

Affordable Protein Foods for Dialysis Patients

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AS IF THE diet for most dialysis patients is not challenging enough, financial constraints make it more difficult. The reality is that many dialysis patients struggle to afford the foods renal dietitians recommend. One contributing factor is the high protein requirements of dialysis patients with the high cost of better quality protein foods.¹ Better quality protein, such as leaner cuts of meat, costs more. And although they are gaining acceptance in the dialysis diet now, cheaper vegetable proteins such as beans and nuts have not been strongly recommended in the past because of their lower biological protein value and phosphorus content.² However, phosphorus from these plant foods is in a preferred natural form and thought to be less efficiently absorbed than phosphorus from other protein sources like processed foods.³ Today, plant proteins like nuts and beans are more popular sources of protein in the renal diet.

“Food deserts” can also deter dialysis patients in their effort to purchase better quality protein foods. Food deserts, or the restricted access to healthy, affordable foods because of the absence of grocery stores within convenient traveling distance, are often found in lower income areas where many people do not own cars.⁴ Nearby food stores may be few in number and sell limited products. Lack of transportation options can prevent patients from escaping food deserts. Therefore, protein ideas presented to dialysis patients should be broad enough to include an assortment of protein foods to fit a variety of circumstances. Renal dietitians are skilled to help dialysis patients think “outside the box” to make the best food choices. [Table 1](#) displays a brief list of atypical (and affordable) protein food products.

Food cupboards and other meal assistance programs such as Meals On Wheels should be explored for applicable patients. As an example, there are at least 61 food cupboard locations in the Rochester, NY area according to a 2014 report from the Information Center Central Library of Rochester and Monroe County.⁵ The Meals On Wheels

Association of America supports a national network of more than 5,000 senior nutrition programs operating in all 50 states and US territories.⁶ The United States Department of Agriculture’s (USDA’s) Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program offers nutrition assistance such as food stamps to millions of low-income individuals and families.⁷ Food stamps can be used like cash to purchase protein foods at authorized retail food stores.⁸ While protein food choices at food cupboards and through programs like Meals On Wheels may be limited or inconsistent, they are free to qualifying recipients (oral communication, 2014).⁹ However, it may be a challenge for dialysis patients to meet the recommended 1.2 g/kg protein per day from assistance programs alone.¹

Money-saving food tips are listed in [Table 2](#).¹⁰ A few points are worth addressing. Dialysis patients may struggle to buy foods in bulk. They may not be able to afford paying more money up front to get the deal. This includes membership fees for warehouse clubs like Sam’s or Costco. Storage for bulk purchases may be limited. Another consideration is a patient’s ability to prepare food at home. Kitchen space/equipment, physical limitations (cannot stand, cannot see well), mental capacity, support structure (family, friends, or live alone), and schedule (work hours, dialysis schedule) all play a role in the food a patient buys and ultimately contribute to the budget for food.

A search of affordable protein foods with the dialysis patient in mind was done in Rochester, NY in June 2014. Foods with 6 g or more protein per serving were reviewed. Oxford Dictionaries defines affordable as “inexpensive; reasonably priced.”¹¹ “Inexpensive” and “reasonably priced” may leave room for interpretation, but in the present search only protein foods costing \$3 or less per pound are included. This criterion eliminated many protein foods from consideration. Only 1 processed meat product qualified. Food products are ranked in [Tables 1, 3, and 4](#) by per pound price from lowest to highest cost.

The search focused on 4 food retailers with strong national presence: Walmart, Target, Aldi, and Trader Joe’s. Walmart, the nation’s largest retailer and grocer, currently has more than 4,000 US retail locations.¹² At present, Target is represented in 49 states and 1,780 stores.¹³ Aldi, a German grocery chain, has approximately 1,300 stores in 32 states right now and is aggressively expanding.¹⁴⁻¹⁶ In 2013, Trader Joe’s stores numbered about 400 in the United States in 42 states.¹⁷

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Table 1. Notable Protein Products at Trader Joe's, Target, and Walmart (\leq \$3/lb, 6 g or More Protein Per Serving)

Product	Price	Serving Size	Protein (g)	Na (mg)	P (mg)	K (mg)	Notes
Walmart: Pampa canned wild caught mackerel in brine	\$1.38/15 oz, \$1.47/lb	2 oz (56 g)	13	280	N/A	N/A	6 servings
Target: Market Pantry roasted and salted in-shell peanuts	\$2.69/1.5 lb, \$1.79/lb	1 oz (28 g) no shell	7	170	N/A	N/A	18 servings
Trader Joe's: Trader Joe's whole wheat cous cous	\$1.99/17.6 oz, \$1.81/lb	1/3 c (62 g) dry	8	5	N/A	N/A	8 servings. Whole grain. 7 g fiber. A fun change from traditional macaroni noodles.
Trader Joe's: Trader Joe's roasted and unsalted sunflower seeds	\$1.99/lb	1/4 c (33 g)	7	0	N/A	N/A	14 servings
Walmart: Bumble Bee canned whole baby clams	\$1.74/10 oz, \$2.78/lb	2 oz (56 g)	9	290	N/A	5	3 servings
Trader Joe's: Trader Joe's frozen turkey burgers	\$2.99/lb	1 burger (112 g)	22	280	N/A	N/A	4 servings

c, cup; g, grams; lb, pound; N/A, not applicable; oz, ounce.

Foods with 6 g or more protein per serving were considered in the search.

Food products selected are free of phosphorus additives per available ingredient lists.

Only products with 600 mg or less sodium per serving are included in the tables (foods with more than 600 mg were excluded).

Only foods priced \$3/lb or less are included. Products are listed from lowest to highest cost based on per pound price.

Nutritional information was taken directly from product label.

Protein, Na, P, K are listed per serving.

Product information obtained from (1) Target: 1050 Ridge Road, Webster NY 14580 on June 17, 2014 and June 25, 2014; (2) Trader Joe's: 3349 Monroe Avenue, Rochester NY 14618 on June 15, 2014; (3) Walmart: 441 Commerce Drive, Victor NY 14564 on June 13, 2014.

Affordable protein foods were discovered at all 4 retailers. Each retailer presents different strengths to customers to assist with the search for affordable protein foods. Walmart's advantage over its competitors is it delivers one-stop shopping with large product offerings. This is a huge benefit to customers who may have limited opportunities to get to 1 store once a week let alone several stores during the week. Over the past few years, Target has been expanding its food products to include more fresh groceries like chicken and eggs.¹⁸ Reformatted Target stores with new food layouts aim to offer customers one-stop shopping similar to the Walmart experience. Target introduced its new Simply Balanced collection last June.¹⁹ This line is an outgrowth of its Archer Farms store brand and designed to be free of many preservatives and

lower in sodium.¹⁹ Aldi sells low cost food items mostly under its own labels in small simple stores. Aldi advertises Wednesday "Fresh Meat Special Buys."²⁰ Earlier this year, Aldi launched its Simply Nature line of affordable all-natural or organic products.²¹ Trader Joe's is owned by the same German parent company as Aldi and demonstrates similar efficiencies equaling lower prices.²² More of a boutique grocery store with unique food products, like Aldi Trader Joe's limits inventory and focuses on the chain's private label.²² Although it sells fresh meats and fish too, Trader Joe's is appealing for its convenient ready-to-eat foods. Trader Joe's "adventurous" and reasonably priced food products offer variety and, consequently, are a valued weapon to help renal dietitians creatively stretch food dollars. Unlike warehouse retailers like Costco, Walmart, Target, Aldi, and Trader Joe's do not force customers to purchase bulk quantities to receive lower prices.

Results of the search were narrowed to concentrate on food products from 1 retailer—Aldi. Aldi is highlighted because of its noticeable (and continued) growth as a discount food retailer. Expected store count expansion is 50% in the next 4 years.^{15,16} Tables 3 and 4 show affordable protein food items from 1 Aldi store location in Rochester, NY in June 2014. Table 4 is the Aldi "Dollar Menu" for the most affordable protein foods costing \$1 or less per pound. As stated earlier, Table 1 shows a short list of notable and somewhat atypical protein food products from the other 3 retailers.

Table 2. Money-saving Food Tips²

Buy foods in bulk.
Cook one's own meals instead of buying already-prepared foods.
Look for sales / specials- peruse weekly fliers.
Use coupons.
Plan a weekly menu to avoid impulse buys.
Pick store brands if they are cheaper than comparable brand name products.
Eat "in season" and buy local - visit farmer's markets or grow one's own garden.
Utilize local food cupboards and programs like Meals On Wheels and food stamps if relevant.

Table 3. Affordable Protein Foods From 1 Aldi Store in Rochester, NY (\leq \$3/lb, 6 g or More Protein Per Serving)

Product	Price	Serving Size	Protein (g)	Na (mg)	P (mg)	K (mg)	Notes
Eggs							
Gold hen grade A large eggs	\$1.35/dz or 24 oz, \$.90/lb, \$.11/egg	1 egg	6	65	N/A	N/A	\$1.55/dozen at another Aldi location less than 8 miles away.
Fit & Active liquid egg whites	\$1.99/lb, \$.20/"egg"	3 T (46 g)	5	75	N/A	N/A	10 servings
Chicken and turkey							
Kirkwood frozen chicken leg quarters	\$4.29/5 lb, \$.86/lb	4 oz raw	18	290	N/A	N/A	Broth and water added (no phosphates in ingredient list but broth ingredients not specified).
Kirkwood fresh chicken leg quarters	\$.95/lb	4 oz raw	18	95	N/A	N/A	
Mountaire fresh whole chicken	\$.95/lb	4 oz raw	20	80	N/A	N/A	
Kirkwood frozen chicken drumsticks	\$2.69/2.5 lb, \$1.08/lb	4 oz raw	20	95	N/A	N/A	Broth and water added (no phosphates in ingredient list but broth ingredients not specified).
Kirkwood chicken thighs fresh	\$1.19/lb	4 oz raw	14	85	N/A	N/A	
Butterball frozen whole turkey	\$1.19/lb	4 oz raw	21	200	N/A	N/A	
Kirkwood frozen 85% lean ground turkey	\$1.69/lb	4 oz raw	17	85	N/A	N/A	
Fit & Active 93% lean fresh ground turkey	\$3.29/19.2 oz, \$2.74/lb	4 oz raw	22	85	N/A	N/A	Price was \$2.99/19.2 oz (\$2.49/lb) until week of 6/23/14 when it increased).
Beef and pork							
All natural 73% lean ground beef	\$10.99/5 lb, \$2.20/lb	4 oz raw	17	75	N/A	N/A	
All natural frozen 75% lean ground beef patties	\$6.99/3 lb, \$2.33/lb	1 patty (4 oz) raw	18	75	N/A	N/A	
Half pork loin in 8% solution	\$2.99/lb	4oz raw	21	320	N/A	N/A	Ingredients: pork, water, salt.
All natural 85% lean ground beef	\$8.99/3 lb \$3.00/lb	4 oz raw	21	75	N/A	N/A	\$.80 more per pound than less lean ground beef listed previously.
Fish							
Northern Catch canned chunk light tuna in water	\$.69/5 oz, \$2.21/lb	1/4 c (56 g)	11	180	N/A	N/A	2 servings. Canned chunk light tuna in oil is \$.79/5 oz.
Northern Catch canned wild Alaska pink salmon	\$2.49/14.75 oz, \$2.70/lb	1/4 c (63 g)	14	230	N/A	N/A	7 servings
Sea Queen frozen swai fillets	\$5.99/2 lb, \$3.00/lb	4 oz raw	15	350	N/A	N/A	Swai is the only ingredient
Processed meat							
Appleton Farms premium pork refrigerated sausage roll	\$2.89/lb	2 oz (56 g) cooked	11	420	N/A	N/A	
Dairy							
Friendly Farms skim milk	\$2.29/128 oz, \$.29/lb	1 c (245 g)	8	125	N/A	N/A	Gram weight from USDA ²³
Fit & Active yogurt plain	\$1.79/32 oz, \$.90/lb	1 c (227 g)	8	170	N/A	380	
Friendly Farms low-fat cottage cheese	\$2.29/24 oz, \$1.53/lb	1/2 c (113 g)	13	410	N/A	180	Sodium content is 820 mg for 1 cup high
Friendly Farms Greek yogurt plain	\$3.89/32oz, \$1.95/lb	1 c (227 g)	24	75	N/A	N/A	Compared with Aldi's Fit & Active plain yogurt above, this Greek yogurt is higher in cost, has 3 \times as much protein, and is lower in sodium.

(Continued)

Table 3. Affordable Protein Foods From 1 Aldi Store in Rochester, NY (\leq \$3/lb, 6 g or More Protein Per Serving)
(Continued)

Product	Price	Serving Size	Protein (g)	Na (mg)	P (mg)	K (mg)	Notes
Friendly Farms Greek yogurt 4-pack peach	\$3.29/24 oz \$2.19/lb	6 oz (170 g)	14	55	N/A	190	Sale. Convenience. Friendly Farms individual Greek yogurt and Friendly Farms 100 calorie individual Greek yogurt are \$.75 each (5.3 oz) and \$.14/oz and \$2.26/lb.
Peanut butter and nuts							
Peanut Delight creamy peanut butter	\$3.49/40 oz, \$1.40/lb	2 T (32 g)	9	135	N/A	N/A	35 servings
Peanut Delight natural creamy peanut butter spread	\$1.69/lb	2 T (32 g)	7	140	N/A	N/A	No hydrogenated oils. 14 servings.
Southern Grove dry roasted unsalted peanuts	\$2.39/lb	1 oz (28 g)	7	0	100	190	16 servings
Southern Grove party peanuts	\$2.39/lb	1 oz (28 g)	8	90	N/A	210	16 servings
Beans							
Dakota's Pride canned pork and beans	\$.49/16.25 oz, \$.48/lb	1/2 c (130 g)	6	440	N/A	N/A	3.5 servings. 6 g fiber. Sodium content is 880 mg for 1 cup high.
Simply Nature refrigerated soymilk original	\$2.29/64 oz, \$.57/lb	1 c (243 g)	7	120	N/A	260	Gram weight from USDA. ²³
Dakota's Pride canned black beans	\$.59/15.5 oz, \$.61/lb	1/2 c (130 g)	7	400	N/A	N/A	3.5 servings. 7 g fiber.
Dakota's Pride canned light red kidney beans	\$.59/15.5 oz, \$.61/lb	1/2 c (130 g)	8	250	N/A	N/A	3.5 servings. 6 g fiber.
Dakota's Pride canned chili beans	\$.59/15.5 oz, \$.61/lb	1/2 c (130 g)	8	470	N/A	N/A	3.5 servings. 2 g fiber.
Dakota's Pride canned great northern beans	\$.59/15.5 oz, \$.61/lb	1/2 c (130 g)	7	410	N/A	N/A	3.5 servings. 6 g fiber.
Dakota's Pride canned cannellini beans	\$.65/15.5 oz, \$.67/lb	1/2 c (130 g)	6	360	N/A	N/A	3.5 servings. 5 g fiber.
Dakota's Pride canned garbanzo beans	\$.65/15.5 oz, \$.67/lb	1/2 c (130 g)	7	270	N/A	N/A	3.5 servings. 6 g fiber.
Dakota's Pride canned lima beans	\$.79/15.5 oz, \$.82/lb	1/2 c (130 g)	7	330	N/A	N/A	3.5 servings. 7 g fiber.
Benita dry pinto beans	\$1.89/2 lb, \$.95/lb	1/4 c (50 g) dry	7	15	N/A	N/A	25 servings. 14 g fiber.
Benita dry black beans	\$2.49/2 lb, \$1.25/lb	1/4 c (36 g) dry	11	0	N/A	N/A	18 servings. 8 g fiber.
Dakota's Pride dry great northern beans	\$2.49/lb, \$1.25/lb	1/4 c (36 g) dry	8	20	N/A	N/A	25 servings. 13 g fiber.
Grains							
Fit & Active whole grain thin spaghetti	\$.89/13.25 oz, \$1.07/lb	2 oz (56 g) dry	9	0	N/A	200	6 servings. Whole grain. 5 g fiber.
Millville Get Balance crunch	\$2.69/15.1 oz, \$2.85/lb	1 c (53 g)	9	100	N/A	N/A	8 servings. Made with whole grains. Has higher whole grain content than the Millville Get Balance original cereal. 8 g fiber.
Millville Get Balance cereal original	\$2.69/14.9 oz, \$2.88/lb	1 c (52 g)	13	80	N/A	N/A	8 servings. Made with whole grains. 10 g fiber.

c, cup; dz, dozen; g, grams; lb, pounds; N/A, not applicable; oz, ounce.

Foods with 6 g or more protein per serving were considered in the search.

Food products selected are free of phosphorus additives per available ingredient lists.

Only products with 600 mg or less sodium per serving are included in the tables (foods with more than 600 mg were excluded).

Only foods priced \$3/lb or less are included.

Within each subcategory, foods are listed from lowest to highest cost based on per pound price.

Nutritional information was taken directly from product label.

Protein, Na, P, K are listed per serving.

Product information obtained at Aldi on 915 Ridge Road, Webster NY 14580 on June 17, 2014; June 22, 2014; June 27, 2014; June 29, 2014; and June 30, 2014.

Table 4. Aldi “Dollar Menu” — Protein Foods for \$1/lb or Less

Product	Price	Serving Size	Protein (g)	Na (mg)	P (mg)	K (mg)	Notes
Friendly Farms skim milk	\$2.29/128 oz, \$.29/lb	1 c (245 g)	8	125	N/A	N/A	Gram weight from USDA. ¹⁹
Dakota’s Pride canned pork and beans	\$.49/16.25 oz, \$.48/lb	1/2 c (130 g)	6	440	N/A	N/A	
Simply Nature refrigerated soy milk original	\$2.29/64 oz, \$.57/lb	1 c (243 g)	7	120	N/A	260	Gram weight from USDA. ¹⁹
Dakota’s Pride canned black beans	\$.59/15.5 oz, \$.61/lb	1/2 c (130 g)	7	400	N/A	N/A	
Dakota’s Pride canned light red kidney beans	\$.59/15.5 oz, \$.61/lb	1/2 c (130 g)	8	250	N/A	N/A	
Dakota’s Pride canned chili beans	\$.59/15.5 oz, \$.61/lb	1/2 c (130 g)	8	470	N/A	N/A	
Dakota’s Pride canned great northern beans	\$.59/15.5 oz, \$.61/lb	1/2 c (130 g)	7	410	N/A	N/A	
Dakota’s Pride canned cannellini beans	\$.65/15.5 oz, \$.67/lb	1/2 c (130 g)	6	360	N/A	N/A	
Dakota’s Pride canned garbanzo beans	\$.65/15.5 oz, \$.67/lb	1/2 c (130 g)	7	270	N/A	N/A	
Dakota’s Pride canned lima beans	\$.79/15.5 oz, \$.82/lb	1/2 c (130 g)	7	330	N/A	N/A	
Kirkwood frozen chicken leg quarters	\$4.29/5 lb, \$.86/lb	4 oz raw	18	290	N/A	N/A	
Fit & Active plan yogurt	\$1.79/32 oz, \$.90/lb	1 c (227 g)	8	170	N/A	380	
Gold hen grade A large eggs	\$1.35/dz or 24 oz, \$.90/lb, \$.11/egg	1 egg	6	65	N/A	N/A	
Kirkwood fresh chicken leg quarters	\$.95/lb	4 oz raw	18	95	N/A	N/A	
Mountaire fresh whole chicken	\$.95/lb	4 oz raw	20	80	N/A	N/A	
Benita dry pinto beans	\$1.89/2 lb, \$.95/lb	1/4 c (50 g) dry	7	15	N/A	N/A	

c, cup; dz, dozen; g, grams; lb, pounds; N/A, not applicable; oz, ounce.

Only foods priced \$1/lb or less are included. Products are listed from lowest to highest cost based on per pound price.

Foods with 6 g or more protein per serving were considered in the search.

Food products selected are free of phosphorus additives per available ingredient lists.

Only products with 600 mg or less sodium per serving are included in the tables (foods with more than 600 mg were excluded).

Nutritional information was taken directly from product label.

Protein, Na, P, K are listed per serving.

Product information obtained at Aldi on 915 Ridge Road, Webster NY 14580 on June 17, 2014; June 22, 2014; June 27, 2014; June 29, 2014; and June 30, 2014.

Protein foods presented in Tables 1, 3, and 4 include eggs, meat, fish, processed meat, dairy, peanut butter, nuts, beans, and grains. Real food and not supplements is discussed. Although granola bars with added protein are gaining popularity and are a cheaper alternative to the protein bars currently on the shelves, they are priced well above \$3 per pound and accordingly were omitted. Although it is known that some foods with phosphorus additives may not be high phosphorus content, such foods are excluded from the tables. In addition, any products with more than 600 mg of sodium per serving are not listed in the tables. Nutritional information as reported in Tables 1, 3, and 4 was taken directly from product labels. The USDA National Nutrient Database for Standard Reference was used in a few cases as a reference for serving size.²³

A wide range of protein foods is represented in the tables for several reasons. For example, processed meats are not ideal because of higher sodium content, but the reality is that patients do eat processed meats and for some this is their primary source of protein. Renal dietitians

should acknowledge these less than perfect protein food choices and suggest the best alternatives (i.e., choose chicken sausage over deli bologna). Another reason for the variety of protein foods is because dialysis patients often have poor appetites and do not eat well. In these situations, allowing several types of protein foods can help increase intake. Yet another reason for presenting various protein food choices, such as vegetable proteins, is to meet the needs of dialysis patients who dislike or cannot tolerate meat products. Most vegetable proteins have fiber. High-protein grains like cereals have fiber and often contain whole grains. Historically, fiber and whole grains have been difficult to incorporate into the dialysis diet, but their inclusion is positive and delivers health benefits to dialysis patients.

Table 5 summarizes observations made when shopping for protein foods at the 4 national retailers in Rochester, NY. Differences in availability and cost of protein foods may exist regionally and locally. Prices are fluid and can change frequently. Not only must renal dietitians be sensitive to the unique circumstances and preferences of

Table 5. Observations Made When Shopping for Protein Foods at 4 National Retailers in Rochester, NY

Affordable protein foods are available at all 4 national retailers. See Tables 1, 3, and 4.

While Aldi sells a variety of affordable protein foods without phosphates, some protein products do contain phosphates (and are excluded from the tables). This is a pattern noticed at the other 3 retailers, as well. Because no golden “phosphate-free list” exists, renal dietitians must teach dialysis patients to read all labels and not make generalizations about products containing phosphates.

Prices in one store do change from week to week. Sales seem more apparent at Target; the other retailers feature specials but appear to advertise more consistent, stable prices.

Raw, uncooked, and plain/unprepared foods may be cheaper than seasoned/prepared food.

Accordingly, deli meat, bacon, and sausages are more expensive (and also provide less protein) per ounce than unprocessed meats.

Cheese is more costly than milk and yogurt. While phosphate-free deli meat and bacon options were identified at the retailers, they failed to make the list due to their higher cost. In fact, only one processed meat product is \$3 or less per pound. The only cheese product less than or equal to \$3 per pound is cottage cheese. Cottage cheese is a higher sodium cheese.

The lowest priced meats are the cheaper cuts of chicken (like leg quarters) and whole chicken/turkey.

Affordable and appropriate pork options are more difficult to find. Pork products seem to contain more phosphorus additives.

Pre-portioned foods are more expensive than the alternative: Convenience equals higher cost.

Vegetable proteins like beans and peanut butter are more affordable per serving than many other protein foods, but provide less protein per ounce than meat or fish.

Canned fish is considerably cheaper than fresh fish and often frozen fish, too. While it does contain sodium, canned fish appears to possess superior nutritional stats (better ingredient list, sodium content) to canned meats like chicken and ham.

Although supplements have their place, real food like fresh ground turkey or eggs is a better deal than most types of protein bars, powders, and drinks.

Granola bars with added protein have made a noticeable entrance into the protein bar market. Although they are a cheaper alternative to the \$1-2 protein bars currently on the shelves, they are priced well above \$3 per pound and are excluded from the table. Review of 8 brands during the search reveals cost from \$5.28 per pound to \$6.72 per pound.

It takes effort and time to find the best price deals.

their dialysis patients, they must also be familiar with the areas in which they work to use available resources to make the best recommendations.

Without question, dialysis patients are challenged on many levels to comply with the renal diet. Besides numerous diet restrictions, cost is another issue that may prevent success. Good quality protein foods can be expensive. The suggested 1.2 g of protein per kilogram of bodyweight per day is a lot of protein to afford and eat.¹ But affordable protein foods do exist, and dialysis patients should rely on renal dietitians to help identify these foods. Assistance programs like local food cupboards offer protein foods and should be used. National food retailers sell affordable protein foods and appear to recognize that there is a demand for growth in this area. Regional (and local) differences in price and variety of protein foods need to be acknowledged. Clearly, the role of the renal dietitian goes beyond teaching patients to read labels for nutritional information. Renal dietitians can also teach patients to be more cost conscious by encouraging patients to check prices, cut coupons, etcetera, to save money when they buy food. Taking a multifaceted approach will help renal dietitians make realistic, appropriate, and creative suggestions to help dialysis patients meet their protein requirements in an affordable way.

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