Menu planning can help you serve your family healthier meals and it can help you save money at the grocery store. After planning your menus, the next step is developing a grocery list so you have all the necessary foods for each meal.

This is the second in a series of publications to help you eat well but spend less at the grocery store. It includes grocery shopping tips, sample menus and recipes that you can adapt to meet your family’s tastes.

Why Write a Grocery List?
When you write down the food items you need, you can cut down on trips to the grocery store. This saves you time and could save you money on gas, too. When you buy only foods on your list, you will be able estimate the amount of money you spend and avoid impulse buys.

Use Coupons Wisely
Using coupons can save you money. Use coupons only to purchase foods you were planning to buy anyway. Sort coupons by food category and be aware of the expiration dates on the coupons.

Food Safety Tips
Keep food safe from the grocery store to your home. Shop for milk, dairy, meat and frozen items last so they are not in room temperature for an extended amount of time. If you travel a distance for groceries, bring a cooler filled with ice to transport perishable foods (such as milk, meat) on warm days.

Consider these tips as you shop for groceries:

- **Produce:** Inspect fruits and vegetables and avoid ones that are bruised or damaged.
- **Meats:** Avoid cross-contamination. Put meat packages in a plastic bag (where available) in your cart. Keep meat packages separate from ready-to-eat foods to avoid cross-contamination.
- **Eggs:** Open the carton. Be sure the eggs are not cracked.
What Do the Dates On Food Products Mean?
Be sure to write the date of purchase on the foods you buy and arrange your cupboards “first in, first out.” In other words, place the oldest foods in the front so you use them first.

- **Sell-by date:** Stores should pull items from the shelves if they are not sold by this date. The products are still good for a while if they’re stored properly at home.
- **Use-by date:** Food is guaranteed to be at high quality until this date. Although the foods are still safe to consume after the date, these items may have lower quality.
- **Expiration date:** Consume food or beverage by this date or throw it.

**MyPyramid Portion Equivalents**
The MyPyramid food plan uses cups and ounces instead of “servings” and calls them “equivalents.” These are some of the equivalents for the food groups:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MyPyramid Portion Equivalents</th>
<th>Visual Clue</th>
<th>Portion size</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grain Group</strong></td>
<td>½ baseball</td>
<td>¼ cup of dried cranberries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 slice of bread</td>
<td>large egg OR golf ball</td>
<td>½ cup of mashed potatoes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 cup ready-to-eat cereal</td>
<td>pingpong ball</td>
<td>1 cup of dried cranberries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>½ c. cooked rice, pasta</td>
<td>check book</td>
<td>2 tablespoons of peanut butter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>or cooked cereal</td>
<td>card deck</td>
<td>3 ounces of fish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vegetable Group</td>
<td>1½ baseball</td>
<td>3 ounces of meat or poultry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 cup raw or cooked</td>
<td>6 dice</td>
<td>1½ ounces of natural cheese (cheddar, Swiss)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vegetables or vegetable</td>
<td>1 egg; 1 ounce meat, poultry or fish; ¼ cup cooked dry beans; 1 tablespoon peanut butter; ½ ounce nuts or seeds</td>
<td>1 teaspoon of margarine or butter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>juice, 2 cups raw leafy greens</td>
<td>thumb tip</td>
<td>1½ ounces of natural cheese (cheddar, Swiss)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### What’s Your MyPyramid Plan?
The latest nutrition recommendations are found at www.MyPyramid.gov.

Each person has different needs based on gender, age and level of physical activity. Learn what each of your family members needs at his/her particular calorie level by visiting the Web site or contacting your local Extension agent for “Ballpark Estimate” handouts for different age groups. The Ballpark Estimates are available online, too, at www.ext.nodak.edu/food/mypyramid/ (click on Other MyPyramid Handouts).

### Size up your portions with these visual clues.
As shown, one-half of a baseball is the same size as ½ cup mashed potatoes.
Example:
MyPyramid Plan and three-day menu plan for a 10-year-old male who gets more than 60 minutes of physical activity per day*

**MyPyramid Plan***
- Grains...................... 7 ounces
- Vegetables............... 3 cups
- Fruit......................... 2 cups
- Milk.......................... 3 cups
- Meat and Beans ...... 6 ounces

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Three-day Menu Plan for a 10-year-old Male*</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Meal 1</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Day 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 c. oatmeal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Tbsp. brown sugar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>½ English muffin with jam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 c. orange juice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 c. nonfat milk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Day 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 c. cereal with raisins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 slice toast with jam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 c. orange slices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 c. nonfat milk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Day 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 c. cooked cereal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 blueberry muffin (from mix)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 c. nonfat milk</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

* indicates recipe is included

**Add Variety to Your Meals**
Mix up your plate with different textures, colors, shapes, sizes and temperatures each day. Incorporating a wide variety of foods from all the food groups into your meals will ensure that your family is getting the nutrients it needs. A colorful plate is a good indicator that you are getting a variety of nutrients and a balance of each of the food groups.
### Weekly Meal Planner (* indicates recipe is included)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Meal 1</th>
<th>Meal 2</th>
<th>Meal 3</th>
<th>Snack</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Day 1 | Cooked Cereal* with milk  
English muffin  
Orange juice  
Nonfat milk | Baked chicken  
Mashed potatoes  
Gravy (from drippings or a mix)  
Corn  
Dinner roll  
Nonfat milk | Tacos with Beans*, lettuce, tomatoes and cheese  
Carrot sticks  
Pineapple chunks and chopped apple  
Nonfat milk | Popcorn |
| Day 2 | Cereal with raisins  
Orange slices  
Nonfat milk | Peanut butter/ jelly sandwich  
Carrot sticks with Ranch dip  
Canned pears  
Nonfat milk | Easy Turkey or Chicken Pot Pie*  
Coleslaw*  
Apple  
Nonfat milk | Cinnamon toast |
| Day 3 | Cooked Cereal*  
Blueberry muffin  
Nonfat milk | Turkey and cheese on bread  
Stir-fry Vegetables*  
Apple  
Nonfat milk | Cornbread Burger Bake*  
Coleslaw* (planned-over)  
Orange slices  
Nonfat milk | Taco Sticks*  
Apple juice |
| Day 4 | Pancakes with warm applesauce  
Orange juice  
Nonfat milk | Chef salad with fresh greens, turkey ham, cooked egg, cheese  
Crackers  
Banana  
Nonfat milk | Spanish Macaroni*  
Mexi-corn  
Bread  
Nonfat milk | Chocolate pudding |
| Day 5 | Cereal  
Whole-wheat toast  
Banana  
Nonfat milk | Fried egg sandwich with cheese on toasted English muffin  
Marinated Salad*  
Canned pears  
Nonfat milk | Scalloped Potato Bake*  
Green beans  
Bread  
Nonfat milk | Apple slices and cheese cubes |
| Day 6 | Cooked Cereal* with milk  
Muffin (from mix)  
Orange juice | Tuna salad sandwich*  
Celery and carrot sticks  
Canned peaches  
Nonfat milk | Spaghetti with meat sauce  
Marinated Salad* (planned-over)  
Garlic toast  
Nonfat milk | Kiwi and pineapple chunks with yogurt dip |
| Day 7 | Cereal  
Whole-wheat English muffin  
Banana  
Orange juice  
Nonfat milk | Bean soup (canned)  
Toasted cheese sandwich  
Cucumber or zucchini rounds  
Nonfat milk | Tuna Salsa Wrap*  
Tossed salad  
Jello with bananas  
Nonfat milk | Popcorn |

Menus adapted from publications by Cynthia Gardner, former NDSU Student Dietitian, and Suzanne Fundingsland, former Nutrition Specialist, NDSU
**Cooked Cereal***

**Ingredients for each serving**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cereal/ grain type</th>
<th>Amount (cups)</th>
<th>Water (cups)</th>
<th>Cooking Time (min.)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bulgur</td>
<td>½</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>20 to 25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cornmeal</td>
<td>½</td>
<td>1½</td>
<td>About 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corn grits</td>
<td>¼</td>
<td>1½</td>
<td>About 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rice</td>
<td>½</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>20 to 25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rolled oats</td>
<td>½</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>About 3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Measure water into cooking pot. (Add ¼ teaspoon salt, if you like.)
2. Heat to boiling. For cornmeal, heat only 1 cup of water and mix the rest of the water with the cornmeal.
3. Slowly pour and stir the cereal into the boiling water.
4. Cover the pot and turn the heat down to medium.
5. Stir a few times so the cereal will not stick.
6. Cook for the time listed above for each cereal.

Makes about 1 cup cooked cereal.

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**Marinated Salad**

**Ingredients**

4 c. vegetables, cut up
¾ c. Italian salad dressing

Use at least three kinds of vegetables. Choose what you like or what costs less at the store. Here are some ideas: broccoli, cauliflower, carrots, celery, cucumbers, radishes, olives, zucchini, cherry tomatoes.

Put cut vegetables in a bowl. Pour salad dressing over the vegetables and mix. Cover and put in the refrigerator. Will keep for three or four days.

Serves four. Per serving: 100 calories, 9 g carbohydrate, 7 g fat, 2 g fiber and 390 mg sodium

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**Week 2 Recipes**

**Key to Abbreviations**

tsp. = teaspoon
Tbsp. = tablespoon
c. = cup
oz. = ounce
pkg. = package
g = grams
mg = milligrams
lb. = pound

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**Taco Sticks**

**Ingredients**

1 c. pinto or kidney beans, drained
1 tsp. chili powder
½ tsp. salt
¾ tsp. garlic powder
4 stalks of celery
1 c. salsa

With a fork, mash the beans with the chili powder, garlic powder and salt. Try to make it smooth. Wash celery. Cut each stalk of celery into three pieces. Spread bean mixture on the celery sticks. Top with some salsa and serve.

Serves four. Per serving: 100 calories, 18 g carbohydrate, 0.5 g fat, 7 g fiber and 580 mg sodium

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**Cornbread Burger Bake**

**Equipment you will need**

- egg beater or fork
- measuring cup
- measuring spoons
- knife
- bowl
- mixing spoon
- frying pan
- cheese grater
- baking dish

**Ingredients**

1 egg, beaten
½ c. cornmeal
1 tsp. baking soda
½ can (1 c.) cream-style corn*
½ c. milk
1 Tbsp. oil
¾ lb. ground beef
½ c. chopped onion
¼ c. chopped green pepper
1 tsp. chili powder
1 c. grated cheese

In a bowl, mix the egg, cornmeal, baking soda, corn, milk and oil. Set aside. Cook the ground beef. Drain the fat. Mix the onion, green pepper and chili powder with the meat. Pour half of the cornmeal mixture into a greased 1-quart baking dish. Cover with the meat mixture and the grated cheese. Pour the rest of the cornmeal mixture on top. Bake in oven at 375 degrees for 30 to 35 minutes.

Serves four. Per serving: 380 calories, 26 g carbohydrate, 19 g fat, 3 g fiber and 760 mg sodium

*Freeze the rest of the corn or add 1 cup of milk to make two servings of soup the next day.
**Tacos**

**Ingredients**
- ½ lb. ground beef
- 2 (16 oz.) cans kidney, pinto or red beans
- 1 onion, chopped
- 1 pkg. taco seasoning or 1 Tbsp. chili powder
- ½ c. grated cheese
- 1 c. chopped lettuce
- 2 chopped tomatoes
- 8 soft tortillas (corn or flour)

**Equipment you will need**
- sharp knife
- cutting board
- frying pan
- can opener
- cooking spoon
- fork, potato masher or blender

Chop onion. Brown onion and ground beef in frying pan. Pour off the fat. Drain one can beans and mash with a fork or potato masher, or blend in a blender. Drain other can of beans and add it and mashed beans to ground beef. Mix well. Fill warm, soft tortillas with ground beef and beans, grated cheese, lettuce and tomatoes. Serve with salsa.

**Serves four.** Per serving: 660 calories, 85 g carbohydrate, 18 g fat, 24 g fiber and 610 mg sodium

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**Coleslaw**

**Ingredients**
- 3-4 c. cabbage, shredded fine
- 1 c. grated carrots
- ½ c. mayonnaise or salad dressing
- 1 Tbsp. vinegar
- 2 tsp. sugar
- ½ tsp. salt
- ½ tsp. celery seed (if you like)

Wash, peel and grate carrots. Wash and shred cabbage. Put shredded cabbage and carrots in a serving bowl. To make dressing, put mayonnaise, vinegar, sugar, salt and celery seed in bowl and stir until mixed well. Pour the dressing over the cabbage and mix well.

**Serves eight** (enough for two meals). Per serving: 25 calories, 6 g carbohydrate, 0 g fat, 2 g fiber and 170 mg sodium

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**Easy Chicken or Turkey Potpie**

**Ingredients**
- 1 c. cut-up cooked turkey or chicken
- 1 (16 oz.) bag frozen vegetables, thawed
- 1 (10.75 oz.) can reduced-fat condensed cream of chicken soup
- 1 c. biscuit mix (such as Bisquick)
- ½ c. low-fat milk or dry milk equivalent
- 1 egg

Preheat oven to 400 F. Stir turkey or chicken, vegetables and soup in an ungreased 2-quart casserole dish. Stir the remaining ingredients until blended. Pour over the turkey or chicken mixture. Bake uncovered about 30 minutes to an internal temperature of 165 F, until the crust is golden brown.

**Serves six.** Per serving: 215 calories, 27 g carbohydrate, 5 g fat, 3 g fiber and 415 mg sodium

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**Tuna Salsa Wrap**

**Ingredients**
- 1 (7 oz.) can tuna, drained and flaked
- ¼ c. light mayonnaise
- 1 tsp. yellow mustard
- ½ c. salsa
- ¼ c. shredded carrots
- 6 large corn or flour tortillas
- 1½ c. shredded lettuce
- ¾ c. shredded cheddar cheese

Warm tortillas according to package instructions. In a small bowl, combine the first five ingredients in the order given. Mix well. Place tortilla on a cutting board or other surface. In the center of the tortilla, place an equal portion of shredded lettuce and tuna mixture. Top with a pinch of cheese. Fold in one end and tightly roll the tortilla over the ingredients. Place in baking pan and warm in oven until cheese is slightly melted.

**Serves six.** Per serving: 362 calories, 41 g carbohydrate, 14 g fat, 2.5 g fiber and 838 mg sodium
Scalloped Potato Bake

**Ingredients**
- 4 c. potatoes, sliced thin
- ¼ c. chopped onion
- ½ lb. turkey ham, cut in pieces
- 1 can cream of mushroom or celery soup
- ½ can water
- ½ tsp. pepper

Peel and slice potatoes and onions. Make layers of potatoes, onion and turkey ham in a greased baking dish. Mix soup, water and pepper in a bowl. Pour this mixture over the potatoes. Cover the baking dish and bake in the oven at 350 degrees for one hour. Take the cover off and bake for 30 minutes more.

**Serves four.** Per serving: 160 calories, 33 g carbohydrate, 1.5 g fat, 4 g fiber and 280 mg sodium

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Stir-fry Vegetables

Use this recipe in place of canned vegetables for a change of pace.

**Ingredients**
- 2 or 3 c. of cut vegetables. (Choose whatever vegetables you like or what costs less at the store. Frozen vegetables are good, too.) Here are some ideas: cabbage, carrots, cherry tomatoes, zucchini, celery, snap beans, broccoli, cauliflower, mushrooms, onions, green pepper
- 1-2 Tbsp. oil or margarine
- salt, pepper or other seasoning to your taste
- 1 c. grated cheese, if you like

Heat the oil in a large frying pan or saucepan. Add vegetables. Stir or toss them over medium heat for three to five minutes or until they are just getting tender. If you like the vegetables more tender, add 2 to 3 tablespoons water, cover tightly and cook a little longer. Stir in seasonings. If you want, top the vegetables with grated cheese and let it melt a little.

**Serves four.** Per serving: 110 calories, 9 g carbohydrate, 7 g fat, 1 g fiber and 15 mg sodium

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Spanish Macaroni

**Ingredients**
- ½ lb. ground beef
- ½ green pepper, chopped
- ½ c. chopped onion
- 2 c. water
- 1 (8 oz.) can tomato sauce
- 1 (28 oz.) can tomatoes (or 2 15-oz. cans)
- 1½ c. macaroni, not cooked
- 1 Tbsp. chili powder

Cook the ground beef in a frying pan. Drain the fat. Add all the other foods and mix with the meat. Bring to a boil. Then turn the heat down to low. Cover. Cook on low heat until the macaroni is done (about 10 to 15 minutes). Stir one or two times so the macaroni will not stick to the pan.

**Serves four.** Per serving: 280 calories, 43 g carbohydrate, 3.5 g fat, 5 g fiber and 820 mg sodium

*For a change: Add frozen or canned vegetables, such as broccoli, corn, kidney beans or mixed vegetables. Try grated cheese on top before serving.*

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Tuna Salad Sandwich

**Ingredients**
- 1 (7 oz.) can tuna
- 1 stalk celery, chopped
- ¼ c. mayonnaise* 
- 8 slices bread

Open tuna can and drain tuna. Put tuna in small bowl. Wash and chop celery on cutting board. Measure ¼ cup mayonnaise. Add celery and mayonnaise to tuna in bowl. Mix well. Place four slices of bread on cutting board. Put one-fourth of tuna mix on each slice. Spread tuna over bread and put another slice of bread on top. Cut sandwiches in half and serve.

**Serves four.** Per serving: 210 calories, 25 g carbohydrate, 3 g fat, 4 g fiber and 520 mg sodium

*To cut calories and fat, use nonfat or low-fat mayonnaise, or use half nonfat yogurt.*

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Entry for Tuna Salad Sandwich

**Equipment you will need**
- cutting board
- can opener
- small sharp knife
- mixing cup
- mixing spoon
# A “Grocery List” of cost-savings ideas

Check the following if you use the tip or plan to use it.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Currently use</th>
<th>Plan to use</th>
<th>Not applicable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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**My Goal**


Date

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This material was funded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Supplemental Food Assistance Program (SNAP). SNAP provides nutrition assistance to people with a low income. It can help you buy nutritious foods for a better diet. To find out more, contact your county social services office.

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For more information about stretching your food dollars, visit [www.ag.ndsu.edu/foodwise](http://www.ag.ndsu.edu/foodwise)

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