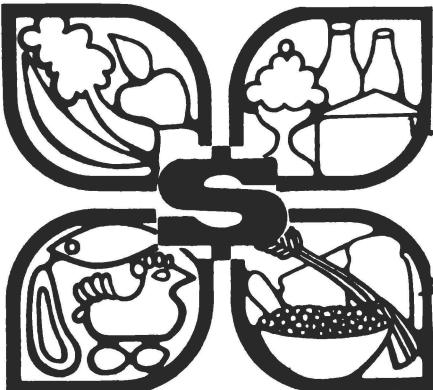


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FOODS AND NUTRITION

MF-535

August 1980

HOW MUCH MONEY FOR FOOD?

How much money should you set aside for food? That depends on a number of things.

Family size. The more people in the family, the more you will need to spend for food. There are some economies in feeding a large family but two can't eat as cheaply as one.

Age of family members. The cost of feeding a child goes up as he or she grows up. It costs about twice as much to feed an 18 year old boy as to feed his 4 year old brother.

Sex of family members. Teenage boys and men eat more than teenage girls and women.

Activity of family members. Very active people burn up lots of energy. It will take more food for active teens and adults whether the activity is work or play.

Homegrown food. Homegrown fruits and vegetables mean that you won't have to spend money for these foods. Some families also have their own milk, eggs, and meat.

Time for and interest in cooking. Cooking may be one of your favorite activities. You may have one hundred ways of cooking hamburger and still be on the lookout for new recipes. You may enjoy making yeast breads for your family even though it takes several hours from start to finish. Some of us aren't that interested in cooking or don't have the time. We may find ourselves spending money to save time and effort. Then we need to ask "Do I really have more money than time and energy?"

Facilities for cooking. The right equipment can make cooking easier. Good storage facilities can help cut food waste.

Where you shop, how often you shop, and how good a shopper you are also have a bearing on how much you spend on food.

No two families spend the same amount of money for food. To get a better idea of how much other families spend, work through the exercise on the back of the page. These costs are based on the kinds and amounts of food families were buying in a nationwide Household Food Consumption Survey. The costs are for individuals living in a 4-person family. If your family is smaller, it will cost more to feed each person. If your family is larger, it will cost less per person.

It is possible to feed your family well for less money. But you could also spend this much money and be poorly fed. The foods you choose are as important as the amount of money you spend.

Write in the number of family members of each age and sex. Multiply and add to find the monthly cost. For example, if you feed 2 teenage boys between 15 and 19 years of age, the monthly cost would be \$130.40. Add up the costs for all of the persons living at home.

Individuals	Number in your family	Thrifty Plan Cost for 1 month*	Total Cost
<b>Children</b>			
7 months to 1 year		\$25.50	
1-2 years		28.70	
3-5 years		34.80	
6-8 years		44.30	
9-11 years		55.50	
<b>Male</b>			
12-14 years		59.20	
15-19 years		65.20	
20-54 years		63.40	
55 years and over		56.30	
<b>Female</b>			
12-19 years		53.00	
20-54 years		51.80	
55 years and over		46.90	
Pregnant		65.20	
Nursing		69.20	
<b>Total</b>			
		Adjustment for family size <sup>1</sup>	

\*January 1980

<sup>1</sup>If 1 person, add 20%; 2 persons, add 10%; 3 persons, add 5%; 4 persons, no change; 5-6 persons, subtract 5%; 7 or more persons, subtract 10%

If you don't have that much money, you may want to look into food assistance programs. There are several aimed at different age groups which can help cut your food costs.

The WIC Program provides money for some special foods for expectant mothers and young children. The local Health Department determines who is eligible.

School Lunch is often more than lunch. Many schools offer breakfast as well. School age children may qualify for free or reduced price meals. The teacher or principal can tell you what to do to apply for free lunches.

Senior Centers serve free or low-cost noon meals for senior citizens. Some centers serve meals 5 days a week while others serve on just one or two days. Some centers also deliver meals to homebound senior citizens.

The Food Stamp Program provides extra food purchasing power for families with limited incomes. The bonus is in the form of coupons which can be redeemed for food. The amount of the bonus is based on income and family size. The Department of Social Services handles the Food Stamp Program.