



Fact Sheet

Cost-Effective Shopping

How do you become a cost-effective shopper?

1. Know your budget.
2. Plan your menu. Make a food list based on your menu.
3. Read the grocery ads.
4. Check unit price to compare the cost between food items.
5. Look for coupons for items on your food list.



Do coupons really save you money?

Does saving \$.02 per ounce of cereal make a difference?



For example, if a child care center serves 20 ounces of cereal each day or 100 ounces of cereal each week, how much money will be saved using a cereal that is \$.02 less per ounce?

$100 \text{ oz/wk} \times 52 \text{ wk/yr} = 5200 \text{ oz cereal} \times \$.02 = \$104$
\$104 saved in one year on one item!

Check out non-traditional retail outlets to purchase food.

Examples:

- a warehouse
- a local food bank
- a farmers' market
- a co-op
- SHARE





Fact Sheet

Cost-effective Shopping, continued

SHARE (Self-Help And Resource Exchange) is a non-profit social business that rewards individuals who volunteer in their communities with up to 50% savings on food. For more information, email info@worldshare.org.

Buy in Bulk

Before buying in bulk, consider the following questions:

1. Will you use it?
2. Is it the best buy?
3. Do you have a safe place to store it?

What about convenience foods?

Convenience foods are items that are partially or completely prepared when purchased.

What are the advantages and disadvantages of convenience foods?

Advantages	Disadvantages
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• save time• product consistency• use less labor• nutrition information	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• cost more• often higher in sodium• may be higher in fat• cook cannot control ingredients• all components of the meal may not be provided in a convenience item

Tips for Determining the Best Value

1. Consider the advantages and disadvantages of convenience foods.
2. Use the nutrition label to get information.
3. Cook convenience foods in the healthiest way.
4. Determine if additional foods need to be added to meet requirements.
5. Determine cost per serving per child.

References

National Food Service Management Institute. (2003). *From the Trainer's Tablet: Lessons for Family/Home Child Care Providers*.

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