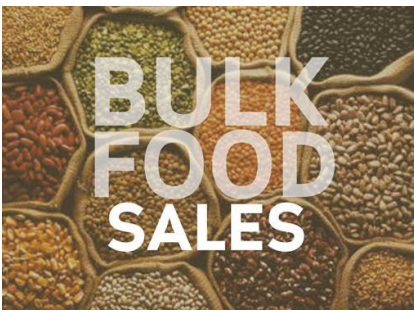


If your centre is on a budget, try these strategies to help you get more value for money



Use these simple tips to help you save on the food budget.

### Plan and write down the weekly menu

To minimise wastage, write a list of the food and drink items you need for the week's menu, and only buy what's on the list. For more menu planning tips, see our factsheet [How to plan a menu for long day care](#).

### Buy from wholesalers, butchers and greengrocers

You can save around \$2 per child a week<sup>1</sup> by using wholesalers, greengrocers and butchers instead of supermarkets. Wholesalers may also deliver.

### Buy in bulk

Look for non-perishable items like rice, pasta, oats, flour, dried and canned legumes, canned fruits/vegetables and cooking oils.

### Buy fresh produce that is in season

Seasonal produce is cheaper and tastier. Swap the vegetables in your usual recipes for cheaper, 'in season' options. Visit [www.marketfresh.com.au](http://www.marketfresh.com.au) to find out which fruit and vegetables are in season now.

### Buy generic or 'home brand' products where possible

### Avoid pre-prepared foods

It's usually cheaper and healthier to prepare meals from scratch, including dips, such as hummus and tzatziki, or custard and milk-based snacks.

### Grow your own herbs

Herbs add beautiful flavours to food, and planting and maintaining a herb garden is a fun, health promoting activity for children.

### Use leftover/unused fruit and vegies

Try making smoothies or baking muffins with any fruit that is left over at the end of the week, or use leftover vegetables in casseroles or bolognese sauce.

### Include more legumes and cut back on meat

Legumes are cheap, tasty and nutritious! Try cutting back on the amount of mince you use in slow cooked recipes and adding in chickpeas, lentils or split peas.

<sup>1</sup> Based on costings conducted by the Healthy Eating Advisory Service, August 2013.