

FOOD WASTE PREVENTION TIPS

Home is where the food is and there are many things each of us can do to reduce the amount of food we waste - and save money at the same time! Food Waste prevention starts when you are buying your groceries and then continues in the home where you store, cook and serve food. Here are some tips for each step in this process.



1. BETTER BUYING

PLAN AHEAD

- ★ Before you go shopping, have a look in your fridge, freezer and cupboard. If you are shopping for the week, try and plan your meals around what you find.
- ★ Then make a list of what you need.....and then try to stick to it! Not only will a list cut down your food waste it will also make shopping an easier experience.

UNDERSTAND THE TERMS USED ON FOOD PACKAGING

Use By:

A key date for food safety - food should be eaten by this date. 'Use by' appears on fresh food that goes off such as fish, salads and soft cheese. Food should not be used past this date unless it is frozen.

Best Before:

Appears on a wide range of longer lasting foods such as tinned, dried and frozen foods. Food is in its best condition up to this date - it should be safe to eat after this date, but the it may begin to lose its flavour and texture.

Sell By & Display Until:

Used by shops for internal stock control. Of no interest to the householder.

SHOPPING



- ★ Don't go shopping when you are hungry - you'll buy more than you need!
- ★ Check the use-by date to avoid buying food that might go off if not eaten immediately. Poke around at the back of shelves - you'll often find 'use-by dates' that are further away. Shops will always put the newer stock at the back of the shelf.
- ★ Beware of special deals such as 'buy one get one free' - these are great for toilet rolls and shampoo but can be bad for fruit, veg and salads - things that go off. Often these are the things we buy because of a good deal but we end up throwing them out.
- ★ Try and buy loose fruit and veg - you get what you need and can cut down on packaging wastes in your bin as well.
- ★ Buy locally and in season. This food will taste better and help protect local industry.
- ★ Try shopping on line - you get what you want and save money - its like magic.
- ★ Shop for what you actually eat, not for what you want/wish you would eat e.g. "I'm going to be healthy this week and eat yoghurts!"...and then never eat them.





2. SAVVY STORAGE

FRIDGE

- ★ Make sure fruit and veg are stored correctly - there is more information on this at STOPFoodWaste.ie
- ★ Keep your fridge in order - a clean and well maintained fridge will ensure food is not lost behind a jar or container. Always try and keep your fridge between 0-5°C.
- ★ Supermarkets are smart and use stock control. Try this at home and rotate the food in your fridge and freezer - put new stuff behind older food so when grabbing food you will always use the oldest stuff.
- ★ Keep all dairy products in the fridge. As the saying goes 'milk left out for an hour is the same as a day in the fridge!'
- ★ Fridges tend to dehydrate food. Keep meat, poultry or fish in an air-tight container, covered in a bag or wrapped in cling film. Alternatively freeze it until needed.
- ★ Keep salad leaves in box with a lid on or in a bag with a clip - a small bit of water in the bottom will prolong their freshness.



FREEZER

- ★ When freezing, cut the food into the portion size that you are going to need later. Label everything and ensure that the food is fully covered or tightly wrapped. BUT don't forget what's in there for 3 years!
- ★ If you are not going to use meat or fish, freeze it or cook it and eat it in the following days.
- ★ Bread is commonly thrown out - try to buy smaller packs. If you don't use bread that often try freezing the loaf and taking slices out as you need them. Most toasters have a de-frost option making it quick and easy to get bread when you need it.

3. CANNY COOKING



- ★ Use correct portion sizes - these are usually included on the packet instructions - the tricky part is following them!
- ★ Try using the same measuring method each time - you'll learn what suits you and those you live with
- ★ Use leftovers to make delicious and cheap meals - try this once a week - the last supper! For some luscious leftover recipe ideas check out our "Quick and Easy Recipes" leaflet or see STOPFoodWaste.ie for more ideas.
- ★ Make extra and have it for lunch or the next evening's meal. Otherwise you can freeze it for another day
- ★ Soups are easy to make from leftovers - a tasty lunch for tomorrow
- ★ Make stock with leftovers and freeze it as ice cubes - these can be stored and used in the future. This also works great for red wine...if there is any left in the bottle!

