

# Ten Quick and Easy Tips For Saving Money On a Food Allergy Diet

~ Presented by The FPIES Foundation ~  
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- **For many families affected by FPIES, their grocery shopping style may be impacted, many finding themselves transitioning to a whole foods lifestyle.**
- **Eating whole foods, specifically produce, can be a great way to maintain healthy living and reduce worries about additives with potential for allergens**
- **A whole foods lifestyle can get very pricey at times. The next few tips can help you to keep your costs low while maintaining this lifestyle.**

- **Tip 1: Flash Freezing**

- **All you need is a cookie sheet, a bit of freezer space, freezer bags & fresh produce**
- **Buy your produce when it is in season and at a lower price and likely higher quality**
- **Wash, peel & cut your produce and then place pieces on the cookie sheet, spaced apart so they are not touching**
- **Place the cookie sheet flat in the freezer. Once produce is frozen, place in labeled freezer bags to store**



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- **Tip #2: Canning**

- Similar to flash freezing, canning is a great way to save money on your family's safe produce by buying it at a lower price when it is in season
- There is a learning curve involved, but there are some great resources to teach you how:
  - Ball Blue Book Guide to Preserving
  - [www.frugalupstate.com](http://www.frugalupstate.com) "Hot Water Bath Canning"

- **Materials You May Need:**

- Glass jars and lids, var. sizes
- Waterbath canner and rack (you can use a large stock pot)
- Canning Funnel
- Jar lifter
- Lid wand







- **Tip #3: Gardening**

- If you have space in your backyard, digging a garden patch for harvesting your family's safe produce can be a great way to save money and to teach children about plant growth.
- Even if you don't want to dig up your yard or if you do not have a yard to dig, you can find raised bed planters and planting boxes/bags at your local home improvement store
- For tips on how to get started:
  - Build a Square Foot garden [journeytoforever.com/garden\\_sqft.html](http://journeytoforever.com/garden_sqft.html)



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- **Tip #4: CSA or Community Garden**

- If gardening at home isn't for you, a CSA (community supported agriculture) or a community garden can be great options
- A CSA normally charges a seasonal or yearly rate. Your family receives a specific amount of seasonal produce weekly or biweekly from the CSA. In some cases, you may also have the option of picking your own produce from the sponsoring farm's fields



- A community garden is typically a garden that each participant works a specific section of.
- You will plant your own produce and care for it
- You will likely utilize a shared space with other families/gardeners
- This is a great way to involve your whole family in a fun activity and to save money on produce. To really get a big bang for your buck, be sure to practice canning and flash freezing with your fresh harvest.



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- **Tip #5: Couponing**

- Couponing is a big trend right now but when your grocery list does not contain many “mainstream” products, finding coupons can be tricky
- Whole Foods Market and other alternative foods stores offer coupons online for their products. They must be used at the store offering the coupons typically, but it is still a great way to save a few bucks.
- The product manufacturer also may have product coupons available on their websites.

- Some manufacturers have free newsletters that you can subscribe to-- often there are coupons and special offers included
- Tracking coupons down can be tricky. To get started:
  - Make a list of the products you generally buy
  - Contact the companies that make those products to inquire about special offers/coupons
  - Check alternative foods store flyers regularly for special deals and store coupons



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- **Tip #6: Buying in Bulk**
  - Some alternative foods stores, such as Whole Foods Market, offer the option of purchasing products by the case and getting an additional discount on the total cost
  - Ordering online can also offer discounts when you buy in bulk. Plus, you save the grocery store trip with kids in tow! Playing at home instead? Yes, please!





- **Tip #7: Online Subscriptions**

- Some websites offer monthly, bimonthly, etc subscriptions to certain food and other products. When you subscribe, there is generally a discount on the total cost
- Multiple subscriptions on sites such as amazon.com can offer additional discounts when ordered at once.



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## **Tip #8: Waste Not, Want Not**

**When preparing for food trials, many families prep enough of the trial food for a week or more of servings. But if the food causes a reaction, what happens to that unused food?**

**If the food is safe for others at home. . .**

- 1. If it is fruit, you can freeze single small portions in ice cube trays and use them for smoothie additions**
- 2. If it is a vegetable, you can freeze single small portions in ice cube trays and use them when making homemade pasta sauce or soup**

- If the food is not safe for others in your home, and if the product is non-perishable and unopened, you can donate it to the local food pantry**
- Unused fresh produce can often be donated to your local soup kitchen.**
- Donations to these supportive services is not only a great way to help your community, but you can also use the donations as tax write-offs.**



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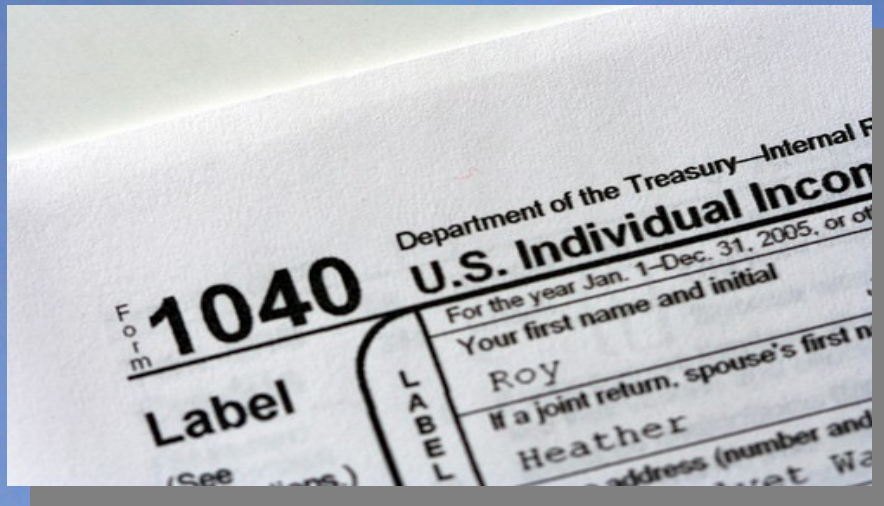
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- **Tip #9: Do Your Taxes!**

- The IRS actually allows you to deduct the additional cost you pay for allergy friendly foods, when you or someone you claim on your taxes has a documented medical reason for the specialty diet.



## How does it work?

If “mainstream” flour costs 2.50 for five pounds and you need to pay 12.00 for your specialty flour, then you can deduct 9.50 on your taxes.

- × Deductions are totaled in the line item deduction section
- × Your total for line item deductions (which includes medical expenses and other items) must meet the IRS requirements for claiming
- × Be sure to save your receipts!
- × If you claim the “standard deduction,” you will not be able to take advantage of this process



- **Tip #10: Redistribute Your Budget**
  - **Examine your budget and attempt to move funds from one area to pad your grocery budget**
  - **Actively seek out coupons and sales on all of your “mainstream” non-food products, like paper towels, etc.**





**When eating a whole foods diet and/or regular amounts of specialty foods, costs can add up. Examining a few of the previously mentioned tips can help you to hopefully reduce your monthly food costs. Remember to Consider:**

- **Canning or freezing produce when in season,**
- **Participating in a CSA, community garden or home garden**
- **Looking at the financials-- your home budget and potential tax savings**
- **Getting the most “bang for your buck” through bulk buying, online subscription options, couponing, and maximizing leftovers**

**Good luck and happy saving! It is difficult to put a price on family health and nutrition but with the resources listed here, hopefully the financial burden will be reduced when it comes to monthly grocery bills, maybe even leaving a bit extra for some much needed fun and relaxation!**



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