

Strategies Applied:

- **Rice:** You'll find coupons for rice and sales - I picked up rice for nearly a year at no cost or a few pennies a package thanks to Riceland. If I have to pay, I'll look for a smaller package that's covered by the price of the coupon, or if I have no coupon, I'll buy the larger bags. Look it the various sections of your store - Asian, Indian, Mexican and see if the price per pound is less. Rice is generally less in the fall. Cost 16 cents.
- **Bell Pepper:** There are two types of sales, per pound or per pepper. I usually look for the per pepper pricing; in my area, it's generally cheaper – I'll then buy the biggest, most gorgeous ones I can find. The peppers are often bagged and sold by a unit price, too. A really good price in our area is about a fifty to seventy cents a pepper for the red, yellow or orange ones, and 40 to 75 cents for the green bell. This is one item I buy at Aldi only if not on sale for less at my regular grocer. Cost 99 cents for two peppers.
- **Onions:** They keep well, so try to buy on sale. Aldi is a good place to find reasonably priced onions. Always less expensive in the fall/winter months, the pricing in my area runs from 33 to 66 cents a pound. Store them in a dark, cool place but not near potatoes. If you've bought too many onions, don't let them go bad. Slice or dice them, saute and portion into Ziplocs labeled "onions" and freeze. You've just saved yourself a step for next time you make a dish. If you use half an onion, consider if you can sauté the rest and put it in a Ziploc in the freezer. If not store in the door where you'll see it when you're cooking next. 1 at 33 cents a pound, about 10 cents.
- **Celery:** Generally inexpensive, but does go on sale from time to time, so I buy extra when it does. Celery keeps so well, there's no reason to not buy when it's not on sale. Remember to use your leaves, they're full of flavor, and if you don't use them in your cooking, save them, along with the bottom parts for soup or stock. Always wash your celery extremely well. To keep longer, slip a plastic bag loosely over the exposed top of the celery. A good price in my area is 98 cents a sleeve, with about 15 or so stalks in a sleeve. Cost 6 cents.
- **Garlic:** I look for a price of about \$2.99 a pound, or about 54 cents a head. Check the pricing of the bulk per pound as opposed to the packaged. I never really find it on sale, but I use so much, I pay attention and buy a bit more when I see the price is lower. Cost for 4 cloves, around 5 cents.
- **Bacon:** Used to be an inexpensive ingredient, its price has risen with its popularity. Let's face it, bacon isn't the healthiest - we seldom use it here on its own as a meat, but do use it in small amounts in recipes, where I consider it as a "flavoring" rather than a protein. I buy on store specials and take advantage of coupons - my go to price is between \$2.00 and \$3.00 a package. I freeze until needed, partially thaw (until a knife will go through) and cut across the bacon from top to bottom. 1/16th is the same size as a strip. I wrap the bacon back up and freeze again. Cost 38 cents.
- **Hot Sauce:** Hot sauces are a highly competitive and sales and coupons make them very inexpensive. Generally, the smaller bottles combine with both are often free or just pennies. Stock up. Cost nominal.

- **Chicken Stock:** If you read me regularly, I make my own with scraps of vegetables and bones – here’s the basic recipe I use for [Best Turkey or Chicken Stock](#) - it’s not particular and though it simmers for a long time, the burner is barely on – I just count it as free.
- **Green Onion:** I try to buy on sale for about 50 cents a bunch (usually during Holidays) then put the white tips in a jar of water in a sunny window to regrow. Kids love taking ownership of the project. I only need to replenish every few months. Cost is so minimal that I don't even count it.
- **Fresh Herbs:** I grow my own in the garden, and keep a few ones I often use on the back steps in a strawberry pot. When winter comes, I bring indoors. Indoors is not always ideal for herb growing, but since a plant costs about the same as a bunch, there's really no loss, even if it dies off; just snip and dry. Cost: nominal.