

Retail Publication News Article



SHOPPING ON A BUDGET: “BANK ON THE BASICS” WITH DAIRY TO MAINTAIN A NUTRITIOUS AND BALANCED DIET

In these tough financial times, many Americans believe eating healthy can be difficult. Driving this point home are the findings from a recent survey released by the Midwest Dairy Association that found that more than half of consumers say price, not nutrition, is the most important factor when grocery shopping in the current economic climate.

“Dollar for dollar, dairy is actually one of the most economical sources of nutrition,” said Nicole Stahr, a registered dietitian with Midwest Dairy Association. “This survey points to a need for more information about nutrient-rich foods, such as milk, cheese and yogurt, that deliver more bang for your buck than other options at the grocery store.”

In response to the survey, Midwest Dairy Association has launched the “Bank on the Basics” campaign to educate consumers about the cost-effective nutritional value of dairy. The “Bank on the Basics” campaign features in-store marketing and educational materials that highlight dairy’s value and a Web site that provides information for consumers, including recipes and nutrition tips.

While people may think they have to sacrifice nutrition for price now, there are ways to buy nutrient-rich foods on a budget, notes Stahr. She believes that planning ahead and shopping the perimeter of your grocery store are some easy steps to eating more healthfully while still being mindful of your family’s budget.

“Dairy makes sense when times are tough,” says Stahr. “There are ways to cut costs at the grocery store without compromising nutrition. Consumers should purchase more nutrient-rich foods, like fruits, vegetables, whole grains, lean meats and dairy, and avoid empty-calorie foods that provide little or no nutrition at a high cost.”

The *Dietary Guidelines for Americans* recommend at least three servings of dairy each day for overall health. Milk, at about 25 cents per 8-ounce glass, is one of the best beverage bargains in the supermarket.

Eating nutrient-rich foods means getting the most vitamins, minerals and other nutrients per serving without empty calories. Stahr points out that when consumers are looking to cut costs, they should look for foods that provide value from both an economic and nutritional viewpoint, instead of just shopping for lower-priced or discounted foods. For example, yogurt and flavored milk are excellent nutrient-rich choices. One eight ounce serving of yogurt provides nearly a third of your daily calcium needs, while sodas offer plenty of calories through added sugars with little nutrient value except through fortification. And cheese is a star for many family meals because it delivers on taste and important nutrients, like protein and phosphorus.

“Dairy provides four of the seven nutrients Americans are missing the most – calcium, potassium, magnesium and vitamin A,” says Stahr. “In this economy, dairy is your nutrition stimulus package. We want consumers to understand they can’t afford to take it off their shopping list.”

For information, recipes and tips to bank on the basics with nutrient-rich foods, log on to www.dairymakesense.com.

