

## Beat Inflation

# How To Spend Your Food Dollars Wisely



Consulting their shopping list are Mr. and Mrs. David E. Alley, both retired Fieldcrest employees. Maintaining a reasonable food budget can be particularly difficult for persons living on fixed incomes. Both Mr. and Mrs. Alley stress the importance of a well-thought out shopping list from which the shopper should not deviate. Mr. Alley is a retired from the Bedspread Finishing Mill. Mrs. Alley (Clara) is a retiree from the Bedspread Mill.

The continuing inflation of food prices has made family food planning and buying a more challenging job than ever before. Offering nutritious, attractive meals while at the same time maintaining a budget nowadays takes knowledge, good judgement and a sharp sense of food values in relation to food costs.

Nutritionists seem to agree, however, that for most Americans, the inflated cost of food can be a very good thing, at least from the standpoint of nutrition. The average American, experts say, should probably cut one-third to one-half of the meat from his or her diet. The result would be a saving in food dollars as well as less intake of unnecessary and possibly harmful animal fats.

The following information on how to shop wisely and get well-balanced meals on a budget was supplied by the Rockingham County Agricultural Extension Service.

To simplify food shopping, the home economists stress the need for a complete, well-thought out shopping list from which the shopper should not deviate for impulse purchases. Another money-saving idea is to shop for a minimum of a one week time period, or longer if possible. Groceries purchased in larger amounts usually result in money saved.

In making a grocery shopping list, foods from four basic groups should be included to provide proper nutrition. The four groups are meat and meat

substitutes for protein; dairy products; breads and cereals; and fruits and vegetables. If the food budget must be trimmed, it is recommended that foods outside these four basic groups should be the first to be sacrificed.

Home economists agree that many shoppers are fooled by budget inflators, that is items which add dollars to the food budget but give very little in terms of nutrition. These items include convenience foods such as TV dinners, prime cuts of meat, weiners, other sausages, smoked and specially cured meats, cold cuts, and snack foods.

Prime cuts generally are expensive and contain too much marbled fat, so much so that they may be detrimental to good nutrition. Smoked and specially cured meats are high in salt content and can affect the blood pressure. Weiners and cold cuts are very expensive for the amount of meat purchased when compared to chicken, turkey and ground beef.

Snack foods such as potato chips, crackers, etc. offer no nutritional value, only empty calories.

Budget Extenders recommended by both home economists and nutritionists, include using less meat by substituting other sources of protein such as cheese, milk, cottage cheese, eggs, peanut butter, nuts, baked beans and split peas. Also recommended is the stretching of meat by mixing it with noodle products in

casseroles. Not only will this type of dish provide an adequate supply of protein, but it will also furnish a source of necessary grain products. The home economists warn, however, that packaged extender products are no more than seasoned noodles and are usually more expensive than ordinary noodles.

Chinese dishes are highly recommended for their ability to extend meat in tasty, satisfying dishes. Soups also rate high,

both nutritionally and economically.

Other budget extenders include buying lean ground beef which, due to less shrinkage when prepared, provides more edible meat for the money. Extra lean ground beef has few advantages and should be avoided because of its high price, the home economists say.

An alternative to ground beef is the new combination of ground beef with ground soybeans

which offers an amount of animal protein for less money.

In times like this, keeping to a family budget is difficult at best. Management of food is a necessity. By using some of the information here, it should be possible to stretch food dollars to economical use while serving the same time serving and satisfying meals.



Herbert Blackstock, a doffer at the Draper Sheet Mill, shops for a family including two small children. Taking advantage of supermarket sales and buying expensive cuts of meat are musts in order to maintain the family food budget.

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