



When I lived in Illinois my father-in-law would go to a local market just at closing and buy up the leftover sweet corn. For pennies a pound we would shuck, boil, cut and freeze bag after bag after bag of delicious corn. Enough to keep all 9 of us (my family of 6, two in-laws and a grandmother) eating corn for the year.

Unfortunately, both freezing and canning seems to have gotten more expensive due to increased prices of supplies and fewer and fewer opportunities for bargain produce. So can a thrifty family still save money canning?

The answer is YES! If you can get supplies AND produce inexpensively, then you can still save.

If you are looking to reduce artificial ingredients, ensure that everything going into your food is wholesome and want to feed your family highly nutritious foods, you know how expensive the natural and organic foods can cost. But even if you are not into the natural and organic you can still save money freezing and canning your own food. Here are some basic steps to help insure you save money.

Getting Supplies Inexpensively:

1. In the off season look for used jars or new jars on closeout. You may be surprised that many local hardware stores stock supplies for the fall, but then clear them out once the season is over.
2. Don't compromise on rings and lids. If you need to, shop around for a good price online.
3. If freezing, look for the heavy duty bags to go on sale throughout the year. Don't expect them to be discounted in the fall.

4. Look at Sams and COSTCO for good deals on heavy duty freezer bags.

Getting Produce Inexpensviely:

1. Grow you own. Nothing saves money like growing your own produce.

2. Get to know your local produce sellers. If you have local stands in your town, frequent them and get to know those who sell through them. Ask about left overs and request that you be called when they have a surplus they are willing to sell at a bargain price. You may not control timing, but the awesome discount will be a worthwhile tradeoff.

3. Wait patiently for peek season. Many local farmers will sell produce for far less when they have loads of produce they need to sell. You will likely have to buy in quantity so be prepared to work hard or go in with another family.

4. Don't be choosey. You may have traditionally only canned jersey tomatoes, however if your local store has a great discount for beefsteak tomatoes, go for it!

Canning and freezing no longer automatically saves you money. But with a bit of planning and work, it can still provide great taste and be a bargain!

If you would like some help and resources check out these sites:

[The National Center for Home Preservation](#)

[University of Minnesota Family Food Preservation Publications](#)

