

Stretch Your Food Dollar Menu VI

Arizona Farm Bureau put together a menu to help you stretch your food dollar by utilizing items that have lower prices.

Menu for the Week:

Sunday:

Pot Roast
Potatoes, carrots, celery & onion
Fresh sliced apples
Milk or Iced Tea

Friday:

BBQ Chicken Breasts
Savory Potato Strips
Tossed Salad
Milk or Iced Tea

Monday:

BBQ Meatballs
American Salad Mix
Milk or Iced Tea

Saturday:

Gilda Smothered Burritos
Waldorf Salad
Milk or Iced Tea

Tuesday:

Beef Stroganoff
Sliced tomatoes on bed of greens
Milk or Iced Tea

Wednesday:

Zesty Papa Protein Scramble
Banana Walnut Bread
Milk or Iced Tea

Thursday:

Seven Layer Salad
Crust bread or Baguette
Milk or Iced Tea

Shopping List

The 2009 second quarter Arizona Farm Bureau food marketbasket showed:

Red delicious apples, russet potatoes, ground chuck, sirloin tip roast, sliced deli ham, bacon, boneless chicken breast, whole milk, eggs, all purpose flour, vegetable oil, American salad mix and toasted oat cereal are down in price.

Dry goods:

2 packages of Brown gravy mix, dry
1 large can red enchilada sauce
1 dozen flour tortillas
Large jar Salsa
1 package egg noodles
1 lemon pepper, spice
1 bag dry pinto beans

Meats:

4-5 lbs pot roast
3-lbs ground beef
1-package chicken breasts
1/3 lb salt pork
2 lbs bacon

Produce:

5 lbs potatoes
2 heads romaine lettuce
2 bag American salad mix
6 large apples
1 bunch celery
1 bunch green onion
1 large yellow onion
1 container grape tomatoes
4 bananas
1 bunch spinach
1 cucumber
1 lemon
1 avocado
1-2 slicing tomatoes

Misc:

1 package frozen peas
1 bottle BBQ sauce
1 loaf crust bread or 1 baguette
1 large can diced green chile

Dairy:

2 gallons milk
4 cup bag of shredded cheese
1 dozen eggs
1 quart buttermilk
Cool Whip

Pantry items you might have on hand:

Flour
Bacon bits
Vegetable oil
Salad dressing
Vanilla
Baking soda
Baking powder
Sugar
Cinnamon
Salt

Items planned for two meals:

Beef: Sunday, Monday, Tuesday and Saturday

Cheese: Wednesday, Thursday and Saturday

Salad: Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday

Apples: Sunday and Saturday

Chicken: Friday

Potatoes: Sunday, Wednesday and Friday

AZFB Food Saving Tips

- **Make a menu and then make a list!** The number one tip for saving money on groceries, making a menu and a shopping list helps you in a variety of ways. First of all, making a grocery list forces you to think about what you are buying and if you actually need it. In addition, making a list - *and sticking to it* - will prevent impulse buys! If you stick to the list you will buy the items you need for your weekly menu.
- **Never shop hungry.** Do not go to the grocery store while you are hungry! You are much more likely to put things into your basket that you do not need if you are hungry because you will be more likely to buy on "impulse." You will be much more susceptible to picking up food that is on display - and is often more expensive - and will tend to buy more food than you actually need. Eat a snack before grocery shopping, and stick to your list!
- **Visit your local farmer, farm stand or join a CSA, Food Co-op** to get the freshest produce. Visit **Fill Your Plate** at www.fillyourplate.org to find items in your community; some items can be shipped directly to you. When shopping at a farmers market, take a cooler so that your fresh items won't spoil on the way home. Many CSA's will deliver your items to your door.
- **Buy more fresh items and less processed items.** Purchasing fresh items such as fruit and vegetables for snacks will help you create a healthier diet. Many processed foods are more expensive and have added salts and sugars. Fresh items are healthier for you and your family.
- **Buy generic or store brand products.** Many store brand products are actually made by the same companies that make more expensive brands, so you don't have much to lose, except for the pretty packaging.
- **Shop the edges of the store**, but avoid items at the ends of aisles....grocery stores are professionally designed to get you to buy as much as possible.
- **Use rebates.** Many people tend to buy a certain product because of a rebate and then forget to send the rebate offer in! Avoid this by sending the rebate in as soon as you make the purchase - you will save money and not have to worry about finding receipts later.
- **Organize coupons.** First of all, only use coupons for items that you already buy! Buying something that you won't use does *not* save you any money! When using coupons, it often helps to organize them by subject and expiration date.

- **Buy in bulk - but don't go crazy.** We've all heard the stories of people who go to Costco and buy 200 pounds of rice for a family of two. However, if you don't go too crazy, buying in bulk is a good way to save money. Bringing a calculator with you to figure out which item is a better deal can save time.
- **Watch sales.** When something that you buy regularly is on sale, stock your pantry! Make sure you're not buying more than you can use before it goes bad, but buy what you can when it is on sale.
- **Shop alone.** Studies show that men and women tend to spend more when they shop as couples and even more when they shop with children. It is easier on you and your wallet if you only have to worry about controlling one person's impulses compared to trying to handle 3 or 4 different people at one time. Shop alone and you will put less in your basket or try using in store child care and carry out service.
- **Consider buying a freezer.** Many items can be frozen when purchased on sale and then used for future meals. Frozen vegetables are picked fresh, flash frozen immediately and are less expensive and will keep longer.
- **Have a plan.** Plan your purchases and errands ahead of time and coordinate your errands into one trip. This will save you time and money on gas by making one trip instead of three or four. Always buy groceries last; never leave meat, produce or dairy in a hot car.
- **Prep meals in advance or have a cooking party.** Invite your friends or neighbors over for a cooking party. Plan meals in advance and have everyone bring their ingredients. Cook together and save time, money and have fun as well.

Sources: Arizona Farm Bureau Staff, Allrecipes.com