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.
- Fruit juice should contribute no more than 1/2 your daily fruit servings.
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 within a few days.
• 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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Servings/Unit</th>
<th>Cost</th>
<th>What can you buy for about $1.00?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Apples</td>
<td>3 medium per pound</td>
<td>$2.24 per pound</td>
<td>1 apple</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bananas</td>
<td>3 medium per pound</td>
<td>$0.59 per pound</td>
<td>5 bananas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grapes</td>
<td>3 cups per pound</td>
<td>$2.68 per pound</td>
<td>1 cup grapes $0.89/cup</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kiwis</td>
<td>5 per pound</td>
<td>2 for $1.00</td>
<td>2 kiwis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oranges</td>
<td>3 medium per pound</td>
<td>3 for $2.00</td>
<td>1.5 oranges</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pears</td>
<td>3 medium per pound</td>
<td>$1.89 per pound</td>
<td>1 pears</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orange juice</td>
<td>6 cups per 12-ounce can of concentrate</td>
<td>$1.88</td>
<td>3 cups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raisins</td>
<td>15-ounce box (2 ½ cups)</td>
<td>$2.99</td>
<td>1 cup (2 servings)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Candy bar</td>
<td>1 2.07 oz bar</td>
<td>$0.89</td>
<td>1 bar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chips</td>
<td>Pringles® 6.38 ounces</td>
<td>$1.69</td>
<td>¾ canister</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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. Juice concentrate is the best buy ($0.31 per cup) compared to bottled juice ($0.46). Drink boxes are not 100% juice.
2. All answers are good uses of overripe fruit.
3. About $5 would buy the needed 14 cups of fruit (2 cups a day)—such as: 5 bananas, 3 kiwis, 5 cups 100% juice, 1 orange.
4. 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
Iowa State University Extension and Outreach
• SpendSmart. EatSmart. www.extension.iastate.edu/foodsavings
• AnswerLine www.extension.iastate.edu/human sciences/answerline (or, call 1-800-262-3804)
• Nutrition and Health www.extension.iastate.edu/human sciences/healthy-living-and-eating-families
• Online Store store.extension.iastate.edu

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