

MAKE YOUR FOOD DOLLARS COUNT

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"Planned - Overs"

With rising prices on almost everything, saving money on your food budget is more important than ever. "Planned-overs" can help pinch pennies, save time, and provide healthier choices for you and your family. Here are some ideas.



Beef:

- "Steak" salad: marinate thin sliced cooked beef in Italian dressing with fresh tomato chunks and mozzarella cheese. Serve on lettuce or on rolls or in pita bread.
- Barbecue beef sandwiches: cut cooked beef in strips; heat in barbecue sauce; and serve on buns.
- Brown ground beef; divide and freeze in amounts for future meals like sloppy joes, tacos or chili.

Turkey or Chicken:

- Hot turkey sandwiches
- Chicken salad
- Chicken, turkey, or beef broth can be made from bones cooked with vegetables (carrot, onion, and celery). Simmer 2-3 hours. Strain and freeze in 1-2 cup portions. Label and date.

Vegetables and Fruits:

- Save leftover cooked vegetables in a freezer container. When full, use to make soup.
- Freeze chopped onions, celery or green peppers in a small amount in a zip-top plastic freezer bag and pat into a flat "cookie" shape. Double bag to prevent odors going through freezer. Freeze. Break off as needed for recipes.

- Over-ripe bananas make great banana bread. Mash and freeze in amounts used in your favorite recipe.
- Add crushed fruit to muffins, cookies, or pancakes.

Here are 2 ways to use "planned over" vegetables:

One-Step Macaroni and Cheese



- 2 cups uncooked elbow macaroni
 - 3-1/2 cups skim (fat-free) milk
 - 1 Tablespoon Worcestershire sauce
 - 2 cups shredded low-fat cheddar cheese
 - 3 cups cooked vegetables paprika (optional)
- In lightly oiled 2-1/2 quart casserole dish, stir uncooked macaroni, milk, Worcestershire sauce, 1 cup cheese, and vegetables until blended. Cover tightly with foil.

Bake in 350° oven 50 minutes. Uncover, top with remaining 1 cup cheese; sprinkle with paprika. Bake 10 minutes more, or until cheese is melted. Let stand 10 minutes before serving to absorb liquids. Serve; refrigerate leftovers.

Yield: 18 servings; serving size 1/2 cup, (100 calories, 1 gram fat, 0 grams trans fat, 190mg sodium, 2 grams fiber)

Frittata

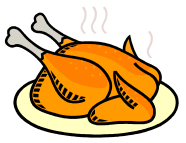
- 2 whole eggs
- 4 egg whites
- 3 cups chopped vegetables (may be any combination of leftover (cooked), canned (drained), or frozen (thawed)
- 1/2 cup grated parmesan cheese (or other cheese as desired)
- 1/4 teaspoon garlic powder
- black pepper to taste
- 1 Tablespoon vegetable oil

Break the eggs into a bowl and beat with a fork until blended. Add vegetables, parmesan cheese, garlic powder, and black pepper.

Heat oil in large skillet over medium heat. Add the egg mixture. Reduce heat to very low. Cover and cook until eggs are firm. Cut into 8 wedges. Serve and refrigerate leftovers.

Yield: 8 servings; serving size 1/2 cup, (90 calories, 4.5 grams fat, 0 grams trans fat, 260mg sodium, 1 gram fiber)





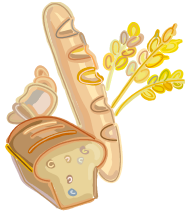
"PLANNED-OVERS" TIPS

• Use a "planned-over" strategy to make your own convenience meals. For example, a large beef or pork roast can be served first as a roast then used later in the week for stew or sandwiches. The rest of a roast chicken can be used for potpie, soup or even pasta salad.

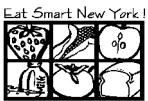
• Package "planned-overs" in meal-size portions for a bagged lunch or freeze to make your own frozen dinners or entrees.

• Save energy costs and your time by baking several items at time. Double batches will allow some to be packaged and frozen. Be sure you label and date them so they can be used within a reasonable time.

• Packaged waffles, pancakes, rolls and biscuits in the freezer section can be expensive when you consider how easy it is to freeze homemade versions. Double the recipe and freeze the extras in freezer bags between sheets of wax paper so they are easier to separate.



Free Nutrition Education Programs



Nutrition staff are available to help limited income individuals and families throughout Herkimer County stretch their food dollars to feed themselves and their families better.

Lessons can take place in participants homes or worksites as well as at community centers. Newsletters and other resources are also available by mail.

Topics include:

- Budgeting and stretching food dollars.
- Basic nutrition and menu planning.
- Preparing low cost, easy recipes and menus.
- Preserving, storing and preparing food safely.

Contact: Cornell Cooperative Extension
5657 State Rt. 5,
Herkimer, NY 13350
(315) 866-7920

Keep "Planned-Overs" Safe

Protect your family from illness by safely cooling, storing, and reheating your "planned-over" foods.

Cooling:

• Refrigerate hot foods in shallow containers so they cool faster. For thicker foods, such as stews, hot puddings, or layers of meat slices, limit depth of food to two inches.

• Avoid letting perishable foods such as meat, poultry, fish, eggs, and dairy products sit at room temperature longer than two hours total. Time includes both first and second use.

• As a general rule, use the refrigerated "planned-overs" within one to two days for best quality and safety. Otherwise freeze for longer storage.

Freezing:

• Freeze foods in portion sizes you'll use for future meals.

• Freeze in thin, flat shapes in freezer bags or freezer containers. A thick shape takes longer to thaw.

• Label each package with the name of the food and date you froze it. Use the date to assure products are eaten while the quality is still good.

Thawing:

• Plan ahead for slow, safe thawing in the refrigerator. Allow about one day for each five pounds of frozen food. DO NOT thaw perishable foods at room temperature.

"Day Old" Bread Ideas

Creative uses of day-old bread are easy ways to stretch your food dollar. When selecting day-old bread, look for the "sell by" date on the wrapper. The bread should still be fresh on that day and stay fresh a couple of days longer. Before using bread, check for mold. Mold is usually blue-green and is found on the folds and between slices. Throw away moldy bread. For long term storage, place bread in freezer bags for best results. Try these ideas:

• **Bread Crumbs:** Save odds and ends of bread in freezer until you have a full bag; then dry in oven. Crush into crumbs. Package in airtight container. Can be used for pork chops, chicken, in meatloaf, or to top casseroles.

• **Croutons:** Cube bread; sprinkle with seasonings as desired; bake stirring often until crisp and brown. To microwave, spread cubes in a microwave dish. Microwave on high 4 to 5 minutes or until dry to the touch, stirring every 2 minutes. Let stand until cool. Package in airtight container.

Need help paying your grocery bill? Food Stamps can help!

Call (315) 894-9917 today.

Nutrition Outreach & Education Program of Catholic Charities of Herkimer County

Cornell Cooperative Extension
Herkimer County
5657 NYS Rt. 5
Herkimer, NY 13350

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