

ABC's of Food

Apples: A is for apple, of course, because Apples are great. Apples are cheap, delicious, easy to eat, versatile, and diverse. They can be used in [countless ways](#) – try thin slices in a sandwich or chopped up in a salad.

Berries: We are so lucky to live where an abundance of delicious berries are grown. Pick your own at local farms, or find a spot to pick them wild and help your child find their favorite.

Cooking with kids: Cooking with kids can be an absolute joy or an absolute (literal) mess, right? We know it's [beneficial to kids](#) – kids are more likely to try healthy foods they make – here are [some tips to make it easier](#) for parents.

Deals: Buying groceries for a family can one of your biggest monthly expenses. Check out these [ideas for making every dollar count](#).

Eggs: [Eggs](#) are high in protein, low cost, and can be used in [so many ways](#). Breakfast for dinner is just a start – eggs are good any time.

Food Hero: [Food Hero](#) is a great source for information, recipes, and fun for families. They have hundreds of healthy and budget-friendly recipes, a special kids section, and ideas for all kinds of meals. Sign up for their [monthly newsletter](#), each on a particular food item.

Many of us are experiencing financial hardships right now, but **there is help available**.

[SNAP \(Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program\)](#) eligibility guidelines have changed due to COVID-19 and your family may be eligible for food assistance.

[WIC \(Women, Infants and Children\)](#) may also be available to you if you are pregnant or have young children at home.

[Pollywog Family Resource Page](#) is where we're listing local COVID-19 resources.

[United Way for Linn/Benton/Lincoln Counties](#) has created an extensive list of resources related to COVID-19.

Gardening: When kids grow their own vegetables – they eat them! Well, not always, but children love to watch seeds sprout and grow. Even if it's only a container on a window sill, [gardening is good for kids](#).



Healthy foods: If your kids resist eating more fruits and vegetables, there are [lots of ideas](#) for parents to try, including [healthy eating habits](#) for the whole family.

Inexpensive food: Some [meals are cheaper to prepare](#), and often are healthier, too.

Jam: Make a [quick jam](#) from the berries you picked that you store in your fridge or freezer. You don't have to process it like jam for long-term storage, so it's quick and easy to make, and saves money.

Kid food: Dino-shaped chicken nuggets, boxed macaroni and cheese, grilled cheese – kids love 'em and parents wish kids would eat healthier. How about [healthy food that is appealing to kids](#)?

Lunch sites: The COVID-19 pandemic is keeping schools closed, but schools are still providing [bagged meals for all kids](#), ages 1 to 18 years, regardless of income. Check with your local school or district to find nearby pick-up sites or delivery routes.

Meatless Mondays: One easy way to save money on groceries is to buy less meat. [Meatless Mondays](#) is a resource that provides information, recipes, and more.

Nutrition: It's normal for parents to worry about their children's nutrition. The AAP has great resources regarding nutrition, including sample menus for each age group. These menus are guidelines for amounts and types of foods and can be adapted for each family.

[8-12 Months Sample Menu](#)

[1 Year Sample Menu](#)

[2 Year Sample Menu](#)

[3-4 Years Sample Menu](#)

On Your Own: OYO is a great way to clean out the fridge, save money, and give the main cook in the family a break. The idea is that each person is on their own for sorting out their dinner, and parents help out young children.

Picnic: Now that our days are warming up and nighttime is coming later, a picnic meal is a fun way to enjoy your meal together. Picnic in your own yard or head to a park. Make it easy by bringing finger foods, like cheese, sandwich meats, and cut-up fruits and veggies.

Quesadillas: Individual quesadillas are great for individual tastes, with veggies or protein.

Rice: [Rice](#) is so versatile, nutritious, and affordable. Try out a [new rice-based recipe](#) for your family often.



Shelf stable/pantry cooking: Shelf stable foods are sealed for longterm storage, like canned or jarred foods, cereals, beans, and grains. These items are great for [making inexpensive meals](#).

Taco Bar: Like a salad bar, a taco bar is an easy way to get dinner ready. The 'bar' possibilities are unlimited – baked potatoes, grilled cheese sandwiches, mini pizzas, quesadillas, and more. Lay out toppings like a salad bar, and let your family make their own. Tip: put your toppings in storage containers, so clean-up is easy.

University Extension: [OSU Extension](#) provides knowledge and hands-on experience to Oregonians in everything from gardening to forestry to community health. They offer info on [many topics](#) and are a great source for information on growing and preserving food.

Vegetables: Vegetables can be the root of struggles between parents and kids. Help your child [pick a new fruit or veggie](#) to try, grow your child's knowledge of [weird veggie facts](#), and serve up some [vegetable facts for kids](#).

Wonton wrappers: These premade little squares or circles of dough are cheap and versatile. Find them in the refrigerator at the grocery store, usually near tofu. [Fill them with savory or sweet things](#) or use them to line muffin pans to make little taco cups.

Extra ingredients: Whether you're trying to get more veggies into your kids, your partner, or yourself, [adding extra veggie ingredients](#) to meals can be done secretly or creatively. Either way, we all could use more veggies in our diets.

YouTube: There are YouTube videos galore for your favorite cuisine, or a new one. Check out videos in other languages and see what you can incorporate into your own cooking.

Zucchini: In addition to being high in vitamin C, zucchini has a good amount of vitamin B-6 and potassium. These are important for brain growth and function, in adults as well as children. There are [many ways](#) to use zucchini; [find new ideas](#) online.

 [Pollywog Facebook](#)

 [Pollywog Website](#)

 [Pollywog YouTube](#)

Pollywog Family
6500 Pacific Blvd. SW, LM-132
Albany, OR 97321
541-917-4884