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## COMPARISON SHOPPING

Making smart buys at the grocery store is as easy as learning a few shopping skills and making smart decisions. Before buying an item, think about price, convenience, nutritional value, how you will store the product, and what your family likes.

### Branding

Most stores carry national brands and store brands. National brands are advertised on TV and in magazines. Most supermarkets carry these national brands. Some examples of national brands are Del Monte®, Campbell's®, Kraft®, and Green Giant®. National brands generally cost the most because the expense of advertising the products is part of the price of the product.

### Smart shopping tips to save money:

- ✗ Buy the brand with the lowest price.
- ✗ The food in the packages may be the same even if the brand names are different.
- ✗ Each company sets its own prices, so some brands cost less than others.
- ✗ Store brands or generic brands usually cost less than name or national brands.
- ✗ Generic brand foods are safe and good for you.
- ✗ Low-cost brands may taste better than national brands.

- ✗ Check brand prices weekly because the prices may change.

Store brands are sold by individual chains and usually are not advertised nationally. Examples would be Kroger®, Piggly Wiggly®, and Winn-Dixie®. The nutritional value of national brands and store brands generally is the same. Read the labels to determine the difference.

### Unit Pricing

Unit pricing is one of the best methods of comparison-shopping. Remember, the price of an item is not always the best way to tell if it is a smart buy. You can use unit prices to find foods and other products that fit into your budget.

A **unit price** is the cost of an item based on a specific unit, or standard amount, such as pound, ounce, quantity per container, or square foot. Unit pricing helps you compare the costs of different brands and different sizes of similar items to help you decide which is the most economical.

- ✗ Most grocery stores provide unit prices as a part of customer service. This information is located on the shelf in front of the item. These labels also may appear above or to the side of the items. Be sure the label matches the product you are thinking about buying.

✗ Unit price labels may vary some from store to store. Basically, the same information should be provided:

- Name of the product.
- Cost of the total package.
- Weight or size of the package.
- Cost per unit – the cost of an ounce, pound, pint, quart, or piece.
- An inventory and price bar code also may be included.

✗ Use unit pricing to compare prices for different product forms. For example, you can compare the cost of fresh, frozen, and canned items, as well as the cost of individual pieces of prepackaged foods like rolls, muffins, or biscuits.

✗ If there is no unit price label, you can use some simple math to figure out the unit price of an item. For example, an 8-ounce carton of Brand Z yogurt costs 72 cents. A 6-ounce carton of Brand Y yogurt costs 62 cents.

#### *Which is the smartest buy?*

**Brand Z – 8 ounces**

$$.72 \div 8 = 9\text{¢ per ounce}$

**Brand Y – 6 ounces**

$$.62 \div 6 = 10\text{¢ per ounce}$

**Brand Z is the better buy because it costs less per unit (ounce) than Brand Y. When the unit price is the same for two items, pick the item that is best for your needs.**

✗ Remember that for unit pricing to work, you must compare similar items. A carton of orange juice, a can of ready-to-serve orange juice, and a can of ready-to-serve orange drink are similar items. On the

other hand, a can of ready-to-serve orange drink and a can of frozen orange juice concentrate are not similar items because you have to add water to the frozen juice concentrate.

✗ *Unit pricing does not compare the nutritional value of items. You must compare the Nutrition Facts label of the products to evaluate the product's nutritional value. Unit pricing does not give information about quality, number of servings, or convenience of the items.*

#### **Check the Ads**

Check supermarket advertisements for seasonal low prices on meat, poultry, fish, fresh produce, and grocery items. Change your menu when you find a good buy, and buy only the amount you can use before the food spoils. Compare prices of fresh, frozen, and canned versions of the same item, such as corn. Also compare prices of bulk products with the packaged versions. You might find a large price difference but no difference in the nutritional value.

#### **Check the Coupons**

Coupons will either save you money or cost you money.

✗ The first thing to remember is to compare the item offered on the coupon to store brands. See if the discount offered on the coupon makes the item a better buy than the store brand.

✗ Use coupons only for products you already use, unless the coupon is for a free item. Do not spend money just because you have a coupon. When you want to use a coupon, buy the product at a store that advertises double or triple coupons.

✗ Using coupons, you often can save several dollars a week on your grocery bill. Smart shoppers take the time to look for, cut out,

and use cents-off coupons. You can find refund forms and other money-saving offers in newspapers, magazines, and stores.

- ✗ Coupons are easy to use, but you should store them so you can find them quickly. Set up a file by putting coupons into groups, such as cereals, soups, seasonings, or anything you buy often. A shoebox filled with envelopes works well. On each envelope, write the type of coupon inside.
- ✗ Once you get your coupons organized, you quickly can pull out those you need. Use them when you are making your shopping list or if you find a sale in the store.
- ✗ Before you go to the store, write your shopping list on the back of a plain envelope. Place a mark beside the items you will be purchasing with a coupon. Put the coupons inside the envelope.

### **Read the Labels**

When you are at the grocery store, you must make smart decisions about nutrition. If you find two products that are the same price and the same quality, you should use the information on the nutritional label to decide which product to buy.

Once you've decided if a food is a good buy, you must decide if it is nutritious. Read the **Nutrition Facts label** to find a product's nutrient content.

Remember to look at the number of servings, calories, fat, sodium, and vitamins in each serving.

# UNIT PRICING SAVES DOLLAR\$ AND ¢ENTS

## What is unit pricing?

Unit prices are figures that help you pick the food that is the best buy for your money. The unit price may list the unit by weight (ounces or pounds), volume (ounces, pints, or quarts), or quantity in the package.


### Find the important parts on each of these labels:

\_\_\_\_\_ The price you pay.

\_\_\_\_\_ The weight or size of this package.

\_\_\_\_\_ The unit price.

**A.**


MILD CHEDDAR NATURAL CHEESE 24 OZ		
<b>\$4.89</b>	Unit Price 3.26¢/pound	21000-61 161 01 4269 2393012
		

\_\_\_\_\_ The price you pay.

\_\_\_\_\_ The weight or size of this package.

\_\_\_\_\_ The unit price.

**B.**

06 05203 12 051496 065000-40790	
<b>CHEESE SPREAD</b>	
16 oz	<b>3.99</b> <span style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">3.99/POUND</span>

\_\_\_\_\_ The price you pay.

\_\_\_\_\_ The weight or size of this package.

\_\_\_\_\_ The unit price.

**C.**


12 16 OZ <b>027412</b>	RETAIL PRICE <b>\$3.39</b>
<span style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;"><b>\$4.49 PER POUND</b></span>	
<b>AMERICAN CHEESE SLICES</b>	

\_\_\_\_\_ The price you pay.

\_\_\_\_\_ The weight or size of this package.


\_\_\_\_\_ The unit price.


**D.**

	06 05203 12 051496 0650000- 40790	<b>\$2.89</b>
<span style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">Unit Price 5.78¢/pound</span>		
<b>MILD CHEDDAR – SHREDDED 8 OZ PKG</b>		

Which cheese product has the lowest unit price? \_\_\_\_\_

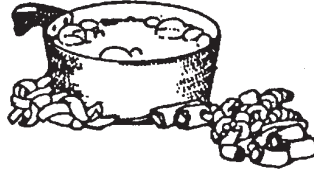
**A BETTER BUY**  
**UNIT PRICE LABELS**

Dannon Yogurt	8 oz.
<b>\$0.72</b>	Unit Price \$0.09 Per Ounce
	

Yoplait Yogurt	6 oz.
<b>\$0.62</b>	Unit Price \$0.10 Per Ounce
	

# LABEL READING FOR BETTER EATING

## Macaroni and Cheese



### Nutrition Facts

Serving Size 2.5 oz. (70 g./ about 1 cup)  
 Servings Per Container: about 3

**Amount Per Serving (as prepared)**

Calories 410      Calories from Fat 170

% Daily Value\*

<b>Total Fat 18g</b>	28%
Saturated Fat 4g	21%
Cholesterol 10mg	4%
Sodium 710mg	30%
Total Carbohydrate 49g	16%
Dietary Fiber 1g	6%
Sugars 9g	
<b>Protein 11g</b>	
Vitamin A 15%	•
	Vitamin C 0%
Calcium 10%	•
	Iron 15%

\*Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs:

		Calories: 2,000	2,500
Total Fat	Less than	65g	80g
Saturated Fat	Less than	20g	25g
Cholesterol	Less than	300mg	300mg
Sodium	Less than	2,400mg	2,400mg
Total Carbohydrate		300g	375g
Fiber		25g	30g

Calories per gram:  
 Fat 9 • Carbohydrate 4 • Protein 4

**INGREDIENTS:** ENRICHED MACARONI (FLOUR, NIACIN, FERROUS SULFATE, THIAMINE MONONITRATE, RIBOFLAVIN); CHEESE SAUCE MIX (WHEY, DEHYDRATED CHEESE [GRANULAR AND CHEDDAR (MILK, CHEESE CULTURE, SALT, ENZYMES)], WHEY PROTEIN CONCENTRATE, SKIM MILK, BUTTERMILK, SODIUM TRIPOLYPHOSPHATE, SODIUM PHOSPHATE, CITRIC ACID, YELLOW 5 [COLOR], YELLOW 6 [COLOR], LACTIC ACID)

Serving sizes are in common household measurements.

Nutrients listed are important to the health of today's consumer.

Ingredients are listed in descending order - main ingredient is listed first, smallest ingredient is listed last.

% Daily Value shows how a food fits into the overall daily diet.

These numbers can help you avoid eating too much fat, saturated fat, cholesterol and sodium.

These numbers can help you get enough dietary fiber, vitamin A, vitamin C, calcium and iron.

Daily Values are based on recommended nutrient intakes when eating 2,000 calories per day. Daily Values are also listed for persons eating 2,500 calories per day.

## COMPARING THE LABELS

Below are labels from two snack foods.

If you ate 24 corn chips, how much fat did you eat? \_\_\_\_\_

If you ate 17 pretzels, how much fat did you eat? \_\_\_\_\_

### Corn Chips

<b>Nutrition Facts</b>			
Serving Size 1 oz. (28g/About 32 chips)			
Servings Per Container 10			
Amount Per Serving			
<b>Calories</b> 160	Calories from Fat 90		
% Daily Value*			
<b>Total Fat</b> 10g			<b>16%</b>
Saturated Fat 1.5g			<b>7%</b>
Trans Fat 0g			
<b>Cholesterol</b> 0mg			<b>0%</b>
<b>Sodium</b> 170mg			<b>7%</b>
<b>Total Carbohydrate</b> 15g			<b>5%</b>
Dietary Fiber 1g			<b>4%</b>
Sugars less than 1g			
Protein 2g			
Vitamin A 0%	•	Vitamin C 0%	
Calcium 2%	•	Iron 0%	
Vitamin E 6%	•	Vitamin B6 2%	
Phosphorus 4%			
* Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs:			
	Calories:	2,000	2,500
Total Fat	Less than	65g	80g
Sat Fat	Less than	20g	25g
Cholesterol	Less than	300mg	300mg
Sodium	Less than	2,400mg	2,400mg
Total Carbohydrate		300g	375g
Dietary Fiber		25g	30g
Calories per gram:			
Fat 9	•	Carbohydrate 4	• Protein 4
<b>INGREDIENTS: WHOLE CORN, CORN OIL, AND SALT.</b>			
NO PRESERVATIVES.			

### Tiny Pretzels

<b>Nutrition Facts</b>			
Serving Size 1 oz. About 21 Pretzels (28g)			
Servings Per Package About 15			
Amount Per Serving			
<b>Calories</b> 110	Calories from Fat 5		
% Daily Value*			
<b>Total Fat</b> 0.5g			<b>1%</b>
Saturated Fat 0g			<b>0%</b>
Trans Fat 0g			
<b>Cholesterol</b> 0mg			<b>0%</b>
<b>Sodium</b> 390mg			<b>16%</b>
<b>Total Carbohydrate</b> 23g			<b>8%</b>
Dietary Fiber 1g			<b>5%</b>
Sugars 0g			
Protein 3g			
Vitamin A 0%	•	Vitamin C 0%	
Calcium 0%	•	Iron 6%	
Thiamin (B1) 15%	•	Riboflavin (B2) 8%	
Niacin 10%	•	Folic Acid 10%	
*Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs:			
	Calories:	2,000	2,500
Total Fat	Less than	65g	80g
Sat Fat	Less than	20g	25g
Cholesterol	Less than	300mg	300mg
Sodium	Less than	2,400mg	2,400mg
Total Carbohydrate		300g	375g
Dietary Fiber		25g	30g
Calories per gram:			
Fat 9	•	Carbohydrate 4	• Protein 4

**INGREDIENTS: ENRICHED WHEAT FLOUR (CONTAINS NIACIN, REDUCED IRON, THIAMIN MONONITRATE, RIBOFLAVIN, FOLIC ACID), SALT, MALT, PARTIALLY HYDROGENATED SOYBEAN OIL, YEAST, SODIUM BICARBONATE.**  
**CONTAINS: WHEAT.**



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