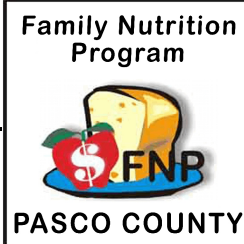


# Family Nutrition Program in Pasco

Nutritious Nibbles of Information

January 2009



## Healthy Eating Makes \$ense

### Can you afford to eat healthy?

In a sense, you can't afford not to. Eating healthy helps provide the nutrients your family needs to stay healthy which will reduce medical bills. Even though the cost of food is on the rise, there are many things that you can do to cut costs without sacrificing nutrition. Read on to find out how to stretch your food dollars through budgeting, food selection, and using low-cost recipes.

### Know what resources are available:

- ✓ Know how much cash and other resources you have (WIC checks, food stamps, etc.) to spend on food.
- ✓ Plan your meals starting with what you already have on hand (more information below).
- ✓ Make a shopping list and stick to it (avoid impulse buying).
- ✓ Consider frozen or shelf staple foods that will last longer.

### Plan your meals:

- ✓ Once you determine what you already have in your pantry, decide what meals you can make using these foods, grocery store specials and coupons.
- ✓ Plan enough meals for at least one week.
- ✓ You can mix foods together (salads, casseroles, omelets, soups, etc.) to make a nutritious meal.
- ✓ Look at *MyPyramid* to help plan healthy meals using items from all food groups.
- ✓ Use vegetables, fruits, and whole grains to complete your menu.

### Check out the following web sites:

#### MyPyramid [www.mypyramid.gov](http://www.mypyramid.gov)

Helps you personalize eating plans, gives advice to make smart food choices from all food groups, helps balance food you eat and physical activity.



#### Loving Your Family, Feeding Their Future <http://snap.nal.usda.gov>

Provides menus, recipes, and tips on buying and serving healthier foods in English and Spanish.

#### Recipe Finder <http://recipefinder.nal.usda.gov>

Helps you select from over 100 low-cost, nutritious and delicious recipes (with food facts) in English and Spanish.

### Prevent food waste:

- ✓ Cut down on the amount of food you throw away; freeze leftovers and use later in soups or casseroles.
- ✓ Take leftovers for lunch instead of eating out; store properly to keep food safe to eat.
- ✓ Before buying an unfamiliar food, be sure that you know how to prepare it.
- ✓ Buy only the amount of food you can use before it will spoil.

This material was funded by USDA's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). SNAP provides nutrition assistance to people with low income. It can help you buy nutritious foods for a better diet. To find out more, call toll-free 1-866-762-2237 or visit [www.dcf.state.fl.us/ess](http://www.dcf.state.fl.us/ess).

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## General money-saving tips:

- ✓ Don't shop when you are hungry or with a hungry/tired child.
- ✓ Try store brands that usually cost less.
- ✓ Compare products for the best deals.
- ✓ Cut down on expensive ready-to-eat sweet and salty snacks.
- ✓ Enjoy seasonal fruits (flavor is at its peak and price is lower), dried fruits, veggies (cut up your own), whole-grain crackers or low-fat yogurt for nutritious snacks.
- ✓ Limit pre-made meals and fast foods.
- ✓ Cook large batches when possible, break down into smaller portions and freeze.
- ✓ Buy a reusable water bottle (instead of bottled water) and refill it with tap water. Refrigerate it overnight and keep it with you during the day. Wash and reuse daily.
- ✓ Avoid expensive sodas, energy and coffee drinks.

## Food safety tips:

### Plan ahead:

- ✓ Keep a pad and pencil by the refrigerator to jot down foods as they run low.
- ✓ Put a cooler in your car for keeping perishables safe on the way home from the grocery store.
- ✓ Only shop when you can take food right home.
- ✓ After shopping, store food in the refrigerator/freezer quickly to prevent spoilage.

### In the store:

- ✓ Stock-up on staple foods such as canned fruit, tuna, or sauces when they are on sale.
- ✓ Select perishable foods such as dairy and meats last, so that they will stay cold in your cart.
- ✓ Put raw meat in plastic bag and keep it separate from other foods in your cart to avoid cross-contamination.
- ✓ Check produce for bruises and other signs of spoilage.
- ✓ Be sure to check to see that eggs are not cracked.
- ✓ Look at the "use by" dates to be sure you can use the foods before they go bad.

### At home:

- ✓ Store ripe fruit and fresh-cut produce in the refrigerator.
- ✓ Wash produce just before using.
- ✓ Place newly purchased canned foods behind older ones in your cupboard and use older cans first (before the "use by" date has passed)
- ✓ Refrigerate perishable leftovers within two hours and use within three days.

## Recipe: Farmer's Market Stir Fry

Makes 4 servings

### Ingredients:

- 1 tablespoon vegetable oil
- 1 teaspoon chopped garlic (optional)
- 3-4 cups prepared vegetables (wash/slice/dice/chop)  
Suggestions: carrots\*, onion, broccoli, cauliflower, celery, yellow squash, zucchini, sweet potato\*, peas, cabbage, green or red pepper
- 1-2 tablespoons low-sodium soy sauce (optional)

### Instructions:

1. Heat electric skillet or wok.
2. Add vegetable oil.
3. If desired, stir in garlic.
4. Add a variety of vegetables cut in small uniform pieces (matchstick size or thinly sliced). Be sure to add the hard\* vegetables first.
5. Add soy sauce, if desired.
6. Stir constantly for 5-7 minutes or until vegetables are tender but firm.
7. Serve as is, or over rice, or rolled in a tortilla.
8. Refrigerate leftovers.



Information in this newsletter was adapted from  
USDA's Nutrition Assistance Programs:  
*Eat Right When Money Is Tight.*  
<http://snap.nal.usda.gov>  
and UF/IFAS' *Managing in Tough Times*  
<http://SolutionsForYourLife.com>

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