

SENIOR NEWS LINE

by Matilda Charles

Keep an eye on grocery prices

If you've done your grocery shopping at the same store for a long time, believing that they have the best prices in town, it might be time to revisit that thought. I just discovered that the big box store where I've shopped isn't the lower cost choice I thought it was.

I discovered this when looking at the website of the store to check availability of an item and then looked at the websites for the two other stores in town. I was shocked to see that my store was much higher in price on several of the items on my regular list. I don't know when this happened, but now that I know.

It looks like we're going to have to keep a constant eye on pricing to keep as many of our dollars as we can. Here are a few suggestions:

Compare the websites for all the stores near you. Make a little chart of the items you normally buy and see who really is the cheapest. Check your list every month.

When you do go, shop from a list. Don't let yourself be tempted to impulsively buy extra items unless you spot a great deal on an end-of-aisle display and can stock up a bit.

Try the store brands. In many cases store brands are actually made in brand name facilities.

Sign up for loyalty cards. The rewards from those can add up. Sometimes you'll get coupons sent via email.

Buy in bulk, if it makes financial sense to do that. And, if it makes sense, make large batches of meals you can freeze. Do the math.

And (although many of us don't like to do it) use the food bank. Let them give you what they will, and fill in the blanks with your own shopping.

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