



Rock Island County

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Budget Friendly Nutrition Tips

Kristin Bogdonas, Illinois Extension food and nutrition educator

March is National Nutrition Month, a perfect time to focus on building healthy eating habits without stretching your wallet.

Eating nutritious meals doesn't have to be expensive. With a bit of planning, creativity, and smart shopping, you can enjoy flavorful, wholesome foods while staying within budget. Here are some practical tips to help you eat well without overspending:

1. Plan Your Meals

Create a weekly meal plan before shopping to avoid impulse buys. Shopping online can also help stick to your list and reduce last-minute temptations.

2. Buy in Bulk

Staples like rice, beans, lentils, and oats are affordable in bulk and can be used in a variety of meals. Buying in bulk helps you save money over time.

3. Shop Seasonally

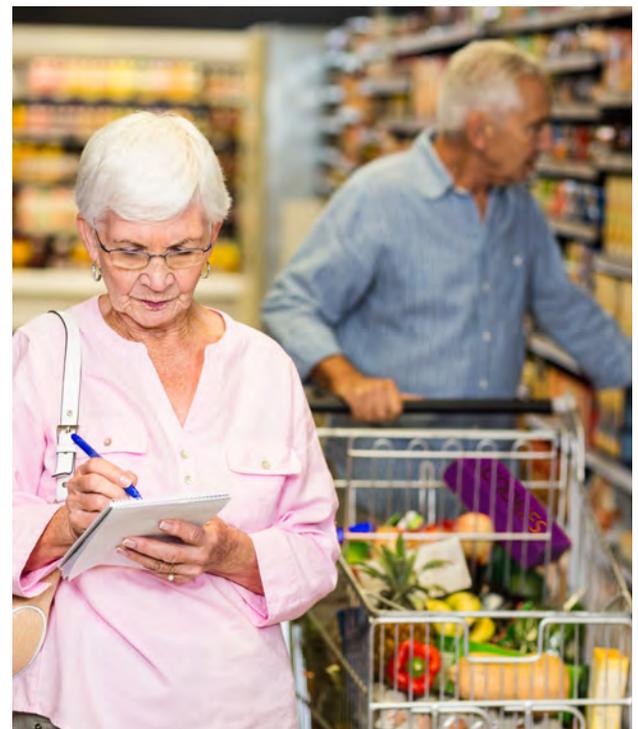
In-season fruits and vegetables are fresher and more affordable. Frozen options are also budget-friendly and retain their nutrients.

4. Cook at Home

Cooking at home saves money and lets you control ingredients. Plus, it's a great way to enjoy meals with family!

5. Use Affordable Proteins

Beans, lentils, tofu, and eggs are great protein sources that cost less than meat, while providing essential nutrients your body needs.



6. Make the Most of Leftovers

Repurpose leftovers into soups, stir-fries, or burritos to reduce waste and stretch your food further.

7. Look for Sales and Coupons

Take advantage of sales and use coupons for healthy items you regularly buy and stock up when prices drop!

National Nutrition Month is a great reminder that small, consistent choices can have a big impact on overall well-being.

QCCA Flower & Garden Show

March 13–15, Rock Island



Illinois Extension has arranged a full weekend of expert-led presentations as part of the QCCA Flower & Garden Show. Visit our display garden and information booth throughout the event. Explore showcase gardens designed by local companies and browse gardening vendors. Take time to enjoy one of the Illinois Extension curated horticulture education sessions that will take place throughout the weekend.

Presentaton Schedule - free with show admission

Friday, March 13

2:00 p.m. — When Weather Strikes, *Emily Swihart, IL Extension horticulture educator*
How weather events impact tree health and what to do after storms.

4:00 p.m. — Reducing Light Over Spill, *Jason Schillig, Musco Lighting*
Techniques for minimizing light spill, with examples from local projects.

Saturday, March 14

Noon — Bees, Hives, and Honey, *Andrea & Ray Churchill, Illinois Master Gardeners*
Honeybee care, hive hierarchy, and honey production.

2:00 p.m. — What's New in 2026, *Stacey Millett, Eve's Garden*
New plants and trends for the coming season.

3:00 p.m. — Hauberg Estate Garden Rejuvenation

Dr. Todd Linscott Hauberg Estate's Executive Committee Chairman
A look at the ongoing restoration of the historic Jens Jensen–designed gardens.

Sunday, March 15

Noon — What Is a Bee City?

Dick Potter, IL Master Gardener, Moline Pollinator Preservation Committee Member
Understanding Bee City designation and its impact on community practices.

1:30 p.m. — Native Plants for Every Garden, *Cindy Lenger, Illinois Master Gardener*
Design ideas and plant selections for incorporating natives into any landscape.

Scan for schedule





Pruning Young Shade Trees Webinar **Tues. March 3, 1:30-2:30 PM**

Young shade trees face a variety of challenges in the landscape, resulting in surprisingly low survival rates for many of these plants. While planting practices and follow-up care are major factors in the mortality of younger trees, canopy failure from poor branch structure is a bigger risk for trees that make it beyond establishment.

Proper pruning early in a tree's life can drastically reduce the risk of canopy failure or hazard development from structurally unsound limbs later in life. Learn more about the issues young trees face and how early pruning can set them up for a lifetime of healthy canopy structure.

Presenter: Ryan Pankau, horticulture educator, Illinois Extension

Register at go.illinois.edu/FourSeasons



Canning with Confidence **Mon, March 30, 5-6:30pm Black Hawk** **Outreach Center, East Moline**

Learn the essentials of home canning and gain the confidence to preserve your favorite foods safely!

This class covers proper techniques for using a water bath canner, including electric models, as well as steam canners and pressure canners.

Participants will receive step-by-step instructions, tested recipes, helpful resources, and video demonstrations of these canners in action.

Presented by Kristin Bogdonas, food and nutrition educator, Illinois Extension

Register by calling the BHC/PACE Center:
309-796-8223

Branching Out: A Botanical Workshop Series **Seed Starting | Thurs. March 26, 1-3 pm, Milan**

Led by Emily Swihart, Illinois Extension Horticulture Educator, and Tracy Jo Mulliken, Horticulture Coordinator, this series blends practical learning with creative take home projects included with your \$15 fee.

Seed Starting for Spring Success | March 26 | 1-3 PM

This beginner-friendly program covers the essentials of starting seeds at home. Learn how to select containers and soil, time your sowing, manage light, and troubleshoot common challenges. Leave with confidence—and your own seed starts ready for spring.

The cost is \$15 per session.

Register at: go.illinois.edu/Botanical



Legacy and Law: Navigating Farm Succession

Tues. March 10, 6:00-8:00 PM
Cerno's Bar & Grill, Kewanee



Your Farm. Your Legacy. Your Plan.

Understanding how succession works—and the pitfalls to avoid—can make a meaningful difference when transitioning your farm to the next generation.

Join University of Illinois Extension and the Henry County Farm Bureau for a seminar on succession planning and the legal aspects of farm transition. The program will highlight strategies to safeguard your farm's future and support a smooth handoff across generations.

Illinois Extension Commercial Ag Specialist **Meagan Diss** will share practical insights, tips, and resources to support farm families in planning for the future. Rural Illinois law specialists Chris Massie, Mike Massie, and Ethen Hunt of **Massie & Quick LLC** will share guidance on farm succession planning and answer questions.

A free taco bar will be served. **No fee to attend; registration required.**

Register at go.illinois.edu/Legacy_Law call 309-932-3447, or scan the QR code.



Additional support for this program provided by **Gold Star FS, River Valley Cooperative, and CHS.**

Horticulture Helpline: Spring Support for Your Gardening Questions



The Horticulture Helpline is gearing up to help you get your gardening questions answered this spring. As planting season begins, Illinois Extension Master Gardeners are ready with trusted advice and the latest research-based information and resources.

There are several ways to reach the helpline:

Online Form: Submit questions anytime at go.illinois.edu/askmastergardener You can include detailed descriptions and upload photos. Master Gardeners will review your submission and follow up with information or additional questions as needed.

Phone Helpline: Call (217) 300-0240 and leave a detailed message. A Master Gardener will return your call with guidance.

In-Person Assistance: Master Gardeners will be available at the Milan Extension office on select Wednesdays throughout the growing season. You may stop by during these times or call while a volunteer is on duty.

In-person dates for March: 11, 18, and 25 Hours: 9 a.m. – Noon

Master Gardeners look forward to helping you prepare for a successful spring gardening season.