



## The CPB's Food Basket Project



Look for products displaying the "Pride of New York" logo when you shop to support NY Farms & food processors

# A "Recipe" for Smart Shopping

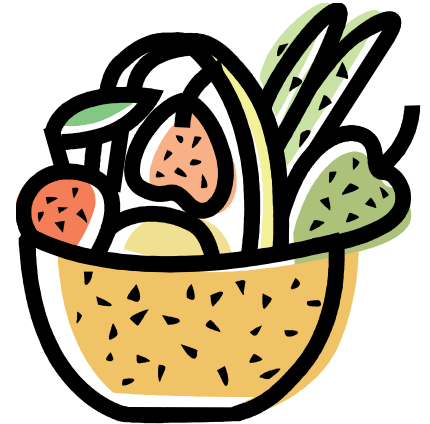
## Tips for the Savvy Shopper



**Know What You Have:** Before you shop, make sure you take stock of what you currently have in your home. Make a list of what you need so that you do not buy items unnecessarily.



**Read the Unit Price:** The unit price is the cost of the item per ounce, quart, gallon, pound, or any other unit of measure. Comparing the unit price of similar products, and different size containers of the same product, will help you get the best deal for the item being purchased. The unit price is usually found on the left hand side and the retail price on the right hand side of the shelf sticker.



**Do Not Shop on an Empty Stomach:** People tend to purchase more when they shop on an empty stomach. This means you may make more impulse purchases, buying products that look appealing but are not really needed.



**Use Coupons:** Check newspapers, especially the Sunday edition, for money saving coupons. Additionally, look online for coupons from national chains and for your local grocery store. Also, make sure to review in-store flyers for discounts. Only use coupons for items that you were going to buy anyway. Do not buy items just because you have a coupon.



**Buy Store Brands:** Often, major manufacturers produce items bearing the store label. Store brands have dramatically improved and often taste as good, and even sometimes better, than national brands. Therefore, you can get the same quality item for less money.



**Convenience Items Cost More:** Packages of washed and cut vegetables usually cost more than purchasing them in their raw form. If you can spend the time, or if a member of the household is willing to wash and cut produce, it will save you money.



**Look Beyond Eye Level for Products:** Eye level items are often more expensive. Bargain priced items are frequently found either on higher or lower shelves.



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**Stock-Up During Sales:** Non-perishable items such as soap, toothbrushes, paper towels, canned goods, etc., are ideal items to buy in bulk when you find good sales. These types of items are used often, and you can achieve considerable savings when they are purchased in large quantities. However, make sure that you have storage space to accommodate large purchases.



**Keep an Eye on the Scanner and Review the Receipt:** Store scanners are not always accurate. Items on sale may not ring up correctly. Additionally, review your receipt as you may catch other mistakes.



**Resist Check-Out Displays:** Items located by the check-out counter are typically purchased on impulse. Resist this temptation by either actively avoiding check-out lanes that are lined with items or make the conscious decision not to add anything to your cart once you are in-line. These items are often less nutritious and more expensive than products found throughout the store.



**Comparison Shop:** You should not only compare prices on the same item at different locations, but also seek out brands that are similar, less expensive and meet your household needs. However, do not drive all over town to save a few cents because you will ultimately spend potential savings on gas.



**End-of-Aisle Displays Can Distract You From Sticking to a Shopping List:** Items found at the end of the aisle are usually sale items, but not always. They can represent a good value if it is a product you need or regularly use. These items are frequently visually attractive but less nutritious.



**Be Aware of Environmental Temptations:** Supermarkets carefully choose music to influence your buying patterns. Some music is played so that shoppers will linger in the store thereby buying more products. Additionally, food samples and smells from the bakery can increase your sense of hunger and desire to buy.

Tip information was "harvested" from the following sources:

[www.bankrate.com](http://www.bankrate.com): "Grocery Store Ploys"

American Heart Association

Findarticles.com

University of Kentucky – College of Agriculture: "Supermarket Savvy"

University of Illinois Extension – Thrifty Living: "Smart Shopping"

[www.stretcher.com](http://www.stretcher.com): "Coupon Strategies"

Provided as a public service from the  
New York State Consumer Protection Board

[www.nysconsumer.gov](http://www.nysconsumer.gov)

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