

Budgeting and reducing food waste

- Cost of Living ideas



Rising cost of living is impacting healthy eating. We have less time and less money to spend on food. This factsheet contains practical tips and tricks aimed at helping your family increase vegetable and fruit intake without breaking the budget.

How to eat healthily on a budget

Seasonal vegetables and fruits are usually cheaper. Get to know what's in season in your region to help with planning budget friendly meals.

- Choose loose veggies and fruit (not in bags) as these are often cheaper.
- Some supermarkets are now selling 'odd-shaped' vegetables and fruits. These are cheaper and just as good for you. Also, look for "reduced to clear" items.
- Local markets and farmgate stalls are farmer-direct, and often a cheaper option. Make use of them if they are in your region.
- Add canned beans and lentils to meals for extra fibre and protein. You can substitute for meat and will help to reduce costs.
- Try to get to know unit pricing (or price per volume). This means you can compare brands and choose the cheaper option.
- Frozen vegetables and fruits are highly nutritious and provide value for money. They are easy to add to a meal, e.g., add a handful of frozen berries to breakfast cereal or add frozen spinach and mixed vegetables to shepherd's pie.
- Does your area offer home-delivered fresh fruit and vegetable boxes? These can provide great value for money and save you a trip to the shops.

Planning and reducing waste

Planning helps with tackling food waste and keeping more change in your pocket.

- Make a meal plan before you go shopping – base it on what's already in the cupboard, fridge or freezer and how much time is available to prepare dishes in the week ahead.
- Write a shopping list, based on your meal plan.
- Where possible leave veggie skins on. They are rich in nutrients, are filling and help reduce waste.
- For soups and stews, use all the leaves and stems from veggies, e.g., carrot and celery tops, broccoli stems.
- Use leftovers – like veggie bubble and squeak, fritters from risotto.
- Make soup from what's left in your veggie drawer at the end of the week.
- Moving older items to the front of the fridge can help reduce waste. Host pot-luck leftovers dinners each week.
- Cook double the recipe (meals or snacks) and freeze. This will save time and money.

Useful resources

- [Pick of the Crop](#) website for resources and recipes.
- [The Queensland Association of School Tuckshops \(QAST\)](#) for time saving recipes.
- [Food shopping tips](#) for healthy eating.
- [The Root Cause](#) for healthy lunch box and snacks

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