

Encouraging Healthy Eating On a Tight Budget



Insights from Consumers and Educators

- In-depth interviews
 - SNAP participants
 SNAP-eligible individuals
 SNAP educators
- Consumer app concepts
 - Healthy food shopping, prep, meal ideas
 - Location-specific offerings, eg, SNAP retailers, incentive programs

Interviewees use similar methods to keep costs low and find healthy recipes—but none note a resource that help with **both**. The opportunity exists to fill this void.

Food shopping on a budget

- **Digital Coupon Apps** (i.e., coupon aggregators)
- Store Memberships (coupons in app, other exclusive deals/sales)
- Online Deals from Stores
- Bargain hunting

Finding healthy, varietal recipes

- **Apps** (incl. Plan to Eat, Mealime, Easy Recipes)
- Dedicated Recipe
 Websites (incl. EatingWell.com, CookingLight.com)
- Other Websites (incl. YouTube, Pinterest)

"Mealime [recipe app] lets you clip 2 coupons on it too...but the things I want—especially vegetables and fruits—there's hardly any coupons for it." (SNAP Participant, Younger, Kids)

No one, however, could identify a site or app focused on healthy eating on a budget

"I usually just stick to meal ideas and meal prepping type of apps." (SNAP-eligible, Younger, Kids)

SNAP educator perspective: Simplicity is key to app use SNAP educators offered some advice to keep in mind in order to best serve the audience with whom they work.

Simplicity The app needs to be simple to use and offer simple meals and recipes

"I think it would need to be simple type recipes—not too many ingredients, common items, easy to find, things they are familiar with, not any herbs or spices they aren't familiar with. If it does have certain things that they aren't familiar with, then have substitute options."

Attainability The app should meet users where they are—potentially early on their path to healthy eating or meal planning

"1-3 day menu or meal plan...More than that and they won't do it. So, I need to slow it down in my classes, so they are able to plan for one day."

Access For those without smartphones or with data limitations, a web-based option might improve reach.

"Because we work with low income, **not everyone has smartphone**. And if you have one, **the data plans might not be unlimited**. So, I guess that's the reason we haven't turned [our website] into an app. It is compatible with mobile. My guess is the reason we haven't gone that way is because we're not sure if that would be the most equitable way."

Branding

USDA gets mixed feedback, especially when asking questions to allow for customization.

"It can say it somewhere small tiny print, but that will be a red flag for a lot of communities. It's just no going to have the reach intended if it's in anyway shape or form a federal program. Then people don't want to put their information in there."

Curriculum

The app needs to be in their curriculum for these educators to teach it/ share it.

"We talk about a lot of these things when trying to help them, so would point them in the direction. Just telling them it's a resource available. We have certain curriculum we follow, so unless it was in that, not sure we could spend time on it."

Coming Soon!



Shop Simple with MyPlate is a web app to help Americans save money while shopping for healthy food choices. Consumers can use this tool to quickly find savings in their local area and discover new ways to prepare low-cost foods.

Key Features

- Local Savings: Consumers can enter their zip code to find cost-saving opportunities in their local area.
- Budget-friendly Foods: Consumers will view a colorful carousel of low-cost food suggestions from each of the MyPlate food groups. For each food, consumers can view purchasing and storage tips, serving ideas, recipes, and nutrition information.
- Healthy Eating on a Budget tips: General tips for saving money when purchasing and preparing healthy foods.

Local Savings

Consumers can enter their zip code to find cost-saving opportunities in their local area, including physical and online SNAP Authorized Retailers, GusNIP-Participating Retailers, and Farmer's Markets.

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Savings		SNAP Savings	Results	Physical SNAP Retailers 0
Use these tips to save more at the store		What is SNAP? Enter your zip code to find local retailers that accept SNAP benefits and participate	45 Results within 5 miles of 06379	Seafood Etc Inc 2 S Broad St Pawcatuck, CT 06379
Make a Plan		in additional incentive programs that help stretch your dollar.	Physical SNAP Retailers (23)	Evans Mobil 87 W Broad St Pawcatuck, CT 06379
Prepare Healthy Meals	1	Distance 5 miles	Online SNAP Retailers (6)	Westerly Land Trust Farmers Market 85 Main St
Are you a SNAP recipient?		Find Retailers	GusNIP-Participating >	Westerly, RI 02891 Cumberland Farms • 69 Friendship St 1 miles Westerly, RI 02891 1
Find retailers that accept SNAP and participate in incentive programs that help stretch your dollar Browse SNAP Savings			Farmers Markets (2)	Reales Grocery Q 122 High St 1.13 miles Westerly, RI 02891 1.13 miles

Budget-Friendly Foods

Consumers can view a carousel of low-cost food suggestions from each food group. Each food features purchasing and storage tips, serving ideas, recipes, and nutrition information.



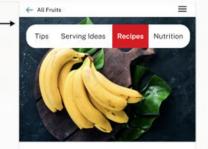
Bananas

- Bananas are available in winter, spring, summer, and fall.
- Bananas are available fresh, frozen and dried forms.
- Purchase green bananas now to use later in the week. Simply leave them out at room temperature to ripen.
- Overripe bananas are still delicious in yogurt, smoothies, oatmeal, or as an ingredient in whole wheat pancakes.



Bananas

- Top your cold cereal, oatmeal, or yogurt with sliced bananas.
- Make a fruit skewer with bananas and other fruit cut into chunks.
- Create a sandwich with wheat bread, banana, and your favorite nut butter.
- Whip up banana "ice cream" for a tasty treat. Freeze banana chunks and blend until smooth.



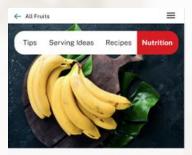
Bananas



Fruit and Yogurt Breakfast Shake



Banana Bread



Bananas

1 Cup of Fruit is Equal to:

- 1 large banana
- 1 cup, sliced
- ¾ cup, mashed

Nutrition Information

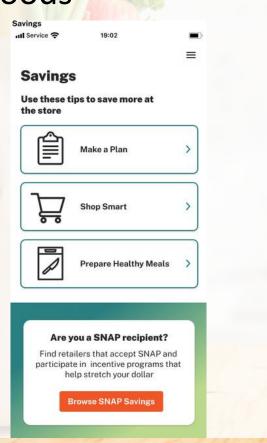
Serving Size: 1 slice, 1/12 of recipe

Nutrients	Amount	
Total Calories	137	
Total Fat	3g	
Saturated Fat	0g	

Healthy Eating on a Budget Tips

General tips for saving money when purchasing and preparing healthy foods

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To get the most for your dollar, follow the tips in this section as you shop at your favorite food store.

19:02



Tips for Every Aisle

Dairy

Other

Use the tips below to fill your cart with budget-friendly and healthy options from each food group.



Make a Plan Use these tips to save more at the store



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Plan Your Weekly Meals Here are some simple tips to get you started:

- 1	See what you already have.	S
	Look in your freezer, cabinets,	Lo
	and refrigerator. You can save	an
	money by using these items	m
5	in the upcoming week's meals	in
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Use these tips to save time when cooking at home. Visit MyPlate Kitchen to discover delicious and budget-friendly recipes your family will love.



Kitchen Timesavers

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Try these kitchen timesavers to cut back on time and make less work for you. By taking the stress and hassle out of cooking, you'll have more time to enjoy it and to spend with your loved ones.

Organize your kitchen.		
Keep frequently used items	Lo	
such as cooking oils/sprays,	ar	
spatulas, cutting boards, and	n	
spices within easy reach. This	in	
will save you from having to		
search for them later.		

Web App

 Shop Simple is a web-based application optimized for use on a smartphone (feels like an app)

- Available directly on MyPlate.gov; nothing to download from the App Store or Google Play
- For users without access to a smartphone, it can be used on a desktop, laptop, or tablet in an iframe

