

Words on Wellness

Menu Planning Tips and Tricks



Sticking to your budget while eating healthy is possible! Planning is the first step. Menu planning helps you save time, save money, and make healthier choices.

You can personalize your menu by choosing nutrient-dense foods you enjoy. Nutrient-dense foods are high in vitamins and minerals without much saturated fat, added sugars, and sodium.

Start with these tips below:

- Check what you have on hand. Check your pantry, freezer, and refrigerator for foods that will soon expire or need to be used up. Make a note of how to use those ingredients in your planner. This can save you money at the grocery store and decrease food waste.
- Don't throw that away! Plan for leftovers. For example, if you make a spinach salad on Monday, use the leftover spinach to make a smoothie for breakfast. Another idea is if you make grilled chicken for dinner, use the leftovers in chicken salad.
- Use MyPlate. Healthy meals can be simple and tasty. Plan a meal that has something from at least three MyPlate food groups. This is an easy way to make sure your meals are healthy and nutrient-dense.
- Think ahead to your family's schedules. Do you need quick and easy meals? Are you hosting company? Do you need to harvest your garden? Using a five-day meal planning [worksheet](#) can help you plan a menu based on your weekly needs.



Source: [MyPlate](https://myplate.gov), myplate.gov



Berry and Greens Smoothie

Serving Size: 8 ounces | Serves: 8

Ingredients:

- 2 medium bananas
- 2 containers (6 ounces each) nonfat vanilla yogurt
- 3 cups leafy greens, washed (kale or spinach)
- 1 package (16 ounces) frozen berries
- 1 cup nonfat milk

Directions:

1. Put bananas, yogurt, and greens in the blender. Blend until smooth.
2. Add berries to blender. Blend until smooth.
3. Add milk to blender. Blend until smooth.
4. Serve immediately or freeze in individual servings.

Nutrition information per serving:

90 calories, 0.5g total fat, 0g saturated fat, 0g trans fat, 0mg cholesterol, 50mg sodium, 20g total carbohydrate, 3g fiber, 12g sugar, 4g protein.

This recipe is courtesy of ISU Extension and Outreach's Spend Smart. Eat Smart. website. For more information, recipes, and videos, visit spendsmart.extension.iastate.edu

That's My Jam!



June is prime strawberry time! Even after the season is over, you can enjoy the taste of fresh strawberries with freezer jam.

Freezer jam is delicious, easy, and quick to make. Jam is only as tasty as the fruit it is prepared with. So be sure to start with fresh, unblemished strawberries that have been washed.

Since it is not cooked, freezer jam tastes more like fresh strawberries. However, since it is not processed in a hot water bath, it does require temperature control like freezing or refrigeration. Try this research-based recipe to ensure the safety of your freezer jam: [Uncooked Berry Jam](https://go.iastate.edu/92RCMB), go.iastate.edu/92RCMB.

Go SNAP, For Healthy Foods

More than 38 million adults and children in the United States are going hungry. In Iowa, 1 in 11 Iowans face hunger. The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) is the nation's largest anti-hunger federal program. It fights poverty by improving access to affordable and nutritious food. SNAP allows individuals and families with limited income to buy food. It can also be used to buy seeds and plants to grow food.

People can use SNAP benefits at grocery stores, convenience stores, and even [farmers markets](https://bit.ly/3B6xYdc), bit.ly/3B6xYdc! Farmers markets sell fresh, local produce that help you enjoy the taste of summer.

If you need help completing the online or paper application, you may contact your local DHS office. You can also call the Iowa SNAP Hotline, 855-944-3663, to speak with someone who can help with the SNAP application. The hotline is open 8:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., Monday through Friday.

Sources: [Food Bank of Iowa](https://www.foodbankiowa.org), [foodbankiowa.org](https://www.foodbankiowa.org)
[Food Security in the U.S.](https://www.fns.gov/programs/snap), bit.ly/3sWyi18

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If you or someone you know is skipping meals, going hungry, or choosing between food and medicine, call 1-855-944-3663 to apply for assistance today.

Call Iowa 2-1-1 or Iowa Lifelong Links, 1-866-468-7887, for additional resources.



Learn more about food preservation and **Preserve the Taste of Summer programs**

extension.iastate.edu/humansciences/preserve-taste-summer