

# 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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