



Making the Most of Your Fruit and Veggie Dollars

From the Everyday Food Smarts staff at Leah's Pantry

Challenge: I live in an SRO and can't always use a kitchen to cook.

Tips:

- Microwaves are for more than just reheating. Check Eatfresh.org or another recipe source for healthy dishes you can make from scratch in the microwave.
- Ask management where you live if you can use a rice cooker, crock pot (slow cooker), or toaster oven in your room. Rice cookers are especially useful for making soups, pasta dishes, and steamed vegetables.
- Create your own kitchen setup from inexpensive and used items. Thrift stores like Goodwill are great places to find things like crockpots, utensils, and more.



Challenge: I don't know which fruits and vegetables to buy!

Tips:

- Buy fruits and vegetables that can be used in many ways. Bell peppers, for example, can be eaten raw or be cooked on their own or with other ingredients. Bananas can be eaten alone or added to fruit smoothies.
- Notice what fruits and vegetables grow locally at different times of year. These tend to be cheaper than produce grown out of season or shipped from different places.
- Team up with a friend or neighbor to share grocery costs! With a combined budget, you can buy and prepare a greater variety of foods.

eatFresh.org 



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Challenge: I don't have time to prepare a fresh vegetable recipe for every meal.

Tips:

- Vegetables like carrots, celery, and cucumbers are great eaten raw. Slice them to enjoy in place of salads or packaged snacks. Sprinkle them with lime juice and a dash of chili powder for extra flavor!
- Use Eatfresh.org or another source to find recipes for salsas, sauces, and dressings made from vegetables. Many salsa recipes, for example, contain only vegetables and can be enjoyed over several meals.
- Have a blender? Try making a fruit and vegetable smoothie! Mild-tasting vegetables like spinach and avocado add nutrients to blender drinks without changing the flavor
- Try making a one-pot vegetarian dish like Lee's Lentil Veggie Stew (visit the EatSF website or Eatfresh.org for this recipe). Then enjoy the leftovers for days. Meals like these can be less expensive to prepare than meat.



Challenge: Fresh fruits and vegetables end up going bad before I can eat them.

Tips:

- Store leafy greens in plastic bags without much air. They will last longer that way.
- Plan ahead for your meals, one week at a time if you can. Then eat the most perishable items, like avocados, first. Save heartier produce like cabbage for later in the week.

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