



South Dakota
Department of
Social Services

For more information

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Grocery shopping
and preparing meals
on a budget



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The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) helps low-income South Dakotans buy the food they need to stay healthy while they work to regain financial independence.

The following list is designed to help SNAP households plan and prepare for healthy meals, and to stretch their food dollars to last longer throughout the month.

Planning Ahead

- Plan meals and snacks according to an established budget.
- Find quick, easy, and healthy recipes online.
- Make a grocery list of what you need.
- Check for sales and coupons in store ads, local papers, and online.

Shopping

- Stick to your grocery list.
- Buy store or generic brands if they are cheaper. They can often cost less with little or no difference in quality.
- Purchasing items in bulk can sometimes save money. Compare prices of bulk and individual items to determine the best value.
- To compare the cost of similar foods, use “unit pricing” by using an equal weight or quantity. Items aren’t always cheaper in bulk, so check before buying.
- Choose in-season fresh fruits and vegetables.
- Buy frozen or canned fruits and vegetables. Make sure canned vegetables are low sodium.

Preparing

- Some meal items can be prepared in advance. Try to pre-cook meals when you have time.
- Double or triple recipes and freeze for quick and easy meals.
- Incorporate leftovers into another meal.
- Pack your lunch, drinks, and snacks.
- Protein items, such as meat, are typically the most expensive part of the meal, so plan meals around those items on sale.
- Remember there are many protein sources to choose from such as fish, poultry, beef, peanut butter, eggs, cheese, dried peas, and beans. Be sure to choose the lean options.

Other Cost Saving Tips

- Grow a garden! Grow a garden of fresh fruits and vegetables.
- Preserve food if possible. Canning, freezing, and dehydrating are options for preserving fruits, vegetables, and meats.

