

# Love Food, Hate Waste!

## Reducing Wasted Food

Most people don't realize how much food they throw away every day—from uneaten leftovers to spoiled produce. **In the United States, over 63 million tons of food is sent to landfills each year, and only about 4% of all food we throw away gets diverted to composting.** By managing food sustainably and reducing waste, we can save money, provide for those who do not have enough to eat in our communities and conserve resources for future generations.



## Benefits of Reducing Food Waste



**Saves money by buying less food that may not be eaten.** The average American consumer spends roughly \$1,300 per year on food that ends up being wasted.



**Reduces methane emission** generated from landfills and lowers greenhouse gas emissions. Landfills are the third-largest contributor of methane in the United States.



**Conserves resources**, such as energy, land and water. It also reduces pollution associated with the growing, manufacturing, transporting and selling of food.



**Supports the hungry** by providing donated, untouched food that would have otherwise gone to waste. In 2019, 10% of Americans suffered from food insecurity.

# How You Can Reduce Wasted Food at Home

Planning, prepping and storing food can help your household waste less food.

Here are some helpful tips:

## Made Easy! ✓ Plan & Organize

- **Plan out your meals for the week** and stick to your shopping list, buying only the things needed for those meals.
- **Check your refrigerator and pantry before going to the store;** avoid buying food you already have.
- **Keep your refrigerator organized** by rotating new items to the back and items that need to be eaten soon to the front and center.
- **Create an “eat me first” box** or bowl to consume the most perishable items first.



## Made Easy! ✓ Storage & Preparation

- **Keep fruits** that give off natural gases as they ripen (bananas, apples, tomatoes) **in a different bin than other fruits and vegetables.**
- **Preserve fresh foods and leftovers by putting them in the freezer.** Bread, meats, sliced fruit and abundant seasonal produce can all be frozen.
- **Wait to wash berries until you are ready to eat them** to prevent them from molding too soon.
- **Prepare foods for quick and easy access** by storing them in clear serving size storage containers.



## Made Easy! ✓ Be Thrifty & Save Money

- **Be creative when cooking.** Casseroles, soups and smoothies are great ways to make use of leftovers and fruits and vegetables past their prime.
- **Shop smart!** Start by shopping in your own refrigerator and cupboards first.
- **Avoid shopping when you're hungry,** as that can lead to overbuying.
- **Buy locally-grown foods** and less than perfect looking fruits and vegetables to save money.
- **Pay attention to expiration dates** and learn the difference between “sell-by,” “use-by” and “best-by” on products.



Thank you for your efforts to keep food waste out of the trash reduces waste going to the landfill and lowers greenhouse gas emissions. For more tips, visit [www.epa.gov/recycle/reducing-wasted-food-home](http://www.epa.gov/recycle/reducing-wasted-food-home) and [SaveTheFood.com](http://SaveTheFood.com).