# Spend Smart. Eat Smart.

# Meat, Poultry, Beans, & Nuts

*Protein comes from both plant and animal sources. Plant protein is usually less expensive than animal protein. MyPyramid recommends 4 to 5 ounces of meat or meat equivalent per day for children aged 2 to 13 and 5 to 6.5 ounces for teens and adults.*

## Check your $-saving skills:

**1.** The most economical source of protein is:
- a. Eggs
- b. Ground beef
- c. Dried beans
- d. Canned beans
- e. Peanut butter
- f. Walnuts

**2.** How many pounds of pork chops do you need to serve 3 people?
- a. 1 pound
- b. 2 pounds
- c. 3 pounds

**3.** The only nutritional difference between canned and dried beans is that canned has more sodium.
- a. True
- b. False

**4.** Buying the lowest cost ground beef is always the best choice.
- a. True
- b. False

**5.** Which of the following is the smart buy?
- a. 6-ounce package of sliced turkey meat for $2.69 per package
- b. Sliced turkey at the deli counter for $4.99 per pound
- c. 2 ½ pounds of fully cooked lean ham for $5

(Answers on next page)

*No endorsement of mentioned products or firms is intended nor is criticism implied of those not mentioned.*

*All prices in this publication were collected in central Iowa, Fall 2008. Although prices vary depending on date and location, the comparative differences generally follow a similar pattern.*

**Each of these provides a 1 ounce MyPyramid protein equivalent:**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1 ounce cooked meat, poultry, or fish | 1 pound lean hamburger yields 12 ounces @ $2.99/pound = | $.25 per ounce |
| ½ ounce nuts or seeds | 1 pound walnuts @ $6.53 ÷ 32 = | $.21 per ½ ounce |
| 1 medium egg | 1 dozen @ $1.50 ÷ 12 = | $.13 per egg |
| ¼ cup cooked beans, peas, or lentils | 1 14-ounce can @$.88<br>7 ¼-cup servings | $.12 per ¼ cup |
| 1 tablespoon peanut butter | 18 ounces = 32 tablespoons @ $2.34 = | $.07 per tablespoon |
| ¼ cup cooked beans, peas, or lentils | 1 pound (dried) @ $.89<br>20 to 28 ¼-cup servings | $.04 per ¼ cup |

## Eat Smart ... practice portion control

Cooking more than a 2- to 3-ounce portion of meat per person encourages us to eat more than we need for good health. Since meat is often the most expensive part of the meal, filling up on meat can challenge your food budget.

The amount to buy for your family depends on the amount of bone or fat.

**One pound serves 4 if it has no bones or fat**
ground beef, stew meat, cubed steak, boneless ham, fish fillets, luncheon meat

**One pound serves 3 if it has some bone and fat**
pork chops, chuck roast, picnic ham, turkey parts, bone-in fish

**One pound serves 2 when it has many bones or more fat**
whole chickens and turkeys, spare ribs, ham hocks

***Making hamburgers for your family of 3?***
Plan ¼ pound per person or ¾ pound for family of 3. If you buy a pound package, either freeze ¼ pound for another meal or cook it all and save one portion for another meal.

***Serving a roast to 4 and want planned leftovers?***
Purchase enough for 8 servings, such as a chuck roast that is about 2 ½ pounds. Set aside the extra portions and serve only the amount to be eaten at the meal.

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# Stretch your MEAT and POULTRY allowance

### Practice your meat-stretching artistry

- Mix meats with beans, lentils, rice, pasta, and vegetables.
- Use beans or a mixture of beans and ground beef in tacos.
- Make stir fry and use only ½ to ¾ as much as in a typical meat serving.
- Add rice to meat balls; bread crumbs or oatmeal to meatloaf.

### Choose either dried or canned beans

- Both canned and dried beans make good meat substitutes and provide the same amount of fiber, protein, and other nutrients.
- Dried beans are less expensive but take more planning to use.
- Canned beans have more sodium (800 mg per cup compared to 5 mg per cup for dried). If you're concerned about sodium but like the convenience of using canned beans, you can drain and rinse the beans to remove about 40 percent of the sodium.

### Watch for sale prices

- Check store ads to see what meats are on sale and base meals on them.
- Stock up—if you have the freezer space to do so. Meat and poultry, including unopened vacuum packages, can be frozen in their original supermarket packaging. If storing more than a month or two, place the store package inside a freezer-weight plastic bag or overwrap it with airtight heavy-duty foil, plastic wrap, or freezer paper; label with contents and date.

# Rinse higher-fat ground beef to reduce fat

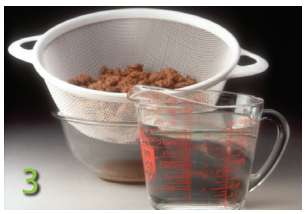
Buying ground beef with a high percentage of fat is usually less expensive per pound but yields less meat. However, you can save with the cheaper ground beef if you rinse and drain it after browning.

Follow these easy steps to remove excess fat when cooking ground beef for spaghetti sauce or other uses.

**1.** Drain fat from skillet after browning meat **(photo 1)**.

**2.** Use a slotted spoon to transfer beef to a plate lined with paper towels. Let sit 1 minute; blot top of beef with more paper towels **(photo 2)**.

**3.** Place beef in a fine mesh strainer or colander set on a sturdy ½-quart (or larger) bowl **(photo 3)**.




**4.** Pour 4 cups very hot water over beef to rinse fat. Drain 5 minutes.

**5.** Use rinsed beef as desired (or freeze for later use). Chill the bowl of waste water. Remove resulting fat layer, wrap in newspaper and discard in trash. Remaining water can be poured down the drain.

Photos courtesy of the Iowa Beef Council

## Answers: Check your $-saving skills

1. Lowest to highest: dried beans, peanut butter, canned beans, eggs, walnuts, ground beef

2. 1 pound

3. True.

4. False—lowest cost often has highest fat content; use it for crumbles that can be drained.

5. The lean ham costs only $2 per pound; ask the meat department to slice it thin. The 6-ounce prepackaged turkey costs $7.20 per pound. ($2.69 per 6 ounces = $.45/ounce x 16 ounces/pound = $7.20).

## Visit these Web sites for more ideas and information

ISU Extension SpendSmart EatSmart
**www.extension.iastate.edu/foodsavings**

ISU AnswerLine
**www.extension.iastate.edu/answerline (or call 1-800-262-3804)**

ISU Extension Food, Nutrition and Health
**www.extension.iastate.edu/healthnutrition**

ISU Extension Distribution Center
**www.extension.iastate.edu/store**

MyPyramid
**www.mypyramid.gov/pyramid/meat.html**

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