

It is a common belief that healthy eating, especially a plant-based diet, is more expensive than eating a diet high in junk food. This is definitely not the case, you just need to know what to buy and cook so it keeps costs low. If you buy the meat-free alternatives and prepared meals, this puts the cost up, but with a well-stocked cupboard you will never go hungry.

### Follow these tips:

Look for tinned beans, peas, vegetables and chopped tomatoes. These are often cheap from international supermarkets, on offer in supermarkets or in the value range. As well as being cheap, they are a good base for many meals such as stews, curries and soups, and can be prepared quickly. There are also dried beans which require soaking and work out a

similar price to tinned, unless bought in bulk.

If you have the money and space to buy in bulk it will save you a fair amount, look for grains, beans, pulses, oats, nuts and seeds.

Buy 'own label' products: branded items are often double the price of the shops own label, so if looking for plant-based milks, lentils and tins or even meat substitutes, go for these to save cash.

Forget expensive pots of hummus. You can mash up chickpeas with a fork or blend



Look for fruit and vegetables in season or try tinned or frozen. Kale or spinach can be frozen, and handfuls taken out as required, this saves on waste and saves you money. If you have any fruit that needs using up, bake it in the oven and have on porridge or as a dessert, or chop up and freeze in containers so it can be used later for a smoothie. Berries, banana, nectarines, melon and plums are all good for this.

small amounts of olive oil, lemon juice and garlic, (sea salt optional). Tahini paste, a traditional ingredient in hummus can cost a £2- £3 a jar but will last a long time. It is fine without it if you find it too expensive.

Get a slow cooker or large pot to batch cook. Make a large pot of stew or curry with vegetables, beans or lentils. This can last for days in the fridge or you can freeze it. You can add it to rice, sweet potatoes, or mix into pasta.

### Preventing waste saves you money so try not to throw anything away.

Plan your meals ahead: this will prevent buying expensive items in a hurry and extra trips to the shops where you may spend more money than you planned.

Look for reduced items or visit your local market which can often be cheaper for fruit and vegetables.

Look for a local pay as you feel supermarket/shop which collects surplus food such as The Real Junk Food Project. This food is collected from retailers to prevent it ending up in landfill. You will always find fruit and vegetables there, and you can usually give your time or make a donation in exchange for food.

