Meal Planning Tips

Experts are recommending that families keep a two-week supply of non-perishable food in case of emergencies. Meal planning is a helpful strategy for food availability during this time.

What is meal planning?
“Meal planning is the way you organize yourself to cook a meal, whether that’s breakfast, lunch, or dinner. It is the plan you make before you shop. Some people plan a month in advance, freezing neatly-labeled packets of soup and stew. Others wing it, shopping for that evening’s meal at the farmers’ market and picking up whatever looks good to them. Meal planning is a really personal thing. What works for you may not work for others” (Durand, 2019). The goal is to find a process that is both enjoyable, effective, money-saving and useful for keeping your ohana inside and supplied during this time.

Examples of foods to keep on hand:
Canned Goods
- Tomatoes, beans, and soups
Dry Foods
- Pasta, crackers, rice, and protein bars
Frozen Vegetables
- Broccoli, peas, corn, and spinach
Frozen Fruit
- Berries, mango, and pineapple
Frozen Protein
- Fish, shrimp, chicken, pork, and beef

Tips For Meal Planning:

**Buy Items In Bulk**
Buying in bulk provides more servings and can save money over time.

**Start with the basics**
Purchase items your family already eats frequently, and build on those meals.

**Buy shelf-stable foods**
To avoid multiple trips to the store during the week, purchase frozen or canned foods and only fresh produce that you will use that week or the next.

**Get organized and take inventory**
Start a weekly-monthly meal calendar to avoid impulsive purchasing.

**Plan for leftovers**
Cook portions of meals separately with minimum seasoning to be used for different meals throughout the week.
- Examples: Chicken (chicken noodle soup, chicken enchiladas, chicken stir-fry)

**Be strategic about freezing meals**
Make double batches of meals to freeze for future use.
- Examples: Stews, soups and casseroles

**Set aside time**
Set aside an hour after grocery shopping to pre-cut fruits and vegetables for dishes throughout the week.

**Turn perishable food into something that can last longer**
- Examples: Sauces, Dehydrate.

References

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