

A credit munch worthy diet: £11 a week!



Eat well, live well: Celia Gunn goes organic

DISAPPOINTED by Stuart Jeffries's failure to live on £10 a week (Mail), and aware of how billions of people all over the world live on far less than that, my husband and I, a writer and a retired doctor in our late 50s and early 60s, tried to live on £10-worth of organic food a week.

We aimed for a simple diet, based on solid nutrition. I am sensitive to wheat and dairy, so we avoided them. For the first week, we bought the exact amounts we thought we'd need, excluding any offers. Comparison pricing between shops was essential. Mostly, the supermarkets were cheaper. For weeks two and three, we found that an ordered box of varied vegetables was better value. We live active lives, walking our dogs twice a day and tending a half-acre

garden, researching and writing, giving talks and leading workshops.

On day one, I chose liquorice tea for its sweetness. One teabag can make four cups a day. Over lunch, we talked about the South American Indians with whom Anthony once worked, who ate a pot of beans and rice a day, with herbs, greens and an occasional meat-kill. I wasn't hungry and felt optimistic, even smug. On day two, I felt a little deprived and often thought about a chocolate biscuit. But I wasn't hungry nor did I feel weak.

On day three, we went for a walk in the countryside: never have I noticed so many places offering fish and chips. I had a slight headache in the afternoon and, in the evening, felt a physical shift within myself. My husband suggested this was because my body was switching

to consuming its own fat reserves. By day four, we'd both lost a pound or two and knew we weren't getting enough calories. We added brown rice and chickpeas to our diet.

By day five, I was sleeping very well and felt unusually energised. On day six, we did some gardening for five hours. I believe I felt so well due to the basic good nutrition and lack of processed foods. By day seven, we had completed the experiment and hadn't lost any more weight.

Two people, one week on organic food: total expenditure £22.66. This is definitely credit-crunch-worthy. And we both felt so energetic that we continued for 21 days!

Ms CELIA GUNN,
Bath, Somerset.

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Tellers from hell

David Cousins. Cheltenham Glos