsmart/tag/money-saving-ideas/>

MEAL PLANNING



Apps

1. Mealtime
2. Yummly
3. FoodPrint
4. Pepperplate
5. Spoonacular

Worksheets

WEEKLY MEAL PLANNER

WEEK OF _____

MONDAY

TUESDAY

WEDNESDAY

THURSDAY

FRIDAY

SATURDAY

SUNDAY

GROCERY LIST

INVENTORY

Copyright © 2018 Kerry A. Taylor, SquawkIta.com
squawkita.com/meal-planning-worksheets

5-Day Meal Planning Worksheet

IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY
Extension and Outreach

SPEND SMART. EAT SMART.
spendsmart.extension.iastate.edu

1 Check refrigerator, freezer, and cupboard for items that need to be used. Fill in menu using these items.

2 Review grocery ads for specials that you can use this week in your menu plan. Add to menu plan and grocery list.

	DAY 1	DAY 2	DAY 3	DAY 4	DAY 5
BREAKFAST					
SNACK					
LUNCH					
SNACK					
SUPPER					
ON HAND					
HOW DID I DO?	<input type="checkbox"/> Grain <input type="checkbox"/> Vegetable <input type="checkbox"/> Fruit <input type="checkbox"/> Dairy <input type="checkbox"/> Protein	<input type="checkbox"/> Grain <input type="checkbox"/> Vegetable <input type="checkbox"/> Fruit <input type="checkbox"/> Dairy <input type="checkbox"/> Protein	<input type="checkbox"/> Grain <input type="checkbox"/> Vegetable <input type="checkbox"/> Fruit <input type="checkbox"/> Dairy <input type="checkbox"/> Protein	<input type="checkbox"/> Grain <input type="checkbox"/> Vegetable <input type="checkbox"/> Fruit <input type="checkbox"/> Dairy <input type="checkbox"/> Protein	<input type="checkbox"/> Grain <input type="checkbox"/> Vegetable <input type="checkbox"/> Fruit <input type="checkbox"/> Dairy <input type="checkbox"/> Protein

Copyright © 2018 Iowa State University of Science and Technology, Iowa State University Extension and Outreach. All rights reserved. Iowa State University Extension and Outreach does not discriminate on the basis of age, disability, ethnicity, gender identity, genetic information, marital status, national origin, pregnancy, race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, or status as a U.S. veteran, or other prohibited classes. Street Address: 150 2nd St., Ames, IA 50010. 1 November 2018 10:22 AM

SHOPPING TIPS



- Make a shopping list and stick to it
- Find other sources of protein, such as beans and lentils
- Buy the store brand, use coupons and a store membership card, looking for sales, and buying in bulk
- Keep track of how much you spend when shopping
- Buy frozen and canned foods
- Eat seasonal foods
- **Compare similar products**
 - The “unit price” tells you how much each item costs per unit, this is a great tool to use to compare different brands and sizes to help you get the best value

BEANS, GOOD FOR YOUR HEART AND YOUR WALLET



- Beans are high in protein, fiber, and antioxidants. They are budget friendly, can be purchased in bulk, and can be stored for long periods of time.
- Dried beans to require additionally soaking and cooking time, but you can make a large batch and store them as leftovers in the freezer for up to 6 months.
- Canned beans can also be a great option, but look for no or low sodium options!

FROZEN AND CANNED FRUIT & VEGGIES



- Frozen and canned produce can be an excellent budget friendly and convenient way to add fruits and veggies into your diet.
- These fruits and veggies are generally picked at their peak ripeness (when they are the most full of nutrients) and canned or frozen within a day or two, preserving these nutrients for when you are ready to eat them.
- Be mindful to choose options with no added sugar or salt.

UNIT PRICE



Unit Price Tag Comparison

A.



6 OZ LOWFAT YOGURT	
Unit Price	You Pay
\$0.12	\$0.72
Per oz	

Yogurt A has a retail price of \$0.72 and has 6 ounces in the container.

$$\$0.72/6 \text{ ounces} = \$0.12 \text{ per ounce}$$

B.



32 OZ LOWFAT YOGURT	
Unit Price	You Pay
\$0.05	\$1.62
Per oz	

Yogurt B has a retail price of \$1.62 and has 32 ounces in the container.

$$\$1.62/32 \text{ ounces} = \$0.05 \text{ per ounce}$$

FOOD RESOURCES



TRITON FOOD PANTRY

Winter 2021 Pantry Schedule

Student Center A

Monday	10am-4pm
Tuesday	11am-1pm
Wednesday	9am-12pm
Thursday	11pm-1pm
Friday	12pm-4pm

Graduate Housing

Monday	2pm-5pm
Tuesday	1pm-5pm
Wednesday	10am-2pm & 5-7pm
Thursday	1pm-5pm
Friday	2pm-5pm

TRITON GROCERY CHECKLIST + MEAL IDEAS

FOODS OFFERED BY THE TRITON FOOD PANTRY WHICH CONTRIBUTE TO A HEALTHY DIET:

- VITAMIN A: SWEET POTATOES, CARROTS, SPINACH
- VITAMIN B1: WHOLE GRAINS (BROWN RICE, BREAD, OATS)
- VITAMIN B2: EGGS, MILK
- VITAMIN B3: LEAFY GREENS, BEANS
- VITAMIN B5: MUSHROOMS, TUNA, AVOCAD-O
- VITAMIN B6: MILK, CARROTS, POTATOES
- VITAMIN B7: EGGS, SPINACH, SWEET POTATOES
- VITAMIN B9: SPINACH, ASPARAGUS
- VITAMIN B12: FISH, MEAT* (ONLY SOMETIMES)
- VITAMIN C: CITRUSES, BELL PEPPERS, BRUSSELS SPROUTS
- VITAMIN D: MILK
- VITAMIN E: WHEAT GERM (BREAD)
- VITAMIN K: LEAFY GREENS, SOYBEANS (TOFU)
- CALCIUM: MILK PRODUCTS (YOGURT, CHEESE), LEAFY GREENS, BROCCOLI
- PHOSPHORUS: YOGURT
- MAGNESIUM: BLACK BEANS
- SODIUM: PROCESSED FOODS, CANNED SOUP
- CHLORIDE: CELERY
- POTASSIUM: LENTILS, BANANAS, APPLES
- SULFUR: ONIONS, BRUSSELS SPROUTS, EGGS
- IRON: WHITE BEANS, SPINACH
- ZINC: CHICKPEAS
- IODIDE: YOGURT



Window Pick-Up Service

EFFECTIVE APRIL 6, 2020

CONFUSED ABOUT RECENT CHANGES TO PANTRY OPERATIONS? FOLLOW THIS SIMPLE GUIDE TO START PICKING UP ITEMS!



1 Identify what you need.

YOU CAN ONLY COME TO THE PANTRY ONCE A WEEK. WHAT FOODS ARE YOU MOST IN NEED OF? PLAN AHEAD TO MAKE THE MOST OF YOUR PANTRY VISIT!



2 Complete the item order form.

FILL OUT THE ITEM ORDER FORM AT [BIT.LY/TFPORDER](http://bit.ly/tfporder). FOLLOW THE INSTRUCTIONS ON THE FORM TO ORDER ITEMS FROM THE PANTRY.



3 Fill out the item pick-up form.

IN ADDITION TO FILLING OUT THE ITEM ORDER FORM, SCHEDULE A TIME TO PICK UP YOUR ITEMS AT [BIT.LY/TFPPICKUP](http://bit.ly/tfppickup).



4 Pick up your items!

ARRIVE AT THE TRITON FOOD PANTRY (OLD STUDENT CENTER) AT YOUR SCHEDULED APPOINTMENT TIME TO PICK UP YOUR ITEMS.

CALFRESH



CALFRESH ELIGIBILITY FOR STUDENTS

Any individual who is a citizen or legal permanent resident of the United States (with the exception of refugees and asylees) may apply as long as the income guidelines and **student eligibility rules are met.**

Basic student eligibility exemptions include being a CalGrant A or B Recipient, being Approved or Accepted for a federal work study (even if not placed), or working an average of 20 or more hours a week.

Please note that student eligibility may vary. If you are a UC San Diego student and would like to learn about or see if you are eligible for additional funds to shop for groceries fill out the [CalFresh Assistance Form](#), e-mail us at calfresh@ucsd.edu, or stop by during our walk-in hours.

For any individual who is not a student please contact our partner The San Diego Food Bank for CalFresh application support.

EATING ON A BUDGET

Students with CalFresh receive a maximum of \$194 per month, or \$48 dollars per week. The following are example shopping lists for students on a CalFresh budget with a variety of dietary restrictions.

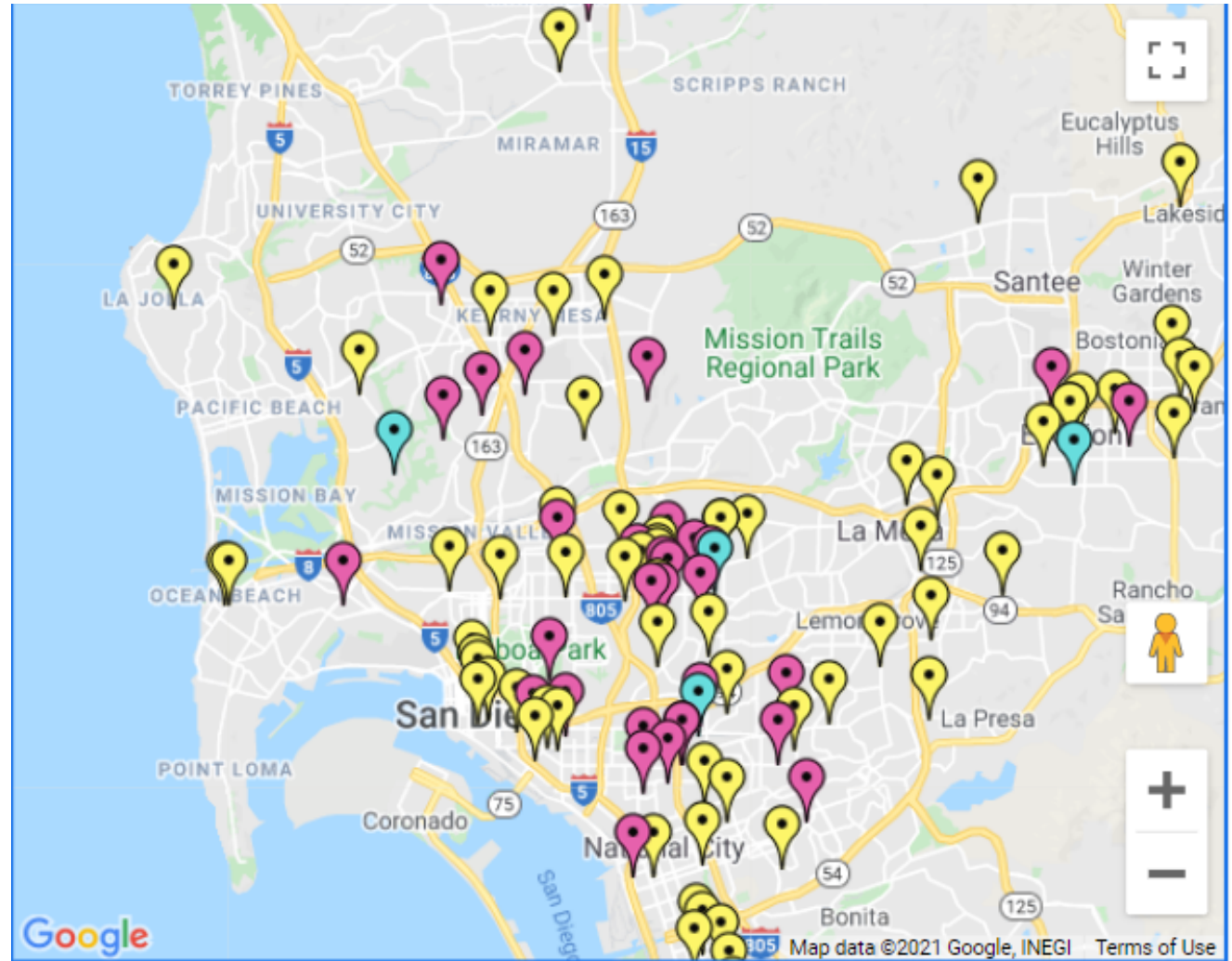
SAN DIEGO FOOD PANTRY

San Diego Food Bank Corporation

- **Super Pantry Program**
 - Super Pantries are food distribution hubs located across San Diego County that offer both contactless “drive-thru” and “walk-up” food distribution services.
 - All Super Pantries are open for food distribution a minimum of 3 days per week.
 - Individuals and families in need of food assistance can visit your nearest Super Pantry during opening hours to receive emergency groceries and resources.

<http://sandiegofoodbank.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Super-Pantry-List-January-2021.pdf>

FOOD DISTRIBUTION LOCATIONS



EXAMPLES OF LOCAL FOOD DISTRIBUTIONS

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Friday	Saturday
Ocean Beach Emergency Food, Inc.	Church of the Nazarene in Mid-City	Pacific Beach United Methodist	Chabad Down town	Church of the Nazarene in Mid-City
<i>1984 Sunset Cliffs Blvd (619) 222-0628</i>	<i>4101 University Ave (619) 249-2684</i>	<i>1561 Thomas Ave (858) 274-6573</i>	<i>308 G st</i>	<i>4101 University Ave (619) 249-2684</i>
9:00am – 12:00pm	2:30pm – 4:30pm	4pm Free pantry and meal	10:00am – 12:00pm	8:30am – 10:30am

CSA BOXES AND FARMERS MARKETS



FARMERS MARKETS

Most accept CalFresh



Monday

+ ESCONDIDO
- WELK
VILLAGE



Tuesday

+ CORONADO

+ ESCONDIDO

+ MIRA
MESA

+ OTAY
RANCH

+ PACIFIC
BEACH

+ SAN
MARCOS

+ UCSD LA
JOLLA



Wednesday

+ CARLSBAD

+ LITTLE
ITALY

+ OCEAN
BEACH

+ SANTEE

+ SOUTH
BAY



Thursday

+ LEMON
GROVE

+ LINDA
VISTA

+ NORTH
PARK

+ OCEANSII

+ RANCHO
BERNARD



Friday

+ BORREGO
SPRINGS

+ IMPERIAL
BEACH

+ LA MESA

+ RANCHO
BERNARDO



Saturday

+ CITY
HEIGHTS

+ DEL MAR

+ LITTLE
ITALY

+ PACIFIC
BEACH

+ POWAY

+ RANCHO
PENASQUITOS

+ VISTA



Sunday

+ HILLCREST

+ LA JOLLA

+ LEUCADIA

+ NORTH SD
(SIKES
ADOBE)

+ RANCHO
SANTA FE

+ SANTA
YSABEL

+ SOLANA
BEACH

MARKET MATCH

An incentive program that allows CalFresh customers to receive additional produce when shopping at select farmers markets

An individual can receive up to \$10 extra in produce when they spend \$10 at the farmers market

Farmers Markets that Offer Market Match up to \$10

- Little Italy Mercato
- City Heights
- Linda Vista



CSA

Community Support Agriculture (CSA) is a great way to purchase fresh produce, while supporting local farmers

This is a great option if your schedule does not allow regular trips to the farmers market

You will receive a box of delicious produce once every week, two weeks, or once a month depending

Community Support Agriculture Programs in San Diego

Prices

Specialty Produce boxes are prepackages with peak season, locally, and sustainable sources produce from CA farms.

\$20/box

Brian's Farmers' Markets offers a multi-farm CSA program that includes weekly baskets of locally-grown, pesticide-free fresh produce.

Small: \$15 per week
Large: \$25 per week
12-wk commitment
One-time startup fee of \$35

Suzie's Farm offers fresh, seasonal, organic vegetables that are grown on our family farm along with first choice access to our delicious pasture-raised eggs as an add-on. Boxes include sprouts, herbs, and some fruit as well.

2 Box Trial:\$50 (\$25/box)
6 Boxes: \$150 (\$25/box)
13 Boxes : \$292.50
(\$22.50/box - 10% discount)
26 Boxes : \$552.50
(\$21.25/box - 15% discount)

Community Roots Farm is a 1-acre non-profit neighborhood farm growing vegetables, fruits, herbs, and flowers sustainably and ethically, emphasizing healthy communities and ecosystems.

Starting at \$30/box

QUICK AND EASY RECIPES



MEAL IDEAS

<https://fitfoodiefinds.com/best-healthy-recipes-for-college-kids-budget-friendly-and-meal-prep/>



BREAKFAST



Overnight Oatmeal

- If your mornings tend to be a bit rushed, then this is the perfect breakfast on the go.
- **Ingredients:** ½ cup old-fashioned rolled oats, ½ cup water or milk, a pinch of salt, ½ cup blueberries, ½ a banana, 2 tablespoons plain Greek yogurt, 1 tablespoon chopped nuts, 1 teaspoons pure maple syrup or honey (optional)
- **Directions:** Combine all ingredients in a mason jar or bowl. Simply cover and refrigerate overnight. In the morning, you can heat it up if you want or leave cold.
- **Note:** You can add frozen fruit, which will save time and will thaw by morning.

LUNCH



Wraps

- Wraps are an easy and transportable lunch food that lets you can be totally creative! Here are some ideas for wraps:
- **Veggie wrap:** spinach, hummus, tomatoes, cucumber, avocado, and your favorite sauce
- **Chicken wrap:** piece of cooked chicken or chicken salad, spinach, bell peppers, cucumber, tomato's, and mustard
- **Turkey wrap:** turkey slices, your favorite veggies, spinach, and cheese

DINNER



Quesadilla

- Delicious and easy meal that you can even make in your dorm room!
- **Ingredients:** flour or corn tortilla, cheese, canned beans (refried or black bean), spinach, bell peppers, tomatoes, and any other vegetable you like
- **Directions:** Chop up all your veggies, add to one half of the tortilla, add the beans, and top with cheese. Fold them empty half of the tortilla over the full half. Place in the microwave until cheese has melted.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Contact Information

Basic Needs

- Email: thehub@ucsd.edu
- Phone: 858.246.2632
- Website: basicneeds.ucsd.edu

Wellness and Engagement

- Email: hdhwellness@ucsd.edu
- Phone: 858.534.3616

HDH Registered Dietitians

- Email: hdhdietitian@ucsd.edu
- Phone: 858.534.2008



Meal Prep:

- The [CollegeNutrionist](#) is a great resource for meal prep ideas. It has meal prep basics as well as recipes and meal plans.

Healthy Meal Ideas:

- [PopSugar](#) has a great article with tons of easy and healthy meals specifically made for college students.
- [EatingWell](#) also has some fantastic easy recipes every student can make.

Call 2-1-1:

- 2-1-1 can connect you to the programs that help you well-nourished such as CalFresh, local and regional food banks, emergency food services, and more.

HANDOUT

<https://www.planeatmove.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/eat-healthy-on-budget-2.pdf>



8 SIMPLE WAYS TO EAT HEALTHY ON A BUDGET

1 BUY WHOLE FOODS

Processed foods are more expensive and less nutritious than unprocessed foods.



Whole foods give you more control over the ingredients and you can also buy them in larger quantities.



2 BUY CHEAPER CUTS OF MEAT

Try less expensive cuts of meat and use different cooking methods to make tougher cuts tender and juicy. Buy large, inexpensive cuts to use in several different meals during the week.



3 PREPARE YOUR OWN FOOD

Preparing your own food allows for total control over the ingredients and is much cheaper than buying food out.

- Eat before leaving for work or going out.
- Take food with you to school or to work.



4 STICK TO YOUR GROCERY LIST

Avoid impulse buying by making a grocery list and sticking to it. Don't shop when you're hungry and go to the grocery store alone. This will help you stick to your list as well.



5 PLAN YOUR MEALS AHEAD

Plan out meals for the week and list all the foods you need to buy. Check your fridge and cabinets to see what you already have and buy only what you're sure you'll use.



6 BUY FROZEN FRUITS & VEGGIES

These are often half the price of fresh produce, you can buy them in bulk to save more, are available all year 'round and are sold in large bags. Frozen fruits and veggies are just as or even more nutritious than their fresh counterparts, if frozen right away when they're picked.



7 BUY GENERIC FOODS

Generic foods taste just the same and are of the same quality as brand name foods. The difference is that they are much cheaper.



8 BUY IN BULK

Foods like grains, millet, barley, rice, beans, some nuts and oats are available in bulk and are easy to stockpile. Find them on sale and buy as much as you can afford, making sure you're actually going to use them.

