

# food waste

THE SILENT & MASSIVE CONTRIBUTOR TO CLIMATE CHANGE

*First off, thank you for your interest in food waste & reducing your footprint on our planet. Change starts small, it takes people like you to lead by example & make a difference. This how-to guide will provide ways to reduce your footprint on our planet while saving money. By following just a few of these tips & tricks, you can make an impact! The end of the guide will provide resources that go into greater detail on each way to prevent food waste or you can **click any fact or image for a link to more information on that topic.***

## WHY SHOULD YOU CARE?

Food waste is rarely discussed, yet it is one of the biggest environmental problems in the world. Some even call it "the world's dumbest problem".

*if food waste were a country it would be the third largest emitter of greenhouse gases*

*the annual value of food wasted globally is \$1 trillion*

*25% of the world's freshwater supply is used to produce food that is never eaten*

*40% of all food is wasted*

*every year, an area larger than China is used to produce food that is never eaten*

Meanwhile, **25,000 people die every day from starvation**. 1 in every 4 people is food insecure. We could feed every hungry person on our planet with the food we waste.

# reducing food waste

## A HOW-TO GUIDE

### **FREEZE YOUR FOOD**

*preserve your food for many months or even years!*

You can freeze just about anything. bread, pesto, milk, cheese, etc. A few things that don't freeze well are veggies with high water content such as lettuce, cucumbers, and radishes



### **UNDERSTAND PRODUCT DATING**

*expiration dates are not federally regulated*

This makes dating labels extremely difficult to decipher. Food is always good past its expiration date, with the exception of baby food, which is still safe to eat, it simply loses caloric value. According to the USDA, dates are simply to help consumers decide when food is of best quality, dates are not an indicator of the product's safety. 90% of Americans throw away food prematurely.



### **MAKE SOUP, CURRY, STEWS, & SAUCES**

*lots of veggies? soft tomatoes?*

To make soup throw some veggies in a pot with a couple cups of water on medium high then bring to a simmer for a lovely soup! Add spices, garlic, onions, and whatever else you have to make a great nutritious soup.





## MAKE SMOOTHIES

*too much fruit?*

You can make tons of smoothies at once and freeze them in glass jars, just put them in the fridge the night before you want to enjoy them. Fruits that are starting to go bad have sweet flavors that you can use to create your smoothie.

## MAKE A COMPOST

*reuse your food scraps*

When food waste goes in the landfill it has no access to oxygen and produces methane which significantly warms up the planet. In the first 2 decades after its release, methane is 84 times more potent than carbon dioxide. Composting allows for aerobic decomposition which produces far less methane. You can also drop off your compost at a local garden or farm.



## BE CAUTIOUS WITH SUBSCRIPTION SERVICES

*companies like Imperfect Produce may actually be increasing food waste*

These "ugly produce" companies are incentivizing large-scale agribusiness to continue overproducing. They reduce CSA (community supported agriculture) box sales from local farms. Food service boxes often deliver much more food than the average person can consume in time, resulting in many of the products going to waste. They also deliver in single-use cardboard, whereas CSA boxes are reused.



## STORE FOOD PROPERLY

*improperly storing food reduces its life*

Soggy radishes, carrots, lettuce, cabbage, and other veggies and fruits can be soaked in cold water and revived. Bread should never go in the fridge, but can go in the freezer.







## SHARE WITH OTHERS

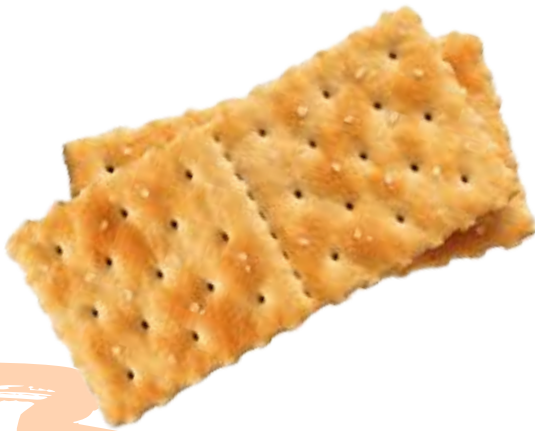
*too much food? don't want your food?*

Food banks and food pantries accept non-perishable unopened goods. If you have veggies, opened goods, or other food items to share then Olio is a great way to do so. Facebook marketplace and community groups have also proved as great places to share food! Just upload a picture of what you have and others can claim it. Then simply put it on your porch for them to pick it up.

## YOU CAN PICKLE THAT!

*beets, peppers, carrots, radishes, cucumbers, & beyond*

Boil 2 cups vinegar, 2 cups water, 2 tablespoons kosher salt, a few teaspoons of sugar and pour into a jar of veggies with onions, and your choice of spices (fennel seeds, mustard seeds, dill, coriander seeds, etc.)



## REVIVE STALE FOOD

*crackers, bread, cookies, & cereals*

Throw your stale foods in the oven at 350 for 3-5 minutes to revive them! Sprinkle a little water on baguettes and stick them in the oven for about 5-10 minutes.

## ONLY BUY WHAT YOU NEED & DON'T BODY SHAME PRODUCE

*use lists & be aware that the shape of your fruits & veggies don't determine their taste*

By making grocery lists and shopping for only what you need, you can save money and prevent food waste. 6 billion pounds of produce are unharvested or unsold for aesthetic reasons every year in America. Show retailers that this food should be eaten, don't be shy when it comes to eating odd shaped foods.





## REPURPOSE YOUR FOOD

*turn tortillas into chips & oats into milk*



Have too many tortillas, but not enough tortilla chips? Slice tortillas into strips, cover with vegetable oil and bake in the oven at 350 for 4-6 minutes on each side. Oatmeal, but no milk? To make oat milk blend 1 cup of oats with 4 cups of water for 30 seconds and strain through pantyhose or a sock. Use the leftover oats for a face mask, oatmeal, or cookies. Many foods can be repurposed like these to cut down on food waste and save money.

## GROW VEGGIES FROM SCRAPS

*reuse your food scraps*

Green onions and celery are veggies you should never have to buy from a store. When the bottoms are placed in a jar of water they grow like crazy. There are many other veggies that you can regrow as well, these include lettuce, carrots, onions, leeks, cabbage, etc.



## PLANT A GARDEN

*with free seeds from various sources*

There are many ways to get free seeds for your garden and many easy vegetables and fruits that can be planted so you have fresh food right in your own backyard or apartment.



## FEED SCRAPS TO ANIMALS

*find animals friends to feed*

Through friends, the Nextdoor app, or your local Facebook community, you can feed food scraps to pigs, chickens, rabbits, and other animals. According to the food waste pyramid, feeding animals is the third best option to reduce food waste.





## GET CREATIVE

*use what you've got for fertilizers, face masks, craft projects, cleaning, & more*

Use old avocados as a face mask. Use coffee grounds as an exfoliant, in your garden, or to scrub with around the house. Tea leaves can also be used in the garden, to start a fire, as a face scrub, or for cleaning.

## KEEP THE FRIDGE UNCLUTTERED

*food is often wasted due to a cluttered fridge*

Fresh fruits, vegetables, and herbs are often forgotten about in the deep recesses of the fridge. This food would likely have been consumed if the refrigerator was properly organized.



## FERMENTING

*make your veggies last while providing amazing probiotic benefits*

Fermented foods are rich in probiotic bacteria which enhances your gut microbiome, digestive system, & immune system. Veggies that may go bad in a week can be preserved for over a year with fermentation.

## USING THE WHOLE FOOD

*eat your peels, turn broccoli stalks into coleslaw, make pesto from carrot tops*

Peels have loads of fiber and nutrients, don't let them go to waste. Shred broccoli stalks, add rice vinegar, ginger, salt, & pepper for a great snack. Make pesto out of carrot tops, eat the yolks of your eggs, use the whole fruit in your smoothies.







## MAKE JAMS, JELLIES, COMPOTES, & FRUIT BUTTERS

*turn bruised apples & old fruit into spreads*

Stew bruised apples with a sprinkle of brown sugar to make apple butter. Mash fruits into jams and jellies.

## TAKE HOME RESTAURANT LEFTOVERS

*& actually eat them*

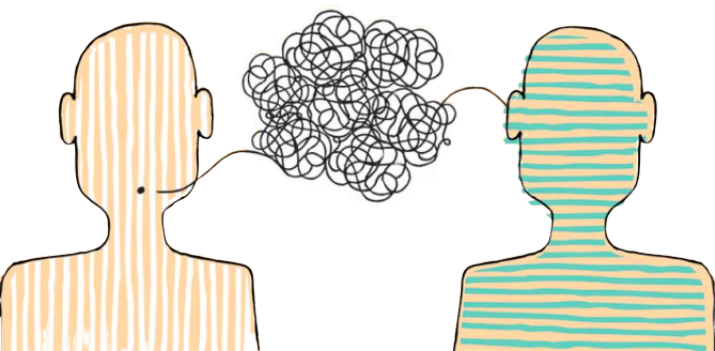
Bring reusable tupperware or bags to take your leftovers home without waste.



## DISCUSS FOOD WASTE

*talk about the importance of reducing food waste with friends, restaurants, & grocery stores & educate yourself on the subject*

Consumers account for 50% of food waste in America. Talk to your friends and family about cutting back their food waste. Encourage your local restaurants and grocery stores to reduce their food waste and give the rest to food banks and those in need.



## CREATIVE RECIPES TO USE FOOD WASTE

*stem, bones, & everything in between*

Using the site Save The Food, you can choose from recipes that use parts and pieces of vegetables that would normally be tossed. Use bruised apples, pears, old bananas, the whole carrot, and other scraps to make beautiful meals.





# resources

*thank you for your efforts to reduce food waste! each picture in the guide is connected to a link or you can choose to use these links which will walk you through each step in greater detail:*

**FOOD WASTE FACTS:** [olioex.com/food-waste/food-waste-facts/](https://olioex.com/food-waste/food-waste-facts/)

**FOOD INSECURITY FACTS:** [tinyurl.com/foodinsecuritylin4](https://tinyurl.com/foodinsecuritylin4)

**FREEZING:** [www.farmdrop.com/blog/zero-waste-freezer-hacks/](https://www.farmdrop.com/blog/zero-waste-freezer-hacks/)

**FOOD PRODUCT DATES:** [tinyurl.com/falsedates](https://tinyurl.com/falsedates)

**SOUPS, CURRIES, STEWS, SAUCES:** [tinyurl.com/reduze](https://tinyurl.com/reduze) & [tinyurl.com/steww](https://tinyurl.com/steww)

**SMOOTHIES:** [tinyurl.com/vegsmoot](https://tinyurl.com/vegsmoot)

**COMPOSTING:** [learn.eartheasy.com/guides/composting/](https://learn.eartheasy.com/guides/composting/) & [tinyurl.com/methane84](https://tinyurl.com/methane84)

**SUBSCRIPTION BOXES:** [tinyurl.com/notsogreatsubbox](https://tinyurl.com/notsogreatsubbox) & [tinyurl.com/helporhurt](https://tinyurl.com/helporhurt)

**STORING:** [savethefood.com/storage](https://savethefood.com/storage)

**SHARING:** [olio.com](https://olio.com)

**PICKLING:** [tinyurl.com/youcanpicklethat](https://tinyurl.com/youcanpicklethat)

**STALE FOOD:** [earth911.com/food/revive-stale-food-tricks](https://earth911.com/food/revive-stale-food-tricks)

**REDUCE BUYING & UGLY PRODUCE:** [tinyurl.com/shopplless](https://tinyurl.com/shopplless) & [tinyurl.com/uglypro](https://tinyurl.com/uglypro)

**REPURPOSING:** [tinyurl.com/oatmilkandcookies](https://tinyurl.com/oatmilkandcookies) & [tinyurl.com/leftovertortillas](https://tinyurl.com/leftovertortillas)

**GROW VEGGIE SCRAPS:** [tinyurl.com/vegscraps](https://tinyurl.com/vegscraps)

**PLANT A GARDEN:** [tinyurl.com/free-seeds](https://tinyurl.com/free-seeds) & [tinyurl.com/easy-garden](https://tinyurl.com/easy-garden)

**GIVE ANIMALS SCRAPS:** [tinyurl.com/animalfoodscraps](https://tinyurl.com/animalfoodscraps)

**GET CREATIVE:** [tinyurl.com/oldavo](https://tinyurl.com/oldavo) & [tinyurl.com/reuseco](https://tinyurl.com/reuseco) & [tinyurl.com/reusetea](https://tinyurl.com/reusetea)

**UNCLUTTER YOUR FRIDGE:** [tinyurl.com/unclutrd](https://tinyurl.com/unclutrd)

**FERMENTING:** [tinyurl.com/fermentyum](https://tinyurl.com/fermentyum) & [tinyurl.com/fermentYAYtion](https://tinyurl.com/fermentYAYtion)

**USE THE WHOLE FOOD:** [tinyurl.com/eatthepeal](https://tinyurl.com/eatthepeal) & [tinyurl.com/usesforscraps](https://tinyurl.com/usesforscraps)

**JAMS, JELLIES, COMPOTES, FRUIT BUTTERS:** [tinyurl.com/jamjellycompote](https://tinyurl.com/jamjellycompote)

**LEFTOVERS:** [tinyurl.com/leftovas](https://tinyurl.com/leftovas) & [savethefood.com/recipes/](https://savethefood.com/recipes/)

**TALK ABOUT IT:** [tinyurl.com/foodwastedocs](https://tinyurl.com/foodwastedocs)

**CREATIVE RECIPES:** [savethefood.com/recipes/](https://savethefood.com/recipes/)

have your own ideas for how to reduce food waste? add to [this google doc!](#)

*if the clickable links within the pictures are not working, or this guide is printed, scan this QR code with your phone camera to download this PDF and access the links with ease*



# RECOMMENDED CONSUMPTION GUIDELINES

	PRODUCT	CONSUME BY*
 <b>BAKERY ITEMS</b>	Fresh or Refrigerated	On or before
	Frozen	Use best judgment
	Tortillas	2 weeks
 <b>BEVERAGES</b>	Fresh (Refrigerated)	21 days
	Shelf-Stable, Plastic Bottle	Indefinitely
	Stimulant Drinks, Shelf-Stable	9 months
 <b>DAIRY &amp; ALTERNATIVE DAIRY</b> (REFRIGERATED)	Butter and Hard Cheese	3 months
	Eggs, in Shell	1 month
	Eggs, Hard Cooked	On or before
	Eggs, Pasteurized or Egg Substitute	10 days
	Ice Cream	Indefinitely
	Liquid Dairy (Milk, Half & Half, Whipping Cream)	10 days
	Soft Cheese, Yogurt, Sour Cream, Cottage Cheese	14 days
	Non-Dairy Liquid (Rice Milk, Soy Milk)	10 days
	Non-Dairy Solid (Soy Cheese, Soy Yogurt)	14 days
 <b>DRY &amp; CANNED GOODS</b>	Non-Dairy Spread (Margarine)	6 months
	Shelf-Stable Milks (Dairy & Non-Dairy)	1 year
	Acidic Canned & Jarred Foods (Tomatoes, etc.)	12-18 months
	Baby Food	On or before
	Canned Foods	Indefinitely
	Cereal, Crackers, and Prepackaged Foods	2 years
	Dressing, Mayonnaise	1 year
	Dried Goods (Beans, Pasta, Rice, etc.)	Indefinitely
 <b>FRESH PRODUCE</b>	Jarred Foods, Shelf-Stable	Indefinitely
	Pouched Foods	1 year
 <b>FRESH PRODUCE</b>	Bulk or Packaged Produce	Use best judgment
	Melons, Cut	On or before
 <b>MEAT &amp; ALTERNATIVE MEAT</b>	Meat, Poultry, Seafood (Refrigerated)	On or before
	Meat, Poultry, Seafood (Frozen)	Use best judgment
	Meat Substitutes (Tofu, etc.) (Refrigerated)	5 days
	Meat Substitutes (Tofu, etc.) (Frozen)	1 year
 <b>PREPARED FOODS</b>	Deli-prepared, packaged by store	2 days
	Pre-packaged prepared, packaged by manufacturer	14 days (refrigerated) 1 year (frozen)
	Pre-packaged prepared with dairy, packaged by manufacturer	7 days

**WHEN IN DOUBT - THROW IT OUT**

\*This poster outlines the amount of time past the date on the package that food should be safe and wholesome to consume as considered by Food Lifeline's Food Safety Committee. These recommendations assume that all product has been handled properly. Please use your best judgment, and *when in doubt, throw it out*.