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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
BUREAU OF HOME ECONOMICS  
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FOOD FOR FAMILIES AT LOW COST

Families with low incomes spend more for food than for any other single item. "Spend food money wisely" is always good advice. It is especially important during periods of unemployment, drought, and other disasters which reduce incomes to a minimum.

Everyone concerned with the well-being of families recognizes the need for directing food expenditures in order to safeguard nutrition. Some communities maintain nutrition experts to help families spend their food money more wisely and to emphasize the economy in using local products. Where this special service is not provided, community leaders are urged to select some local person with the most likely training and have them act in such capacity. In most towns and rural districts there is usually a home economics teacher, a home demonstration agent, or a person who has had special training in foods and nutrition who can map out a program to be followed.

This leaflet is designed to help relief workers who may be called upon to assist in apportioning relief funds and in suggesting low cost food budgets. Some of the material is adapted from the U. S. Department of Agriculture Circular 139, "Buy health protection with your food money," which was prepared at the request of the National Drought Relief Committee by Hazel K. Stiebling, Senior Food Economist and Hazel E. Munsell, Senior Nutrition Chemist, both of the Bureau of Home Economics, Miriam Birdseye, Extension Nutritionist, Office of Cooperative Extension Work, U. S. Department of Agriculture; W. H. Sebrell, Passed Assistant Surgeon, U. S. Public Health Service; and Clyde B. Schuman, Director of Nutrition Service, of the American Red Cross.







SUGGESTED LOW-COST FOOD SUPPLY FOR PERSONS OF VARIOUS AGES\*

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Listed below are the approximate amounts of foods which will meet the needs of persons of various ages. These combinations and proportions of food give good returns for a limited outlay of money. The quantities are stated flexibly to permit some adjustment to individual needs. These proportions are not considered optimum for nutrition, but it is believed that they can be safely used. Any changes should be made with great discretion, preferably only by a person well-trained in nutrition.

By adding together the amounts needed by each individual member being fed the approximate total amount needed for any group can readily be found.

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Food	Units	Man	Woman	Boy 14-17	Girl 14-17	Boy 9-13	Girl 9-13	Child 6-8	Child 3-5	Child 2 or less
MILK	Qts.	1-3 $\frac{1}{2}$	3 $\frac{1}{2}$ -7	3 $\frac{1}{2}$ -5	5-7	7	7	7	7	7
GRAIN PRODUCTS										
Bread	Lbs.	5-7	4-5	4-5	2	2-3	2-3	1-3	$\frac{1}{2}$ -1	$\frac{3}{4}$ -1
Flour	"	1	$\frac{1}{2}$ -1	$\frac{1}{2}$ -1	$\frac{1}{2}$ -1	$\frac{1}{2}$ -1	$\frac{1}{2}$	**	**	**
Cereal	"	1-2	1	1	1	$\frac{1}{2}$ -1	$\frac{1}{2}$ -1	1	$\frac{1}{2}$ -1	$\frac{1}{2}$
VEGETABLES & FRUITS:										
Potatoes	"	4-7	3-4	5-7	4-5	4-6	3-4	2-3	2	1-2
Legumes	"	$\frac{1}{4}$ - $\frac{3}{4}$	$\frac{1}{4}$ - $\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{4}$ - $\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$ - $\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{4}$	**	**	..
Tomatoes	"	1 $\frac{1}{2}$ -2	1 $\frac{1}{2}$ -2	1 $\frac{1}{2}$ -2	1 $\frac{1}{2}$ -2	1-2	1-2	1-1 $\frac{1}{2}$	1-1 $\frac{1}{2}$	1
Other vegetables and fruits	"	5-8	4-6	3-5	3-5	3-5	3-5	3-5	3-4	1-2
LEAN MEAT, fish, poultry	"	1 $\frac{1}{2}$ -2	1-2	1 $\frac{1}{2}$ -2	1-2	1-2	1-1 $\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{4}$ - $\frac{1}{2}$	**	..
EGGS	No.	1-3	1-3	1-3	1-3	3-4	3-4	5-7	5-7	3-4
CHEESE, nuts, gelatin	Lbs.	$\frac{1}{4}$	$\frac{1}{4}$	$\frac{1}{4}$	$\frac{1}{4}$	1/8	1/8	**	..	..
FATS and oils as butter or substi- tutes, lard, bacon, salt pork, vegetable oils	"	1	$\frac{3}{4}$	1	2/3	2/3	2/3	1/3- $\frac{1}{2}$	1/8- $\frac{1}{4}$	**
SUGARS and sweets	"	1-1 $\frac{1}{2}$	1-1 $\frac{1}{4}$	1-1 $\frac{1}{4}$	1	$\frac{3}{4}$ -1	2/3	$\frac{1}{4}$ -1/3	1/8	**
BEVERAGES: Coffee	"	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
(Select Tea	"	1/8	1/8	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
one) Cocoa	"	1/3	1/3	1/3	1/3	1/3	1/3	..	..	..

OTHER FOODS OR ACCESSORIES:  
 Cod-liver oil : Use upon the Recommendation of a Physician : As a food cod-liver oil is desirable from 1 tsp. to about 1 tbsp. daily (especially during winter).  
 Yeast :

\*Adapted from "Suggested ration for a week -- grocery order" prepared by the Nutrition Service, American Red Cross for use in disaster, in consultation with the Bureau of Home Economics, U. S. Department of Agriculture, and with the U. S. Public Health Service, Washington, D. C.  
 \*\*Children may have some of food named but amount is too small to note here.

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## EQUIVALENT WEIGHTS AND MEASURES OF SELECTED FOOD MATERIALS

**MILK:** If fluid milk is not available, one pound of unsweetened canned milk may be used for each quart of whole milk. To use dry skim milk in any dietary which calls for fresh whole milk, allow for every 5 quarts of whole milk one pound of dry skim milk, and provide in addition 5 to 6 ounces of butter substitute or other fat, and one ounce of cod-liver oil.

**EGGS:** One dozen eggs of medium size as purchased weighs about 1-1/2 pounds.

**GRAIN PRODUCTS:** If bread is baked at home, allow 1 pound flour for 1-1/2 pounds bread.

**MOLASSES:** Cane, 1 quart (2.9 pounds) can replace 2 pounds cane or beet sugar.

**TOMATOES:** The contents of one No. 5 can (or 1 quart jar) weigh approximately 2 pounds.

**FRUITS:** One pound dried fruit can replace approximately 4 or 5 pounds fresh fruit.

## SUGGESTIONS FOR BUYING AND MEAL PLANNING

Use the varieties of each type of food, as cereal, vegetables, fruits or meats, which are cheapest from week to week.

At every meal serve milk to children and bread to all.

For breakfast - have toast and cereal (often a "whole-wheat" bread or cereal) with milk for all. Serve milk or cocoa to children and coffee or tea only to adults.

For dinner - three or four times a week let the main thing be a dish containing meat or fish, as lamb or beef stew with vegetables, or escalloped or creamed salmon; once or twice, a cheese dish or eggs; and about twice weekly baked beans or a thick pea or bean soup. Serve potatoes with one other vegetable or fruit every day. A sweet dessert, as bread or cereal pudding, may be added.

For supper - serve a thick vegetable chowder or soup, baked potatoes, creamed vegetables or cereal mush. Fresh or dried fruit or a cereal pudding may be used as a dessert, if desired.

Leaflets on the use of beans, less expensive meats, wheat germ, rice polishings, and Aunt Sammy's Radio Recipes may be obtained from the Bureau of Home Economics of the U. S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C.

Many home economics departments of State agricultural colleges are prepared to furnish suggestions for planning and preparing inexpensive meals.

