COST-CONSCIOUS CONSUMERS FIND WAYS TO MAKE THE MOST OF EVERY MEAL

Plastics Make it Possible℠ Survey Reveals that in Today’s Economy, Americans Are Cooking More Meals at Home and Eating More Leftovers

ARLINGTON, VA (February 2, 2010) – In today’s cost-conscious economy, consumers are making choices to help them stretch every dollar. When it comes to eating, this can mean cutting back on dining out, eating smaller portions, reusing leftovers, buying in bulk and making an extra effort to reduce food waste.

In fact, nearly two-thirds of Americans indicate they have changed their food consumption patterns because of the economy, and 80 percent of Americans say their families make a point of eating leftovers to save money, according a recent survey conducted on behalf of Plastics Make it Possible℠, an initiative sponsored by the plastics industries of the American Chemistry Council. Other findings from the survey show that 72 percent of Americans pack lunch for themselves or their children, and 94 percent of Americans feel good when they store and reuse food rather than throwing it away. Women are more likely to eat leftovers for lunch, bring home leftovers from restaurants or parties, and make large meals to extend over several days.

“I think what we’re seeing today is very much a ‘back to basics’ approach when it comes to meal time,” said Steve Russell, vice president of the Plastics Division for the American Chemistry Council. “Times are tougher so Americans are taking home leftovers from restaurants and cooking more meals themselves. Proper storage of fresh food and leftovers goes a long way to helping ensure consumers get the most out of every meal.”

Following are some simple storage and preparation tips that can help reduce or extend food budgets:

- Store and eat those leftovers! There are so many ways to use leftovers – from ready-to-eat lunches to creating new meals from leftover ingredients to freezing them for later use. Storing leftovers in air-tight plastic containers can help keep them fresher longer. Transfer restaurant leftovers to sealed plastic containers as soon as you get home. If you won’t be able to eat your leftovers within a few days, immediately transfer them to plastic containers or sealable bags that are made especially for the freezer.

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Cook once, eat for a week! Planning meals in advance can help save money and precious time. About four in five Americans said that plastic food containers and plastic wrap have made planning family meals easier. With the help of airtight plastic bags and containers, it’s easy to prepare and conveniently store an entire week’s worth of meals at once. This helps planners to purchase ingredients when they’re on sale.

Pack your own. Packing lunch instead of eating out can save money, and the wide variety of plastic bags and containers available today don’t just keep food fresh, they can help control portion size, which is important when trying to lose or maintain your weight. In fact, 56 percent of Americans say they are looking for products that help them practice portion control. And for those who are battling the bulge or just trying to eat healthy, there are also new plastic containers and wraps that are designed to keep fruit and vegetables fresher even longer.

For tips on proper food storage as well as additional survey results, visit www.plasticsmakeitpossible.com.

The survey was conducted by TNS Global in September 2009 to a nationally representative sample of 1,000 American adults aged 18+.

About Plastics Make it Possible℠
Plastics Make it Possible℠ highlights the many ways plastics inspire innovations that improve our lives, solve big problems and help us design a safer, more promising future. This initiative is sponsored by the plastics industries of the American Chemistry Council. For more information, visit www.plasticsmakeitpossible.com.

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