Lesson 4: Shopping and Fall Planting

Nutrition topic: *Grocery shopping, saving money*

Gardening topic: *Fall Planting*

Recommended recipe demo: marinated zucchini salad (or a recipe that focuses on the vegetables being grown in the plot).

Optional Nutrition Topic: Food, Fun, and Reading Protein, Getting the Whole Family Involved

Optional Garden Highlight: *Use Fruit and Vegetable Handouts to focus on a few foods being grown in the garden.*

Objectives

Participants will be able to:

- *Name three grocery shopping tips that help stretch food dollars.*
- *Explain the benefits of shopping at a farmers' market.*
- *Calculate fall planting dates based on the average first fall frost.*
- *Identify crops that can be planted for fall cropping.*

Required handouts: General Grocery Shopping Tips, ***Shopping for Produce****,* ***Shopping For Fruit****,* ***Shopping for Vegetables****,* ***Family Mealtime***

Recommended handouts: based on what you are planting, pull vining veggie handouts

Nutrition topic: Grocery Shopping, Saving Money

Grocery Shopping

Once you have a meal plan ready, it is time to head to the grocery store.

Distribute the General Grocery Shopping Tips handout

Discussion starter: "What are some tips and tricks for shopping for healthy foods while staying within your budget?"

Discuss some of the tips and tricks from the General Grocery Shopping Tips handout.

- Stick to the edge of the store.
- Do not shop hungry.
- Go to the grocery store during slow times.
- Identify which foods you really want.
- Always compare prices.
- Check shelves at all levels- higher or lower items may be prices better
- Make and stick to your grocery list.
- Make a budget.
- Be flexible.

Following some of these recommendations will also make your food budget stretch longer.

Stretching food dollars with fruits and vegetables

Many people think fruits and vegetables are too expensive when living on a limited food budget. While some fruits and vegetables can be expensive, there are many ways to get your five servings a day even on a limited budget.

Discussion Starter: What are some tips you use to get a variety of fruits and vegetables while staying within your budget?
Distribute shopping for produce handout and discuss money saving tips

- Buy fresh, frozen, or canned.
- Shop in season.
- Shop sales.
- Buy produce that is high quality, and it will last longer.
- Plan your meals using the most perishable items first.
- Optional: distribute shopping for fruit and shopping for vegetable handouts.

Benefits of Shopping at Farmer's Markets
There are many benefits to shopping at a local farmer's market.
Quality: You can easily find fresh produce of the highest quality.

- Fruits and vegetables that are fresh often have greater flavor and more nutrients.
- Transporting fruits and vegetables over long distances reduces their flavor and nutrient content. To increase their shelf life, they may have been picked before they were ripe.
- Farmers' market produce is picked days, and even hours, before the customer makes the purchase.

Price

- When certain fruits and vegetables are in season, they may be less expensive at the grocery store.
- You can occasionally get a great deal on fruit and vegetables if you shop at the end of the market day. Keep in mind that at the end of the day, you may have less selection.

Variety

- There is a large variety offered at the markets during the peak of the local growing season, providing access to unique varieties of produce, including heirloom tomatoes, winter squash, herbs, and fresh greens that are harder to find in the grocery store.
- Farmers are often a great resource for how to use different fruits and vegetables and may even offer you a sample to taste. This is an opportunity to try new varieties of fruits and vegetables.

Supports the local economy.

- Money spent at the farmers' market stays in the local economy. Many markets have regulations on how far away fruits and vegetables sold at the market can travel.

Optional: Getting the whole family involved at mealtime Distribute the "Family Mealtime" handout and discuss as a group way to include all members of the family in meal preparation.

Family Mealtime
Regular family meals support healthier lifestyles, improve behavior, and stronger relationships. Family meals also help children develop healthy food habits at a young age.

Optional handouts from Create Family Meals:

- *How to Get Kids Involved*
- *Meal Planning 101*

Health Benefits

- Lower incidence of childhood obesity.

- They are more inclined to increase their intake of fruits and vegetables.
- Children are more likely to make healthy choices even outside the home
- Children participate in fewer dangerous behaviors such as drug usage, sexual activity, and alcohol misuse.
- Lower incidence of pediatric depression.
- Eating disorders are less likely to affect children.

Benefits for children
- Increased sense of self-worth.
- Improve academic performance.
- Expands vocabulary.

Benefits for Families
- Relationships grow and get better.
- Enhances family dynamics.
- Kids and parents have greater communication.
- Children understand more clearly what the family expects of them.
- Families feel closer to one another.
- Families that eat more meals at home will spend less money on food.
- Parents can provide an example of wholesome eating habits.

Gardening topic: Fall Planting

Midsummer is a great time to plant hardy vegetables for a fall harvest. In general, any vegetable that can be sown or transplanted on the cool days and frosty nights of spring is a candidate for midsummer planting.

- Which crops to plant
    - Cool season crops (refer to the cool/warm season crops handout).
    - Examples: peas, radishes, lettuce, spinach, carrots, beets, Swiss chard, turnips, kale, kohlrabi, broccoli, cabbage, and cauliflower.
- Timing of planting and harvesting
    - Know your average first fall frost date.
    - On the seed packet, add the days to germination and days to maturity. Add 14 days (about 2 weeks) to this number to give you a two-week buffer to reach maturity. Fall weather has cooler temperatures and less light, which will slow plant growth.
    - Count backwards the total number of days from the fall frost date, and this will give you a planting date.
- Most crops planted for fall should be planted sometime in June or July, depending on the total growth time needed to reach harvest.

Recipe Sample

Allow time for participants to taste the sample.
Encourage participants to give their feedback on the recipe, including what they would do differently.

Lesson 4 gardening terms:

- **Germination: a seed to sprout to form a seedling, the environmental conditions must be favorable to support the growing plant.** The soil depth, amount of water, and temperature are all critical conditions that must be met for the germination process to be started. Typically, the soil conditions must be moist and warm.
- **Maturity:** the stage of a plant's growth when it begins the cycle of reproduction, specifically fruit development.