



Stretch Your Food Dollar
GA Group Session
August / September 2007



WHO: All WIC Participants

WHY: Everybody wants to save money. Participants will learn ways to save money when grocery shopping by using these money saving tips at home and at the store to stretch their food dollar.

WHEN: 15 minutes for instruction

WHERE: The WIC nutrition education room at all WIC sites in Riverside County.

MATERIALS NEEDED:

1. Large Post-it with **Tips at Home** / **Tips at the Store** listed
2. (1) Bell for the Shopping Feud game, if you have one
3. Handouts: Food Stamps and Seasonal Guide for produce

WHAT:

- Simple ways to save money when grocery shopping
- Tips to use at home and at the store to save money

WHAT FOR: By the end of this session, participants will have:

- Named simple ways to save money when grocery shopping
- Shared tips to use at home and at the store to save money

Introduction:

(2 minutes)

Good morning/afternoon! My name is _____ and I would like to welcome you to our WIC group session. Today we will discuss some tips to use both at home and at the store to save money on groceries.

Planning ahead is the key to saving time and money. This means deciding how much money you have to spend on food each month, planning your meals, and sticking to your plan! Using these tips at home and at the store can help. Let's say you're planning a birthday party, what do you do ahead of time? (Pause for answers). Just like with planning a birthday party, before you go shopping for food, you also need to plan. This will help save money!

With the person sitting next to you, share 1 thing you already do to save money when you shop for food. (Educator help participants pair up). What questions do you have? (Pause 5 -7 seconds.) Now, I would like to invite a couple of you to share with us what you discussed. (Pause)

Thank you for sharing those great tips.

Home and Store Tips:

(6-8 minutes)

Listen as I read some tips to use at home and at the store. Using these tips can save you money.

(Point to posters)

| <u>Home</u> | <u>Store</u> |
|-------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1. Plan a Food Budget | 1. Compare Name Brand vs. Generic |
| 2. Check Your Cupboards | 2. Check Unit Price |
| 3. Make a Grocery List | 3. Read Food Label |
| 4. Check Store Ads | 4. Buy Fruits & Vegetables in Season |
| 5. Plan Meals Ahead | |

I'd like to invite you to work in small groups and share what the tips mean to you. (Arrange ppt's into groups of 4, if possible) **Group #1**, I'd like you to share what the tips **on the Home** poster mean to you.

Group #2, I'd like you to share what the tips **on the Store** poster mean to you. (Continue until all groups have been assigned home or store.) Take a few minutes to do this. (Pause)

Let's come back together and have each group share what you discussed.

Which group would like to share first? (Pause for sharing and continue until all groups have shared.)

That's wonderful! Thank you all for sharing some great tips and ideas for saving money. I have a few tips to share, too.

Home: (Read **only** the tips NOT discussed by groups.)

1. Plan a Food Budget

- Decide how much money you can spend on food each month. Then divide that by 4, and that gives you the amount you can spend each week. WIC and food stamps can help stretch

your budget.

2. Check Your Cupboards

- Check what food you already have, which will keep you from buying food you don't need.

3. Make a Grocery List

- It helps to keep a notepad on the refrigerator; that way, when you run out of something during the week, you can write it down.

4. Check Store Ads

- If an item that you use often is on sale, put it on your list! Plan meals based on what's on sale. What stores do you find have good prices or sales? (Pause for response.)
(Possible responses: grocery stores, 99 cents stores, Target, Wal-mart, Costco, Sams club, etc.)

5. Plan Meals Ahead

- Plan meals ahead for the week. Try to make enough to have leftovers; they come in handy for lunches or a quick dinner!

Store: (Continue reading only the tips NOT discussed by groups.)

1. Brand Name vs. Generic

- Usually the only difference between brand name and generic is the cost; they often have the same ingredients and taste. Save money by buying generic.

2. Check the "unit" price

- Often the larger container is less expensive per unit, but not always. Check the unit price which is usually located on the shelf, under the item. In case you are not familiar with unit pricing, here is an example of what it looks like at the store (Show and pass around unit price page).

3. Read the food label

- Reading labels is a great way to make sure you get the best nutrition for your food dollar. By looking at the "Nutrition Facts" label, you can watch your intake of fats and sugar, and compare amounts of nutrients like fiber, iron, and calcium.

4. Buy fruits and vegetables in season

- For example, zucchini might be \$1.29 a pound in the winter, but only .39¢ a pound in the summer.

Shopping Feud Game

(5 minutes)

Now we are going to use the tips by playing a game called **Shopping Feud**. Raise your hand if you are familiar with the TV game, Family Feud. (Pause) We are going to play a game similar to the TV game. One side of the room is Team 1 and the other side is Team 2. (Divide into 2 groups) After I read a statement, the person who rings the bell first and answers correctly scores a point for their team. To make it easy, all the answers are either true or false. (Keep score & call up 2 new people per statement)

What are your questions? (Pause) Are you ready to play? Who would like to come up first?

1. Store brands are usually MORE expensive.False
2. Ready to eat or pre-made foods are usually the best buy.False
3. Planning meals based on the sales can help save money.True
4. Food labels can help you compare the nutrition of similar foods.True
5. You can find the unit price on the food label.False
6. A food budget will NOT help you plan how much you have to spend. ...False
7. Fruits and vegetables out of season are cheaper.False
8. Shopping with a list can help you get everything you need.True

*(Call next team member
with each statement)*

(Announce winning team.) Thank you for playing the Shopping Feud game!

Conclusion:

(1 minute)

By following these tips, you can save money. Many people save hundreds of dollars a year by:
a) Planning meals ahead, instead of at the last minute
b) Making a food budget, and sticking to it!
c) Shopping wisely by using a shopping list, comparing prices, and buying produce in season. Using these tips when at home and at the store will help you stretch your food dollar. I have a couple handouts that I would like to offer you; one is about the **food stamp program** and the other one lists the **fruits and vegetables in season**.

Thank you for participating in today's group session.

