

Why are food prices rising so high?

- **Oil is at a record-breaking price,** and most produce travels an average of 1,500 miles to get to a grocery store. (Just another reason to eat local!)
- **Increased demand for corn** for ethanol production means that the price of corn has doubled in the last year. (Let's hear it for grassfed cows!)
- **Increased demand for meat** and dairy products from our quickly growing and developing world population means a greater demand for grain feed. (Eat your veggies!)
- **Organic farmers do not receive** federal tax subsidies, so organic prices reflect the true cost of producing food while preserving our resources, land, and environment for future generations.



The USDA guide to healthy, thrifty meals can be found at:
www.cnpp.usda.gov/USDAFoodPlansCostofFood.htm

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ALL ABOUT

Shopping on a Budget



www.strongertogether.coop

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Getting started

Make a realistic budget

- Track your purchases to get a baseline measurement.
- Set a goal to meet your needs.
- Try setting aside a cash allowance for your grocery purchases.
- Check out the USDA's food plans and other resources at www.cnpp.usda.gov

Change your patterns at home

- Wash and prep veggies and fruits to encourage usage.
- Use a fridge message board to note perishable items.
- Cook staples in larger batches for "planned-overs."
- Eat together as a household to reduce use of convenience foods.

Plan before you shop

- Donate expired or undesired food items from your kitchen.
- Take a cupboard inventory before planning meals and shopping.
- Plan meals around perishables.
- Keep a running grocery list (consider using a template with only necessary items listed—just check items off as you run out).
- Remember to pack your grocery bags, bulk jars, and egg cartons!

Shop wisely

- Look for sales on items already on your list.
- Only use coupons for items already on your list.
- Be flexible—adapt recipes for the season.
- Focus on whole, unrefined, and bulk foods.
- Mind the Dirty Dozen when choosing organic vs. conventional produce.
- Join the co-op for additional discounts.

THE DIRTY DOZEN

According to the Environmental Working Group, these conventional produce items have the highest concentration of pesticide residue.

Fruits

Apples
Cherries
Grapes (imported)
Nectarines
Peaches
Pears
Strawberries

Vegetables

Bell peppers
Carrots
Celery
Kale
Lettuce

This list comes from EWG's rating of nearly 43,000 produce items tested for pesticides between 2000 and 2005. A full list is available at www.foodnews.org

Reevaluate your methods

- Try any plan you make for two months before adjusting as needed.
- Keep tracking your spending!

Other things to consider

- Ask your entire household to get on board with the budget.
- Consider starting a garden to produce some of your own food.
- Consider reducing the amount of money you spend eating out.



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