

## **Food Programs & Other cheaper ways to buy food:**

1. **Farm Stands.** Look for farm stands near you or farmers market. The prices are a lot cheaper buying directly from the farmer then having to pay the middleman too. I buy from a stand near me tomatoes that cost 4 large for \$1.00 I then went to the supermarket and weighed four tomatoes the cost was by pound and would have cost me \$2.50. I just saved \$1.50 plus it was a lot fresher from the farmer! After awhile you will become a regular and they will know this sometimes throwing in some things to you.
2. **Warehouses.** You usually have to pay a yearly fee. There is one in San Antonio where I live but it's just to darn far from me to make the trip and not worth it. They sell a lot of items in bulk plus I hear some great bargains on appliances. Just keep in mind although it seems really cheap there might be a store closer to you that has the same item you want at a better price make sure and do research first. Most the experts I have read about concerning bulk are if you have the extra money buy in bulk. Although what I would do with a gallon jug of mayonnaise besides have a great potatoes salad picnic for an army would baffle me. It would also spoil too with only three of us eating it. I could use the flour though and store it like I do in my huge flour container. Just use common sense when purchasing bulk. Can you really use it? Can you store it? If you bought it now like tons of coke would it be gone in one week are you tempting your family to eat more cause its there?
3. **Extension offices:** Do you have one near you? If you're not into cooking they might have some programs on not only food nutrient but also on how to create meals. I had a lady come over from the county extension office in N.C when we lived there that came by and offer me tips on home made recipes and frugal living. I wished I could remember her name I am eternally grateful that she took a young bride under her wings and not only taught me a few basic cooking things but also kept company to a lonely army house wife with no friends in the area company. <http://www.ces.ncsu.edu/depts/fcs/foods/efnep/>
4. **Senior Families/Friends Exchange.** Are you a senior citizen? Do you know someone that is? It all started out with my grandmother trying to give away the powdered milk she didn't use that she got from the senior citizen center to my mother. My grandmother goes and so does my elder aunts to get a box each month from the center. Some things they use but other stuff is either too much or its something they don't use. My mother said she didn't use it but I did so she sent it to us. On the next visit I sent her some fresh farm eggs from our ranch that I had extra. The next time my parents went to visit my hometown they came back with frozen cranberries, instant mashed potatoes, and more powdered milk from one of my elder aunts who had heard from my grandmother what we did. I sent a long back some eggs, and fresh vegetables from my garden. On the next visit more of elder aunts have heard about our exchange and offered me some of there extras that they didn't use'. We have never said once, "here I will barter this for

that” its more of just, "here I have too much of this, or I don't use it your welcome to have it" I am thankful for the extra food and I hope my relatives enjoy the fresh food from our farm. Perhaps you have something to exchange or do? Perhaps they need a trip to the grocery store? Or Post office?

5. **Barter.** Have a friend or family living out in the country that has chickens and fresh milk? Barter for it! There has to be something that you do that they mentioned that they love that you do. Bake? Cook? Baby sit do their taxes, have extra pecans from your tree? Heck I myself would barter some of my fresh chicken eggs for a homemade great tasting casserole that I can stick in my freezer. Or a homemade cake to take to my family.
6. **Food Coops-** Food coops are great to join if you want to save money but be aware you need to learn to use the stuff you receive so they wont go to waste. Usually a group of people will get together and take turns picking up the food goods at a farm or farmers market.. Everyone will resource their money to buy in bulk, the more you buy the cheaper it is to get at a good price.
7. **Food Share program-** SHARE is a not-for-profit organization that builds and strengthens the community through volunteer service and helping people save money on food goods. Each month you pay a certain amount like \$25 I think on ours and you would go pick up an assortment of dry goods, cans, fresh veggies and meat. Even though it says a few states on this web site <http://www.sharewi.org/> or <http://www.sharefoodprogram.org/> or <http://www.heartlandshare.com/> you need to email them to ask if they have one in your state cause I found out I had one in ours in Texas and it wasn't listed.
8. **Government.** Don't be embarrassed to ask for government help if you need it to feed your family and you had paid taxes at one time or another you should use these programs. A few years back when we first got married and had our first child it was very tight. I couldn't find work and husband was in military. I went to WIC "Woman Infant and Children" and got tickets for free milk for my baby, beans cheese etc. I was so embarrassed going to the store and handing them the tickets but I got over it fast. I would do it all over again. I would do anything in my power to feed my children and keep them healthily. For different programs [http://www.frac.org/html/federal\\_food\\_programs/federal\\_index.html](http://www.frac.org/html/federal_food_programs/federal_index.html) Look for Food banks near you by state/zip [http://www.seconddharvest.org/zip\\_code.asp?s=48](http://www.seconddharvest.org/zip_code.asp?s=48) , For food stamps and info on Elderly <http://www.ssa.gov/pubs/10100.html#part6>
9. **Farms** Take out the middle man and go directly to the farm. To find one near you for veggies, meats and milks try [www.localharvest.org](http://www.localharvest.org) or [www.realmilk.org](http://www.realmilk.org) for