

Strategies Applied:

•**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. Check out Aldi for your sugar; their prices are generally great. A rule of thumb: A store brand on sale will often beat a name brand on sale with a coupon. Aldi generally beats both. This amount is about 5 cents.

•**Lemon Juice:** Look for lemons to drop in price from January to April, stock up a bit and use them more when the price is really great as they keep for several weeks. One lemon, if a heavy juicy one, will yield about three to four tablespoons of juice. Don't pay any attention to color – always pick up the heaviest lemons. If the recipe doesn't use all the rind, I'll grate off the rest before I squeeze it and put it in small snack sized Ziplocs in the freezer for another use. To get more juice out of your lemon, press down on it and roll it on your counter, or place in the microwave for just a few seconds to barely warm. Last bought 50 cents for a lemon, I used one and a half.

•**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 3 eggs, about 60 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 \$2.99 a pound and freeze, where it stays fine for months. Cost for this recipe: 4 tablespoons, 37 cents.