

Manage Food Waste at Home

Brought to you by Tri-County Sustainability Food Waste Subcommittee

- Save money (family of 4 throws away \$1300 to \$2300 annually in food waste)
- Reduce climate change (40% of food purchased winds up in landfills creating methane gas).
- When we throw away food, we also throw away the precious resources that went into producing this food.
- This includes the use of land and natural resources, the social cost to the environment and our biodiversity.
- Food waste accounts for a third of all human-caused greenhouse gas emissions and generates 8% of greenhouse gases annually. With these statistics in place, there is a huge need to reduce this environmental footprint.

Top Ten Tips for reducing waste

1. Create a “use this first shelf” in your refrigerator and pantry. This should be the most visible shelf so everyone can see it. Left overs and produce that need to be consumed should go on this shelf in fridge. Older Pantry items so you can create a meal or donate before they go bad. <https://lifehacker.com/avoid-food-waste-with-an-eat-this-first-shelf-1841469901?msclkid=5f0bc9eecef911ec95dfca76ee2e39fa>
2. Shop your refrigerator and pantry before going to the store. This uses up items that need to be used before they go bad.
3. Shop with intention – pick loose fruits and vegetables and bulk grains so you only buy what you need.
4. Don't over buy or order when having a party. We aren't actually feeding an army. Use a party calculator to help you know how much food per person. <https://calculate-this.com/cooking-crowd-calculator#calc>
5. Store food properly. Fruits should be stored in low humidity crisper drawer. While vegetables should be stored in high humidity crisper drawer. Do not store potatoes and onions together. Place herbs, scallions, and asparagus in glass with a little water. <https://www.partselect.com/blog/proper-fridge-food-storage/>
6. Use scraps to create new items. When cutting vegetables (onions, herbs, carrots, celery, etc.) save those end bits in a freezer bag. Make vegetable, chicken and beef stock later when you have enough. This goes for the bones of fish, poultry, pork and beef. Why pay for stock when you can make it from scraps. So many more ideas at <https://zerowastechef.com/>
7. Preserve Food before it goes bad. Blanch and freeze it, dehydrate it, ferment it, can it, or freeze dry it. Do not know how to preserve food take a class at one of the technical schools or the county agricultural centers.
8. Expiry Dates or Best Buy Dates – these are not regulated and are used to control stock at the retailer level. Use common sense when evaluating food with “dates” on them.

9. Join your local Buy Nothing Group do a “flash give” when you have extra food. Or ask for a small amount of a condiment so you don’t need to buy a big bottle.
10. Last Resort is to compost food waste. Backyard composting, indoor vermicomposting, counter top system (such as Lomi), and/or bokashi composter. Not interested in doing it yourself? Use a pickup service (<https://www.gardenstatecomposting.com/>)_Composting returns nutrients back to the soil to grow healthy food.

