



Eat Healthy on a Budget

Consuming the right mix of fruits and veggies for your body can boost your performance and your immune system... and it doesn't have to break the bank. Here are 10 simple ways to budget for fruits and veggies:

GROW IT. Consider your own garden to grow fresh tomatoes, berries, squash or peppers. For information on starting your own garden go to: www.cdc.gov/Features/gardeningtips/

SHOP LOCAL. Visit your local farmer's market or participate in a community supported agriculture (CSA) program. Visit www.localharvest.org/csa to learn more and find a CSA in your area.

KEEP IT FRESH. Invest in reusable green fruit and veggie bags to add additional days to the life of fruits and veggies. At an average cost of \$10 for a pack of 20 bags, you can nearly double the life span of refrigerated fruits and veggies!

CLEAN IT. Wash fruits and veggies when you are ready to use them, or if you wash your produce right away and store it in a container, place a dry paper towel under the fruit or veggie to capture moisture and prevent sogginess.

FREEZE IT. Canned fruits and veggies may contain additives to keep them fresh over its intended shelf life. Consider buying frozen fruits and veggies to thaw as needed for smoothies or stir fry.

KNOW THE LIFE SPAN. Longer lasting fruits and veggies include apples, cabbage, onions and potatoes, while bananas, strawberries, asparagus and broccoli tend to spoil quicker.

PLAN YOUR MEALS. Go to the grocery store with a list to avoid the impulse purchases so you only buy what you need.

SHOP SAVVY. Utilize sale flyers from local newspapers to determine the stores with the best bargains and clip coupons.

COMPARE COSTS. Organic fruits and veggies have a higher cost, so if that is a factor for your family, then conventionally-grown fruits and veggies will save you money. Additionally, because organic fruits and vegetables aren't treated with preservatives or waxes, you may find that they spoil faster than conventionally-grown produce.

RECYCLE IT! If your bananas or zucchini start to spoil, consider using overly ripe fruits or vegetables to make homemade bread for use as a delicious snack or breakfast on-the-go.

**THE USDA DEFINES ORGANIC FOOD AS
"PRODUCED WITHOUT USING MOST
CONVENTIONAL PESTICIDES; FERTILIZERS
MADE WITH SYNTHETIC INGREDIENTS OR
SEWAGE SLUDGE; BIOENGINEERING; OR
IONIZING RADIATION."**

(Source: <http://www.nal.usda.gov/afsic/pubs/ofp/ofp.shtml>)

