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INFO SHEET: AFFORDABLE HEALTHY EATING

It can be incredible to learn that a whole food, plant-based (WFPB) diet can both improve your health and save you money. Depending on where you live, some of the following ideas for low-cost healthy food shopping may be more useful than others. Consider what works best for you and share your tips for cost-saving shopping with one another.

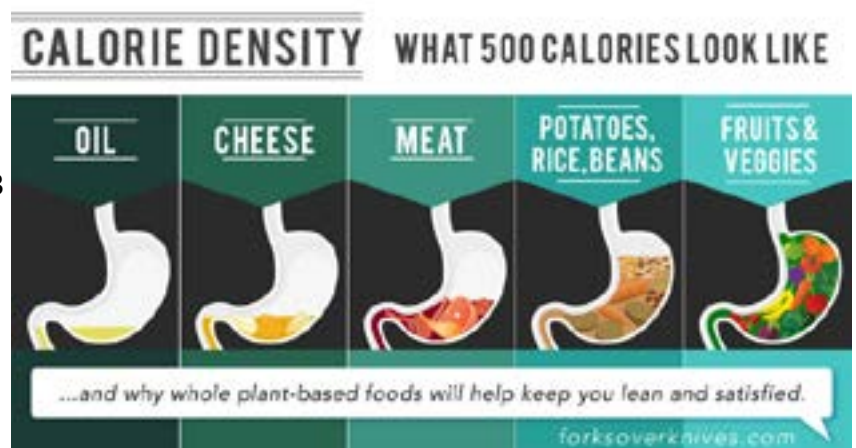
Isn't a Plant-Based Diet Expensive?

People often believe that eating a plant-based (or vegan) diet is expensive. This is largely due to the myth that you will be eating a lot of processed and prepared specialty foods (such as veggie burgers, mock meats, and plant-based cheese products). In reality, the staples of the diet - beans, grains, pasta, fruits, and vegetables - can be some of the cheapest ingredients available, especially compared to buying meat¹. Consider this example: Comparing a WFPB Split Pea Soup recipe with a Ham and Split Pea Soup recipe², the respective prices are \$4.34 and \$12.78 for 8 servings of each version. The plant-based option is 66% cheaper to make and it's lower in calories and fat.

Feeling Fuller:

Plant-based foods help you feel satisfied and fuller due to their high fiber content, and you typically consume fewer calories eating WFPB meals. As you can see in the graphic, 500 calories of oil, cheese, or meat do not fill the stomach, leaving you feeling hungry for more, whereas plant-based meals with the same number of calories fill you up.

(This graphic was created by Forks Over Knives)



Shopping for Staple Food Items:

- Stock up on staples, produce, and canned foods when they are on sale
- Inquire about case discounts for buying in bulk at your grocer
- Buy dry goods from the bulk section (if available), or in bulk from Walmart or Amazon.com
- Shop at international markets for low-cost dry goods and spices

¹ <https://www.drmcDougall.com/misc/2008nl/mar/foodcost.htm>

² <https://ucdintegrativemedicine.com/2015/03/cheap-or-expensive-the-real-truth-about-plant-based-diets/#gs.U=dB4Yw>



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Shopping for Fresh Produce:

- Freeze extra produce that's on sale or in-season
- Grow your own food
- Buy from a farmer's market
- Check to see if frozen fruits and vegetables are cheaper than fresh (check for no added salt or sugar)

Prepping Meals at Home:

- Meal planning - prepare multiple meals on the weekend and freeze servings for the week ahead
- Chop produce yourself (rather than buying it pre-cut)
- Cook at home instead of dining out
- Select recipes that take 30 minutes or less to prepare

Recipes and Resources:

Center for Nutrition Studies - This website, www.nutritionstudies.org, is filled with money saving tips, including how to budget and shop smart, stretching your grocery dollars, and offering inexpensive meal ideas. Refer to the article "[Plant-Based Food Guide: How to Eat Well on a Budget.](#)"

"[How to Eat a Healthy Whole Foods, Plant Based Diet on \\$50 a Week](#)" - this article provides recommendations on creating a food shopping budget, which includes spending \$20 a week on fresh produce, \$10-15 in the bulk section and aisles, \$5-7 on non-dairy items, and the rest on frozen fruits and vegetables.

This Info Sheet was designed for the Oasis Jumpstart Program to accompany the "Affordable Healthy Eating" presentation.