Smart Money lists **seven ways to save on your grocery bill** which can be helpful around tax time. Check out the suggestions to keep a few more dollars in your pocket.

1. **Stockpile. Most items are discounted just once during a 10-to-12-week sales cycle.**

   Do this where it makes sense. Canned items and instant oatmeal are items you can stockpile when they go on sale. Due to their longer shelf life, you can get through all the items just before the next sale and nothing will go bad.

2. **Explore the store. Cheese, for example, can be purchased from the cheese counter, the deli and the dairy case. Keep an eye out, too, for sales.**

   Several items in the store are available in multiple places, often for cheaper prices. For example, spices can be found in the spice aisle in pricy jars or much more inexpensively in the international section where they are packaged in plastic bags for often 66% less.

3. **Try store brands. A 14-ounce package of the store-brand broccoli is 44% cheaper than the brand name.**

   Store brands are often manufactured in the same plants that make the brand name products. Experiment with different varieties of store brands to see where you can cut costs.

4. **Shop on Sundays. Armed with the fresh batch of coupons from your Sunday newspaper and the weekly sales circular, you can maximize your savings. Consumers who combined the two reported saving an average $678 annually, according to a recent Consumer Reports survey.**

   If Sunday is too busy for your tastes, check with your local store to see when sale items are rotated, Wednesdays for example, and go armed with your sale flyer for great deals and the best selection.

5. **Think outside the supermarket. Drugstores and pharmacies for milk, superstores for snacks, cereals and cleaning supplies, warehouse clubs for pantry staples, discount and dollar stores for anything.**

   Thinking outside of the box may result in a better deal on cleaning supplies, boxed items and other necessities if you are willing to shop around a bit.

6. **Check unit prices. Buying the bigger size isn’t always the best deal.**

   Sometimes the value size can be cheaper per ounce, but not always. Most grocery stores breakdown the price per ounce on the shelf tag right next to the price. Compare the two sizes to see which one is really the best deal.

7. **Become a coupon connoisseur.**

   In addition to the coupon value, many stores regularly offer double coupon days where if you time it right, you can pay a fraction of the normal retail price.

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Amanda McDanel
Extension Agent

Hello Friends,

April showers and our friendly tax professionals—that’s what I’ve got on my mind this month. With the price of gasoline increasing and a volatile economy, it’s essential that we practice good money management skills and save a little money for a rainy day. This doesn’t always mean earning extra income, although that is always a good thing, if you are a smart shopper you can conserve and keep those grocery bills lean.

Speaking of lean, keeping your protein choices lean can help to keep your health strong. Instead of eating out, save your money and try the lean and tasty turkey recipe, schedule in a little downtime and enjoy the day. Now that’s a wrap!

-Amanda
This time of year can be especially hectic and often we forget to take a “time-out” for ourselves. Remember, it’s hard to fill someone else’s well when yours is dry.

- Mark one day off your calendar a month to “catch up.”
- Schedule a breather. If you live by a calendar, schedule one hour a day to allow some breathingspace. “Take Five” for yourself.
- De-clutter. Divide your desk or room into sections. Pick one section and start decluttering. Try handling things only once. Use boxes or bags, marking them: Keep, Give Away, or Toss.
- Rid yourself of old commitments and goals. Stop to think about everything you’re doing or working towards. Does it still fit in your life today? If not, stop doing it or get rid of it as a goal.
- Take a 1-minute speed whine. Find a friend, set a timer, and take turns whining about everything you can fit into 1 minute. If you whine fast enough, you’ll end up laughing—the best stress-buster of all.

Go Lean with Protein

- The leanest beef cuts include round steaks and roasts (round eye, top round, bottom round, round tip), top loin, top sirloin, and chuck shoulder and arm roasts.
- The leanest pork choices include pork loin, tenderloin, center loin, and ham.
- Choose extra lean ground beef. The label should say at least “90% lean”. You may be able to find ground beef that is 93% or 95% lean.
- Buy skinless chicken parts, or take off the skin before cooking.
- Boneless skinless chicken breasts and turkey cutlets are the leanest poultry choices.
- Choose lean turkey, roast beef, ham, or low-fat luncheon meats for sandwiches instead of luncheon meats with more fat, such as regular bologna or salami.

Lean and Tasty Turkey Avocado Wrap

1 (9-inch) whole-wheat tortilla wrap
1 Tbsp. fruit chutney, such as mango or peach
2 oz. roasted lean turkey breast, sliced
4 thin tomato slices
2 Tbsp. shredded low fat cheese, such as mozzarella or cheddar
1 tsp. minced cilantro (optional)
1/4 avocado, sliced into wedges

Lay the tortilla on a cutting board and spread with the fruit chutney. Cover the same area with sliced turkey. Lay the tomato over the turkey. Sprinkle with the cheese and cilantro, if using. Place the avocado wedges across the bottom of the tortilla, 2 inches away from the edge.

Fold the bottom of the tortilla up over the avocado, fold the two sides in, and pull at the bottom. To keep the filling from pushing forward, keep pulling the rolled part toward you. This also helps make a firm roll.

- www.aicr.org

Simplify 101

Contact Amanda McDanel to have a back issue of SEAscapes mailed to you free of charge! Call Dare County Cooperative Extension Office at 473-4290!

- www.mypyramid.gov