

## Check your \$-saving skills:

- Which of the following is the best buy for a sack lunch?
  - A 4-pound bag of apples @ \$5.50 (11 apples)
  - 4 pounds of apples @ \$1.69 per pound (8 apples)
  - Snack pack of fruit @ \$1.99 (4 4-ounce containers)
- Which of these is the best buy?
  - 12-ounce can of frozen juice concentrate @ \$1.69 (makes 6 cups)
  - 64-ounce bottle of 100% juice @ \$3.69 (8 cups)
  - 10 boxes of Hi-C® fruit drink @ \$2.59 (8 cups)
- How could you use fruit that is overripe?
  - Make a smoothie
  - Freeze it to make smoothies, muffins, quick breads, pancakes
  - Add it to muffins or pancakes
  - All of the above
- What would it cost for a single person to buy enough fruit to meet the MyPlate recommendations for a week? (Refer to chart on next page.)
  - \$4
  - \$6
  - \$8
- All fruits and vegetables should be washed immediately after purchase.
  - Yes
  - No

(Answers on next page)

*No endorsement of mentioned products or firms is intended nor is criticism implied of those not mentioned.*

*All prices in this publication were collected in central Iowa, Spring 2012. Although prices vary depending on date and location, the comparative differences generally follow a similar pattern.*

## Fruits

Fruits contain vitamins, minerals, and antioxidants. They are a good source of fiber and also are low in fat. Because each fruit has a unique nutrient profile, we need to include a variety in our meals and snacks. All fruits and 100% juice are part of the fruit group. According to MyPlate and the Dietary Guidelines for Americans, children need 1 to 1 ½ cups of fruit daily. Teens and adults need 1 ½ to 2 cups. In general, 1 small, whole fruit, 1 cup of 100% fruit juice, or ½ cup of dried fruit counts as 1 cup.

## Spend Smart: consider all forms of fruit

Fresh, canned, frozen, dried, and 100% juice have similar nutrient values. Try these tips for finding the smart buys. Take a calculator to the store (or use the one on your cell phone) to figure the unit prices.

### Fresh

- Purchase fruit in season for best price and quality; consider freezing extra fruit if time and space allow.
- Choose the smaller size when buying apples, oranges, bananas, and other individual fruits that are sold by the pound. The smaller size fruits are closer to the 1 cup serving size, which helps with portion control.
- Pre-cut fruit is at least 3 times more expensive and spoils faster.

### Canned

- Choose juice or water-packed varieties.
- Watch for sale prices and stock up.
- Use coupons and/or select the generic brand.
- Use unit pricing; individual-size containers can cost twice as much.

### Dried

- Monitor portion size; ½ cup of dried fruit is a 1 cup fruit equivalent.
- Make your own snack packs by measuring ½-cup amounts into plastic bags or small containers.
- Compare brands and package sizes using unit pricing.
- Raisins are generally the least expensive dried fruit but even other dried fruits can be a smarter alternative to candy or cookie snacks.

### Juice

- Check labels and buy 100% juice instead of “drinks” or “punches.”
- Frozen concentrate generally provides more servings per dollar than other juice choices.
- Add lemon or lime slices to chilled water for an alternative thirst quencher.

# Spend Smart: guard your fruit investment

## Check before you buy

- Hold the bag or carton up and look at the bottom for smashed or moldy fruit. The packaging should protect the product.

## Treat with care at home

- Use fresh items first; have an immediate plan for using fresh berries and cherries, which can spoil quickly.
- Wash fruit under clean, running water and drain.
- Do not wash berries or cherries until ready to use.
- Most fruit will keep a week when refrigerated, but quality declines over time.

## Monitor supplies

- Cut up blemished or damaged fruit for salads or snack cups.
- Freeze fruit if it will not be eaten immediately.
- Write purchase date on canned and frozen packages and use the oldest ones first.
- Add nearly-too-ripe fruit to yogurt or use in smoothies, muffins, cobblers, or crisps.

# Spend Smart: what can you buy for a dollar?

A common misconception is that “fruit is too expensive.” The truth depends on how foods are compared. When you consider nutrition as well as cost, fruit is a bargain—and makes a great choice for snacks and desserts.

|              | Servings/Unit                          | Cost             | What you can buy for about \$1.00? |
|--------------|--|------------------|------------------------------------|
| Apples       | 3 medium per pound                     | \$1.69 per pound | 2 apples                           |
| Bananas      | 3 medium per pound                     | \$.59 per pound  | 5 bananas                          |
| Grapes       | 3 cups per pound                       | \$2.68 per pound | 1 cup grapes<br>\$.89/cup          |
| Kiwis        | 5 per pound                            | 3 for \$1.00     | 3 kiwis                            |
| Oranges      | 3 medium per pound                     | 3 for \$1.00     | 3 oranges                          |
| Pears        | 3 medium per pound                     | \$1.68 per pound | 2 pears                            |
| Orange juice | 6 cups per 12-ounce can of concentrate | \$1.69           | 3 cups                             |
| Raisins      | 15-ounce box (2 ½ cups)                | \$2.69           | 1 cup<br>(2 servings)              |
| Candy bar    | 1 2.07 oz bar                          | \$.77            | 1 ¼ bars                           |
| Chips        | Pringles® 6.38 ounces                  | \$1.69           | ¾ canister                         |

## Facts about organics

- Generally cost more than conventionally produced foods
- Research\* has not proven that organic fruits are nutritionally superior

\*American Dietetic Association, Institute for Food Technologists, U.S. Department of Agriculture

## Answers: Check your \$-saving skills

1. The best buy from least to most expensive: 4-pound bag of apples cost \$.50 each, larger apples sold by the pound (\$.85 each). The snack pack is \$.50 per container, but you would need 2 for a cup serving (\$1.00 each).
2. Juice concentrate is the best buy (\$.28 per cup) compared to bottled juice (\$.46). Drink boxes are not 100% juice.
3. All answers are good uses of overripe fruit.
4. About \$4 would buy the needed 14 cups of fruit (2 cups a day)—such as: 5 bananas, 3 kiwis, 5 cups 100% juice, 1 orange.
5. No. Some, such as apples and grapes, can be washed right away. Others, such as berries and other high moisture, softer fruit, should be washed just before using.

## Visit these websites for more ideas

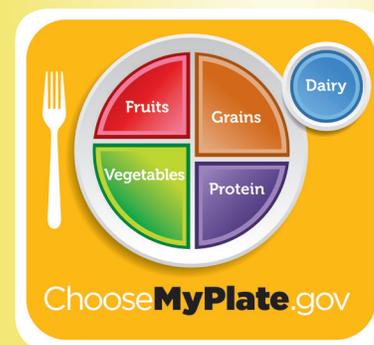
ISU Extension and Outreach  
SpendSmart EatSmart  
[www.extension.iastate.edu/foodsavings](http://www.extension.iastate.edu/foodsavings)

ISU AnswerLine  
[www.extension.iastate.edu/families/answerline](http://www.extension.iastate.edu/families/answerline)  
(or, call 1-800-262-3804)

ISU Extension and Outreach  
Nutrition and Health  
[www.extension.iastate.edu/healthnutrition](http://www.extension.iastate.edu/healthnutrition)

ISU Extension and Outreach  
Online Store  
[store.extension.iastate.edu](http://store.extension.iastate.edu)

Choose MyPlate  
<http://www.choosemyplate.gov/>



Prepared by Peggy Martin, MS, RD, state extension specialist. Reviewed by Ruth Litchfield, PhD, RD, LD, extension nutritionist.

..and justice for all  
Iowa State University Extension and Outreach programs are available to all without regard to race, color, age, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, gender identity, genetic information, sex, marital status, disability, or status as a U.S. veteran. Inquiries can be directed to the Director of Equal Opportunity and Compliance, 3280 Beardshear Hall, (515) 294-7612.

Issued in furtherance of Cooperative Extension work, Acts of May 8 and June 30, 1914, in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Cathann A. Kress, director, Cooperative Extension Service, Iowa State University of Science and Technology, Ames, Iowa.