



COOKING IN BULK TO SAVE MONEY:

Good idea or risky?



Many families have adopted the practice of cooking a lot on the weekends so that they eliminate the hassle of meal planning during the busier weekdays. The question that often comes up from this practice is how the meals should be stored. For example, if making a large pot of soup, should it be left to cool on the counter prior to refrigerating or should it be refrigerated immediately? The fact is that both practices can be risky.

Letting foods cool at room temperature for more than two hours exposes foods to the “danger zone” of temperatures which ranges between 40 degrees and 140 degrees Fahrenheit. In that environment, bacteria can multiply rapidly. Even when placing large pots in the refrigerator it may take up to eight hours to cool the food below 40 degrees because of the size of the pot and the time it takes for the contents to absorb the cool air. This is much too long for safety concerns.

With the goal of bringing foods to cool as quickly as possible, the best option is to put hot, cooked foods into shallow containers (not more than 2 inches deep) and refrigerate immediately. A potholder placed under the container will prevent heat from cracking interior refrigerator shelves. If cooking foods such as a roast, large ham, or turkey, the meat should be sliced or cut into small portions and refrigerated immediately in a small container.

When storing leftovers in the refrigerator, most experts recommend that they be discarded after three or four days. For longer storage, consider placing cooked foods in the freezer. Label the contents with the date that the food is being frozen. For best quality, use within 3 to 4 months. When using frozen leftovers, it is a good idea to thaw them first by placing them in the refrigerator overnight. Never leave food out at room temperature to thaw. Reheat the leftovers until they are 165 degrees or steaming hot.

Source: http://www.fsis.usda.gov/PDF/Leftovers_and_Food_Safety.pdf



Grocery Sale Cycles – When Do Things Go On Sale?

Look for the following items on sale during the month of September:

Back to School Sales Through Labor Day: Crayons, Pencils, Folders, Binders, Other School Supplies

Diabetes Awareness: Bayer Glucose Meters, Glucerna Cereal

Baby Items: Major Baby Equipment, Baby Safety

Seasonal Produce: Apples, Artichokes, Beans, Bell Peppers, Chili Peppers, Cucumber, Eggplant, Grapes, Onion, Valencia Oranges, Asian Pears, Bartlett Pears, Pomegranate, Squash, Tomatillo, Tomatoes, Winter Squash

Your Family Spending Plan

Almost everyone would like to have more money. However, more money isn't always possible and doesn't always solve the problem. Most people must get along on what they have.



Whether a family has a lot of money or just a little, a sound plan for spending and saving is the key to having dollars for what is needed and wanted before the money disappears in unexpected ways. A spending plan can help a family:

- identify available resources
- plan for today and tomorrow
- spend and save more effectively
- develop confidence, independence and resourcefulness in handling financial problems

A plan for spending and saving possesses no magic. It cannot change the amount of money you have. It cannot make you save. Neither can it eliminate financial crisis. But a spending plan can help control the use of money so it meets needs and wants.

For the steps in preparing a spending plan and for spending plan worksheets, contact the Baylor County Extension Office at 500 N. Main Street, Seymour TX 76380, 940-889-5581.