

# Comparison shopping? Don't forget beverages!

by Monine Strode

"Pocketbook consciousness" is a new state of awareness that reaches into every aspect of life. Comparing prices on food items is commonplace, but drinks vary greatly in cost, also. Let's take a look at price differences on some of the beverages available to today's consumer. These are regular prices.

	(per quart)
Beer	.....\$1.00
Canned fruit juice	..... .90
Carbonated beverages	..... .80
Tomato juice	..... .70
Orange juice	..... .50
Milk	..... .48
Sweetened powdered mix	..... .45
Lemonade	..... .30
Instant ice tea	..... .11
Powdered drink mix	..... .10*
Ice tea (from tea bags)	..... .03
Water	..... "Free"

\* plus sugar

If cost is your only consideration, you'll choose water. Water is a good choice for good health, too. To make it especially appealing, you might try putting a jarfull in the refrigerator so it's chilled and ready.

Some people want a flavored drink, however, and you can think nutrition as you look at these beverages. The powdered drink mix to which you add your own sugar is probably next lowest in cost, but provides only 15 percent of the daily recommendation for vitamin C.

Lemonade costs a little more, but provides 30 percent of the vitamin C needed. Tomato juice gives you 50 percent and orange juice provides 100 percent. Carbonated beverages seldom provide any nutritional value and often add unneeded calories.

Most labels give you good nutrition information so you can take this into consideration as you shop for the best bargain in terms of cost and nutritional benefit.

## Cuke Cues

Cucumbers are a plentiful and much-used vegetable. You can buy field-grown cukes or greenhouse varieties; both types can be utilized in salads or for other table uses. Additionally, there are those that are field-grown specifically for use as pickles.

This popular vegetable probably originated in India and has been cultivated for more than three thousand years. Today, a hybrid cucumber is used for making pickles; it is the result of seeds that were sent from Korea to New England, more than thirty years ago, by a New Hampshire plant scientist named Meader. These new hybrids allowed efficient mechanical harvesting for the first time, thus permitting the million-dollar pickling industry to be "reborn."

Cucumbers come in various sizes, shapes, and colors: long and thin; short and fat; smooth-skinned; bumpy; green; white; and yellow. The supply is generally good throughout the year, but is heaviest from May through August. Look for cukes that are firm along their entire length and have good color. Avoid those that are large in diameter; they'll probably have large, tough seeds. Also avoid those with withered or shriveled ends.

Store cucumbers in your refrigerator, in the vegetable hydrator; there they will be kept moderately chilled in a fairly humid environment. This vegetable is ideal for use in warm-weather salads; actually, the expression "cool as a cucumber" stems from the fact that on a hot day, the pulp temperature of a cucumber will be about 20°F. cooler than the outside air.

### YOGURT-CUCUMBER SALAD

- 1 large cucumber, about 8" long
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 cup plain unflavored yogurt
- 2 teaspoons brown mustard
- Dash white pepper
- Garnish: 2 tablespoons thinly sliced scallion (green onion), green and white portions

Using the tines of a fork score cucumber, then cut horizontally into 1/4-inch-thick slices. Arrange slices on paper towels and sprinkle with salt.

In medium bowl combine yogurt, mustard, and pepper and mix well. Pat cucumber slices dry and add to yogurt mixture, turning until slices are well coated. Garnish with scallions and serve immediately.

Makes 2 servings.

Sometimes, you can combine the very reasonable cost of the powdered drink mix with the higher cost, but better nutrition, of fruit or fruit juices. For instance, make a powdered orange drink and orange juice combination or a powdered lime drink with lemonade added. You can even make carbonated beverages go further by adding one bottle to these combinations.

It's important to remember to include milk in the beverage list. Most people need a good source of calcium and, in summer, we often

overlook milk as a beverage choice.

You can find out more about nutrition, food shopping and food preparation to help your food dollar stretch farther from the nearest office of the Oregon State University Extension Service which wants to help you eat well while getting the best value for the money.

Instant milk can add a creamy, milkshake-like consistency to these fruit-flavored beverages. You can also flavor milk with ice cream or sherbet to create a milkshake-type beverage.

Here are some delightful summer beverages to try:

### RAINBOW MILK DRINKS

- 1 pint lime, orange, lemon or raspberry sherbet
- 4 cups cold milk
- 1/4 teaspoon vanilla

In a pitcher, juice container or mixing bowl soften sherbet. Gradually blend in milk with rotary beater or whip until sherbet is thoroughly combined with milk. Stir in vanilla. Serve in chilled glasses.

### SUNSHINE SHAKES

- 1 cup instant dry milk
- 1/4 cup orange breakfast drink powder
- 2 teaspoons sugar
- 2 ice cubes
- 4 cups ice cold water

Put all ingredients into jar or blender. Shake in jar until mixed. If using blender, blend until ice is ground fine. Serve. Makes four cups.

### PINK SPARKLE PUNCH

- 1 envelope lemonade unsweetened soft drink mix
- 3/4 cup sugar
- 3 quarts water
- 1 12-oz. can frozen lemonade concentrate
- 1 16-oz. bottle lemon-lime carbonated beverage

Combine all ingredients except carbonated beverage. Slowly add this last ingredient and pour over cups.

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