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## **Bargain Bites: Eating Right When Money's Tight**

I think it is safe to say, we have all seen the rise in food costs happen over the past several months. Although this increase in cost can seem overwhelming, there are ways to stretch your food dollars. The tips below will help you know the right steps to take in planning your meals ahead of time, how to budget for smart food choices, and how to prepare low-cost recipes!

### **Before Shopping**

Plan your weekly menu-Preparing in advance will help you know what you need to purchase and will also let you know what your need to use before it goes bad.

Use store coupons, sales, or discount cards - If you have a coupon for an item that you normally don't eat, don't just purchase it because you have a coupon.

### **During Shopping**

Never go to the store hungry - Everything looks good when you are hungry! Your shopping list might grow by a few items if you do not eat before you go shopping.

Compare products for the best deals - Use unit pricing and also the Nutrition Facts Label to get the best product for your money. Don't be afraid to try the store brand version!

### **After Shopping**

Store your groceries right away - Putting your groceries up as soon as you reach your destination is key to avoiding any food safety concerns.

Separate and store - if you purchase a large amount of fresh food, like meat, poultry, or fish, divide them into meal-size packages, label them, and freeze them for later use.

Visit [snaped.fns.usda.gov](http://snaped.fns.usda.gov) for more information on this topic. Katherine Pinto, EFNEP and SNAP-Ed Agent, [kdpinto@ksu.edu](mailto:kdpinto@ksu.edu) or 620-232-1930.

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