It’s time for eggs!

Easter always brings a flood of eggs at the grocery store. But think beyond boiling them for Easter. This is an excellent source of protein for a low price, particularly this time of year. There was a wonderful article on the Food page of the News Miner in February that explained much of what you need to know about purchasing eggs. We won’t go over that again, but will look at ways to use eggs to stretch your food budget. This week we are going to talk about using those fresh eggs. Next week we’ll talk about recycling those boiled Easter eggs into budget-friendly meals for your family.

Eggs are a budget and a nutritional powerhouse. They are high in protein and are low in fat and cholesterol. Egg yolks one of the few foods that naturally contain Vitamin D.

Eggs should be purchased from a refrigerated case and refrigerated as soon as you get them home. This is key to keeping down the levels of food borne illnesses.

The trick to cooking eggs is to remember to keep the temperature low and the cooking time short. Too high a heat for too long and the eggs become tough and rubbery. So always use medium temperatures.

We all know how to make breakfasts from eggs, so let’s concentrate on those other meals.

Omelets are great ways to use eggs for family meals. Combine 3 eggs, 3 tablespoons water, and 1/2 teaspoon salt. Mix with a fork until thoroughly combined. In an 8 to 10 inch skillet with sloped sides, heat 1 tablespoon of butter or oil until a drop of water sizzles. Pour eggs in skillet, cook over medium heat. As eggs cook, pull eggs away from the side with a spatula and let uncooked portion flow underneath to cook. When eggs are set buy still shiny, fold and serve.

Now here comes the fun. Have leftover vegetables? Put them in the center along with some cheese before folding. Ham or meat can be placed in the center, or go daring with fresh or frozen fruit and a spoon of sour cream or yogurt.

Frittata is an open faced omelet. Cook ham, chopped meat, chopped vegetables in a small amount of margarine or butter till tender. Pour the mixed eggs over the top of vegetables or meat and cook over medium heat.
Lift edges and let uncooked eggs flow underneath and cook. When egg mixture is almost set, place in the oven under the broiler for 1 to 2 minutes or just remove from heat, cover with a tight lid and let it stand for 3 to 4 minutes. Sprinkle with cheese and serve. Try using eggs, peppers, fresh spinach, garlic, or any frozen vegetable. Top with cheddar, parmesan, or feta cheese.

Quiche is my favorite way to use up leftovers. Line a pie plate with pastry (either homemade or purchased), and bake at a 450 degrees for about 5 minutes—this will give you a good crisp crust. Then fill with whatever your family loves. I use leftover potatoes, vegetables, ham, sausage, chicken, even crabmeat and top it off with a generous amount of cheese. Stir together 3 eggs, 1 1/2 cups milk, salt and pepper. Pour it over the top and bake it at 350 for 35 to 40 minutes.

No matter which of these recipes you choose, you can feed your family quickly, easily, and nutritiously. Don’t forget to add eggs to your diet, your pocketbook will appreciate it.