

NEWS RELEASE

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How to Prepare Healthy Meals While Saving Time & Money

January is a great time to focus on healthy eating and food budgeting. A great way to start is to plan two meals a week using a crock pot. Cooking with a crock pot uses less electricity than a conventional oven, cooks foods at safe temperatures, needs little attention for several hours at a time, and often provides enough portions for leftovers. All of these advantages make crock pot cooking a great option for anyone! Try these simple tips to save time in the kitchen, keep money in your wallet, and prepare healthy meals with little effort.

- **Buy cheaper, leaner cuts of meat!** Crock pots cook lean meats slowly, making them tender with less shrinkage than fatter, expensive cuts of meat.
- **Use beans or lentils instead of meat!** Slow cooking beans and lentils in a crock pot is a great alternative to simmering on a hot stove. They provide a fat-free source of protein, lots of fiber, and are very inexpensive.
- **Add extra veggies to your favorite recipes!** Hearty seasonal vegetables such as winter squash, dark leafy greens, and root vegetables are affordable this time of year. They add extra vitamins, minerals, fiber, and rich flavors to crock pot meals.
- **Cook more than one meal at a time!** Crock pots are designed to cook large amounts of food. This makes it convenient to double a recipe and cook enough food for additional meals.

Whether you are looking to save time, money, or just want an easy healthy meal, crock pot cooking is worth a try. For recipe ideas visit [The University of Rhode Island SNAP-Ed site](#).

Children and adults participating in the Let's Eat Healthy! Program are learning about food safety, cooking, and healthy eating habits. For more nutrition or program information, please call (530) 889-7350, or visit our website at <http://ucanr.edu/sites/letseathealthy>. "Like" us on Facebook for additional tips and updates at UC CalFresh Nutrition Education Program, Placer/Nevada Counties.



This material was produced by the University of California CalFresh Nutrition Education Program with funding from USDA SNAP, known in California as CalFresh (formerly food stamps). These institutions are equal opportunity providers and employers. CalFresh provides assistance to low-income households and can help buy nutritious foods for better health. For CalFresh information, call 1-877-847-3663.