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NEWS RELEASE

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Supermarket Savings: Tips for Saving Big Bucks

With today's economy, people have become more cautious how they spend their money. As food costs are on the rise, taking a closer look at how you purchase groceries could be crucial to your family's economic wellbeing. Here are a few shopping tips that are guaranteed to save you money:

- **Buy in season** - Seasonal produce is cheaper as more local crops are readily available to purchase. Spring and summer fruits and vegetables in season in the Placer County area include apples, apricots, berries, peaches, plums, carrots, cucumber, eggplant, peas, onions, potatoes, summer squash, peppers and tomatoes.
- **Stick to the list** - Take a moment to make a shopping list before you get to the store, then stick to your list and try not to give into all of the unnecessary items around you while shopping. Also, try to plan your list around foods that are already in your fridge and pantry.
- **Sales and coupons** - Track store sales from the Sunday paper or mail advertisements and plan your meals around sale items. Also, watch out for buy-one get one-free items and in-store coupons along the aisles.
- **Buy in bulk** - Buying in bulk may cost you more at the time of purchase, but could save you in the long run. The savings can be found by comparing the price per-unit on a bulk item to the price per unit on average sized package. Many times the price per unit on bulk food items are less than regular sized packages. Look for the bulk foods section in your favorite grocery store for price comparisons.
- **Store brand versus name brand** - Store brand food items are frequently less expensive than name brand items. Additionally, most if not all ingredients included are identical and of equal quality.
- **Mealtime magic** - Plan your meals around foods that are already available at home. To make this easier, have your shopping list include items that are universal and can be used for a variety of meals. For example, tomatoes and peppers can be used for stir fry's, soups, salads and pasta creations.
- **Homemade versus convenience** - It is usually cheaper to make your own food than to buy a similar convenience food at the store. Complete meal kits are more expensive than combining individual items such as, meats, pasta, sauce and seasonings.

For additional tips regarding saving money on groceries as well as nutrition information for families, contact the UC Cooperative Extension, Nutrition BEST program at (530) 889-7350, or visit our website at <http://ceplacervevada.ucdavis.edu> .

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