

Foods Savings - rancherma@yahoo.com

1. **Write down** what you spend on groceries for a week and month. You will be surprised how much you spend. See areas in which you can improve like getting rid of too much junk food and soda. A lot healthier too!
2. **Organize your Pantry & Fridge.** Make sure your pantry is well organized this way you won't be buying what you already have. Have a list on your freezer and pantry on what you have in it.
3. **Make a list & Menu.** Stick to the list. Another helpful thing I noticed when I did the price list book was I buy certain same items all the time. By knowing this I know how much I am going to spend that month and plan for it by buying bulk or looking for it in sales.
4. **Gardens.** Everyone has space for a garden unless you live in a shoe with no yard. My husband even planted hydroponics plants one year in our library room. The air was fresher in there and there were no bugs to deal with. Square foot gardening fits in most small back yards. Look at HGTV for frugal gardening ideas or get the book "Square foot gardening" Can't grow from seed like me? Try getting little bedding plants to start out with.
5. **Don't waste it!** Don't throw it away. Learn to use leftovers. Ends of the bread that no one wants to eat freeze it save it along with others and then cut them up add some salt, pepper, garlic and have croutons. Sour milk use it for pancakes, Over ripe bananas make the best banana bread. Have a once a week left over night. Be creative!
6. **Cut back on meats.** You don't have to have meat at every single meal. Try having beans with corn bread. Split pea soup with home made biscuits. Save that chicken stock and have chicken soup without the chicken just the juice and noodles and vegetables my daughter and husband love it!
7. **Seal it, contain it:** Learn to clean and store your food so they wont spoil as easy if left in the grocery bag that it came in. It will make the food last longer which means less for you to buy.
8. **Make it from Scratch.** Unless you have tons of time on your hand and no little toddle under foot this is a great way to save money and sometimes its better from scratch then store bought foods. I still would rather eat my husbands home made thick pizza crust pizza then buy it from the best pizza place in town. There is no comparison. Make sure though you do your research sometimes it may taste better to make from scratch but is the time and all the ingredients worth it if you had bought it someplace else on sale.

9. **Freeze dinners: Cook monthly, Weekly.** There are tons of books out there on cooking this way. Not only will save you time by having it ready to just pop in the oven you can buy and use things in bulk which will save you money in the long run.
10. **Can your foods:** Learn to can the foods you get from the garden or friends.
11. **Barter/trade:** I do a lot of that with family friends and people from trade groups living around me.
12. **Seniors:** If you're a senior take advantage of the food programs they have for you at senior centers. Not only free/cheap meals but also programs for free milk, cheese etc...
13. **Throw a potluck dinner** at your house once a week or month with close family or friends. Not only are you saving but your family & friends as well and what a great social event!