BUYING OF FOOD

Food is very important for good health. It is therefore important that family members feed well. Food is expensive and can spoil easily too. Family food purchasing should be thoroughly planned and carried out. It is equally important that food is properly stored. Proper preservation and storage will prevent wastage and ensure that food is safe and hygienic.

Factors to consider when buying food:

- Size of the family
- The family food needs
- Food preservation and storage facilities available to the family
- Food quality
- Foods in the season
- Money available to the family
- Where to buy food
- Buy non-perishable foods in bulk and store properly
- Purchase vegetable and fruits as and when needed if possible
- Avoid waste by purchasing just the food which the family will eat
- Share bulk buying project with neighbours or friends whenever possible
- When to buy food. For instance, some perishable foodstuffs such as meat and vegetables are best purchased in the mornings in the open market.
- Buy where foodstuff is best and cheapest. Make substitutions when other foods of the same nutritive value are cheaper. For instance, pawpaw can be substituted for mango, if pawpaw is cheaper.

Wise Buying Practices

When buying food, it is best to buy foods in the season. Judge the quality of food before buying. For instance, when buying fruits and vegetables judge items for firmness, proper colour, and absence of bruises and breakages in the skin. Also judge values of food before buying. Most

stores help you judge the value of a food item by providing unit prices. A unit price is the price per kilogram or other accepted unit or measure. This information makes it easy to compare the cost of products in different-sized packages. Check measurement, e.g. cups and scales, when buying such foods as grains, pulses, and garri. Read labels on food containers, such as canned foods, bottled fats and oil, etc. Check expiry dates, food content, weight, volume, etc. Make bulk purchases whenever possible. Compare values and prices in different stores and with different sellers. Make sure you buy food you can store/preserve and prepare.