

FACTFILE: GCSE HOME ECONOMICS: Food and Nutrition



Being an effective consumer when shopping for food

Learning outcome

Students should be able to:

- evaluate the following food shopping options for a range of consumers:
 - independent grocery shops;
 - supermarkets;
 - markets;
 - farm shops;
 - online shopping;
 - shopping apps.



Consumers have so many options available when shopping for food. It is important to learn the advantages and disadvantages of each option to decide which is the most suitable for different types of consumers. You will need to know how to justify the suitability of different shopping options for different types of consumers.

Shopping option: Independent grocery shops

Examples: Local corner shop, Mace, Spar

Advantages:

- Range of local food products.
- Close to home and usually in residential areas.
- Often sell products in small quantities, which ultimately reduces waste.
- Personal and friendly service.

Disadvantages:

- Often more expensive.
- Stock/choice of products may be limited and may not be rotated regularly.
- Range of products on sale may be limited.

Shopping option: Supermarkets

Examples: Tesco, Sainsbury, Asda

Advantages:

- Wide range of products and brands available.
- Special offers and promotions which may save consumers money.
- Economies of scale – selling more products for less therefore saving consumers money.
- Range of services and facilities on offer for a wide range of consumer needs/wants.

Disadvantages:

- Impersonal service.
- May overspend and make impulse purchases because of the special offers available.
- Often situated out of town and therefore may be more difficult to access.
- Often very busy and noisier than a smaller shopping option.

Shopping option: Markets

Examples: St Georges Market in Belfast

Advantages:

- Range of local produce available therefore helping the environment by reducing air miles and helping to support the local economy.
- Expert advice available.
- May be cheaper than shops.
- Sociable experience for consumers.

Disadvantages:

- May only be available on certain days and possibly weather dependent.
- May not have access to the range of products available from other shopping options.
- Packaging and labelling may not be available on the food products.

Shopping option: Farm shops

Examples: McKees, Cloughbane Farm shop

Advantages:

- Supports local community.
- Local product, less air miles therefore better for the environment.
- Wider range of organic produce.

Disadvantages:

- Generally more expensive than supermarkets.
- May only have seasonal vegetables compared to the range available at a supermarket.

Shopping option: Online shopping

Examples: Tesco, Sainsbury, Asda etc.

Advantages:

- Available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
- Wide range of products available.
- Can purchase from the comfort of your own home.
- Able to budget; online bill is visible as items are added to the 'basket'.

Disadvantages:

- Security issues (Internet or payment card fraud).
- Don't get to handle the product before purchasing it.
- May have to pay postage or delivery charge.
- Don't get the product immediately.

Shopping option: Shopping apps

Examples: mySupermarket

See: <https://itunes.apple.com/gb/app/mysupermarket-grocery-shopping/id640504087?mt=8>

Advantages:

- Create and manage grocery lists while finding the best offers with the "super list".
- Shop from any supermarket.
- Daily prices updated for Tesco, Asda, Sainsbury's, Morrisons, Boots, Superdrug, Waitrose, Ocado, Aldi, Poundland and Iceland.
- Create and manage shopping lists at home, on the go or in store.
- Find products through search, filter and barcode scanner.
- Compare the price of individual items or the entire list across 11 grocery stores.
- Set price alerts so never overpay on favourite items.
- Get saving suggestions and exclusive cashback vouchers to save even more.
- The shopping list is automatically synced to my Supermarket account.

Disadvantages:

- Don't get to assess the aesthetical quality of the food, e.g. texture, smell etc.
- Difficult to know/check date of food items.

