



Healthy and Budget Friendly Meals with Beef

Grade Level: 9-12

Lesson Objectives:

Students will use a budget and nutritional guidelines to plan a balanced meal for their family.

Time:

Two, 50-minute sessions

Day 1: Set up and research

Day 2: Complete worksheet and present to classmates

California Standards:

Common Core English Language Arts Grade 9-12:

SL.9-12.1, RI.9-12.10, W.9-12.7

Materials:

- ▶ Internet access or grocery store newspaper advertisements
- ▶ Healthy and Budget Friendly Meals with Beef worksheet
- ▶ Beef Fact and Activity Sheet www.learnaboutag.org/factsheets/pdf/Beef.pdf

Background Information for Teacher:

This lesson will provide students with ideas on how to include beef in healthy, budget-friendly meals that they can share with their families. Students will also learn budgeting skills, which will help to prepare them for managing food costs as young adults.

Procedure:

1. Ask your students to write down how much money they think their parents spend on food to feed them each day. How much does this add up to in a month? Explain that the average American family spends approximately 11 percent of their monthly budget on food (USDA), which is very low compared to other countries where food is much more expensive. For example, families in Pakistan spend almost half of their income on food. People living in the United States are fortunate to have access to one of the most affordable and safe food supplies in the world.
2. Have students imagine that they are college students working a part-time job and they need to incorporate healthy foods into their diet on a limited budget. Beef is an excellent source of zinc, iron, and protein (ZIP), which are important for good health. Show students this short video clip of an economical and healthy meal being prepared by a high school student. Go to www.LearnAboutAg.org/bonalabeef.
3. Explain that this activity will focus on beef as an economical and healthy protein source. Hand out the Beef Fact and Activity Sheet for students to read. After reading, discuss the main beef nutrition points with the class. www.learnaboutag.org/factsheets/pdf/Beef.pdf
4. Hand out the Meal on a Budget worksheet and explain to students that their challenge is to design a dinner that will feed their family for \$3.50 per person that includes beef. The meal must be nutritionally balanced and adhere to appropriate serving sizes according to the MyPlate guidelines found at www.ChooseMyPlate.gov. As a class, go through an example of how to fill out the chart that compares costs for different cuts of lean beef.
 - Look at the MyPlate website as a class to explain where students can find information on food groups, serving size, nutrient content, healthy eating tips, and more.
 - Also show the class the USDA recipe-finder database, which contains low-cost food choices that follow dietary guidelines. <http://recipefinder.nal.usda.gov>



Healthy and Budget Friendly Meals with Beef

5. As a class, view the Food Safety Advice page on the MyPlate site to review food safety practices: Clean, Separate, Cook, and Chill. Students should include food safety practices in their meal planning. www.choosemyplate.gov/healthy-eating-tips/food-safety-advice.html
6. After students have had time to research the cost of food, have a class discussion and ask students to share sources of bargains they found. Ask students if they found any stores that were consistently less expensive than others and brainstorm possible reasons for this. Ask students for examples of inexpensive, high-quality protein such as lean hamburger or top sirloin. Discuss why protein is such an important part of the meal. For example, it provides many essential nutrients and helps us feel full longer.
7. Bring the lesson to a close by having students summarize their meal recipes, cost per person, and nutritional facts on an 8.5 x 11 sheet of paper that they will post in an area of the classroom dedicated to this assignment. Have students discuss challenges they encountered while creating the meal on a budget, and have them share how they worked through these challenges.

Extension Ideas

- Have students prepare their meals to share with the class
- Have students present the nutritional benefits of their meal on a poster
- Hold a contest for the best tasting, healthiest, and most economical recipe
- Invite a nutritionist to be a guest speaker in your class



Healthy and Budget Friendly Meals with Beef

Name: _____

The goal of this lesson is for you to plan a healthy dinner for your family for \$3.50 or less per serving.

Build your dinner plans around MyPlate guidelines for serving size and food choices. The meal should include beef as a source of lean protein, whole grain, dairy, fruit, and a vegetable. The MyPlate website provides information on the five food groups and recommended serving sizes based on age, gender, and physical activity level. www.choosemyplate.gov/food-groups Discuss your recommended serving sizes with a partner and what you think the serving sizes should be for family members.

1. How many people in your family? _____

2. At \$3.50 per person, how much can you spend to purchase the groceries to make a dinner for everyone in your family? _____

3. Look at grocery store advertisements to get an idea of the types and cost of items. Focus on a variety of nutrient-rich foods. Include colorful fruits and vegetables, and lean beef as your protein source. There are many different cuts of beef that are both lean and budget friendly. Choose whole grain bread, pasta, and rice when possible. Use the charts to fill out information about some of the foods you may choose to include in your dinner recipe.

Helpful tips:

- 1 pound = 16 ounces
- 1 cup = 8 ounces

Types of Lean Beef	Cost Per Pound	Amount Needed for Meal	Total Cost



Healthy and Budget Friendly Meals with Beef

Types of Whole Grain	Cost Per Pound	Amount Needed for Meal	Total Cost

Types of Vegetables	Cost Per Pound	Amount Needed for Meal	Total Cost

Types of Fruit	Cost Per Pound	Amount Needed for Meal	Total Cost



Healthy and Budget Friendly Meals with Beef

Types of Dairy	Cost Per Pound	Amount Needed for Meal	Total Cost

- Keep costs down by choosing fresh and simple ingredients. Sources for main-dish recipes include: www.beefnutrition.org, www.beefitswhatsfordinner.com, and www.ChooseMyPlate.gov.

Describe what you will make for dinner in the space below. Make sure to explain how you will include each of the five food groups.

- How much did you spend on your meal? _____
- How many people will it serve? _____
- Attach newspaper advertisements or printouts from grocery store websites to document your prices.
- When you make this meal for your family, what food safety practices will you follow to make sure no one gets sick? Note specific handling procedures, storage requirements, and cooking temperatures.