

Strategies Applied:

- **Flour:** Buy around any holiday when it is on a great sale price, especially the winter Holidays. I freeze all flour products when I bring them into my home for three days to avoid any issues. The five-pound bags are often much less expensive than the larger bags and are on sale so often, that it isn't necessary to buy the larger bags unless one does a lot of baking. Sometimes coupons are available for the brand names during the sales. 5 pounds for \$1.55 (Aldi's) is about 17 cups, unsifted, 9 cents a cup. Cost for the recipe 27 cents.
- **Sugar:** Look for sugar on sale, which usually happens around the holidays. While any holiday generates a sales price, the best sales are generally from Thanksgiving to Christmas, when coupons are abundant. 8 cents.
- **Eggs:** Stock up on eggs when they're inexpensive, normally during Holiday weeks. Low prices in my area range from free (often with other purchases) to anywhere from \$1.89 for 18 eggs. They last for weeks in the fridge – The date on the container is a 'buy' date, and you can expect them to last a good six weeks past that date. If you pick up two or three packages when they're at their low, you'll rarely need to pay full price.
- Refrigerate right away and never store in the door; eggs keep best in a colder part of the refrigerator, in their own box. (Then put your partially used vegetables in the door where you'll see them and remember they need to be used ASAP – the half a bell pepper or onion, etc.) In doubt about an egg? If it floats in water, discard, just to be on the safe side. If they float, it means the egg inside is drying out, not that it is bad in any way. Cost for 2 eggs, about 20 cents.
- **Yogurt:** I habitually buy the large cartons of yogurt, even when I can get the individual ones on sale with a coupon, just because I try to avoid as many additives and as much sugar as possible and I find them to be a bit better quality. If I feel like a flavored yogurt, I'll add in a bit of fruit to my bowl, or maybe a teaspoon of jam.
- Yogurt lasts for weeks and when the dates were first put on dairy, the buy by date, as a way of rotating stock, it was never intended as an expiration date! Any separation in yogurt is the "whey" and to maintain the same consistency, should be stirred back in. Use your eyes and nose in determining when yogurt is good, not the date you should buy it by. Cost for a large carton at Aldi's \$1.79. For this recipe, 90 cents.
- **Butter:** A bit of a splurge, cost and calorie wise – but for taste and health, I'd rather use real butter than trans fat laden margarine or oils. Yes – they do have trans fat, even if the label says they don't. Harvard, for instance, says unequivocally: "*The key to a healthy diet is to substitute good fats for bad fats and to avoid trans fat.*" While butter isn't a healthy fat, many feel that trans fat is worse than saturated.
- Buy on deep specials, often around the holidays with store coupons. I shoot for \$2.50 a pound and freeze, where it stays fine for months, but haven't seen a great price in ages. At \$4.86 a pound, a stick is \$1.22.
- **Baking Soda, powder, salt:** The cost is so minimal I don't know how to count it. Look for baking items during any holiday to be at a low, and an all time low from just before Thanksgiving through New Years, and possibly around Easter, as well.