



EATING FRUITS AND VEGETABLES ON A BUDGET

TAKE ADVANTAGE OF FRUITS AND VEGETABLES IN ALL FORMS

- Fresh fruits and vegetables aren't the only nutritious choices. Frozen, canned, and dried fruits and vegetables keep longer and may be less expensive while still containing adequate nutrition. Less spoilage is money saved!
- All types can be eaten as a snack, added to meals, or used in other cooking or baking.
- Stock up on fresh fruits and vegetables when on sale to prepare and then freeze, can, or dry at home.

BUY IN SEASON

- Buying produce in season is usually lower cost, fresher so keeps longer, and often tastes better.
- In Iowa, Fall fruits and vegetables include: apples (many varieties), blueberries, cantaloupe, purple grapes, pears, raspberries, watermelon, beets, brussels sprouts, cabbage, carrots, eggplant, kohlrabi, leeks, lettuce, okra, onions, parsnips, peas, peppers, potatoes, pumpkins, radishes, spinach, sweet potatoes, tomatoes, turnips, winter squash (acorn, butternut, spaghetti, patty pan, etc), zucchini
- More information on seasonal produce: lowa-produce-calendar, [lowa agriculture.gov](http://lowa-agriculture.gov)

MAKE A PLAN

- Making a list before going grocery shopping can save money and time; reduce shopping stress.
- Take note of where fruits and vegetables are located in your go-to grocery store. Organize your list in order of how you would go through the store.
- Check for sales and stock up on those items.
- Buy shelf-stable items in bulk. A large bag of frozen berries may be cheaper and keep longer than two containers of fresh berries. Dried fruit, applesauce pouches, packaged fruit cups, and canned items keep for a long time.
- Plan ahead — think about what meals you want to make during the week and buy produce accordingly.

PREVENT SPOILAGE TO SAVE \$

Some produce should be used right away after buying, and others can withstand a longer shelf-life. Use within:

- 2-5 days — berries, bananas, bok choy, chard, cucumbers, kale, mangoes, peaches, plums, spinach, tomatoes.
- 5-7 days — bell peppers, broccoli, brussels sprouts, cabbage, cauliflower, cherries, corn, eggplant, green beans, lettuce, mushrooms, oranges, grapes, pears.
- 1-2+ weeks — apples, beets, carrots, lemons, limes, onions, potatoes, turnips, winter squash.

PROPER STORAGE

Proper storage helps maintain produce for longer — again saving money, but also maintaining flavor and texture:

- Countertop produce (whole and uncut) — avocados, bananas, tomatoes, citrus fruits, garlic, melons, pineapples, winter squash. Store any leftovers in the refrigerator after cutting (except bananas).
- Fridge produce — apples, bell peppers, berries, carrots, cauliflower, celery, corn, cucumber, eggplant, grapes, green beans, leafy greens, summer squash, tomatoes.
- Onions, potatoes and sweet potatoes are best kept in dark and cool spaces outside of the fridge (e.g., the pantry).