



Illinois Extension

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS URBANA-CHAMPAIGN

Put a Stop to Food Waste

FOOD WASTE CHALLENGE

WHAT?

Keep track of what food you and your family are throwing away.

WHY?

Approximately 35% of all food is wasted- a number which has doubled since the 1970's. Households account for 38% of food waste, higher than any other sector. Consumers throw away 1 lb. of food per person per day costing a family of four \$1,500 per year of uneaten food. Food is the single largest component of our landfills and accounts for 58% of the fugitive methane emissions (those released to the atmosphere).

HOW?

It's simple—just measure or weigh food before you throw it out. That means leftovers—scrape the plates into the “food waste” container; the fuzzy things in the back of your fridge; the wonky fruits and veggies that linger in your crisper drawers; stale cereal and crackers; peelings and cores and leafy tops of fruits and veggies—all of it. Measure /weigh it before you throw it out.

You will need:

- This worksheet
- A pencil
- Paper bags for food waste
- Food scale or large measuring containers

You can weigh or measure daily or weekly—just make sure you record the amounts!

Week 1

| Day | Food being thrown away | Amount (grams, cups, etc.) | Reason for waste |
|-----------|------------------------|----------------------------|------------------|
| Sunday | | | |
| Monday | | | |
| Tuesday | | | |
| Wednesday | | | |
| Thursday | | | |
| Friday | | | |
| Saturday | | | |

Total amount wasted: _____

Week 2

| Day | Food being thrown away | Amount (grams, cups, etc.) | Reason for waste |
|-----------|------------------------|----------------------------|------------------|
| Sunday | | | |
| Monday | | | |
| Tuesday | | | |
| Wednesday | | | |
| Thursday | | | |
| Friday | | | |
| Saturday | | | |

Total amount wasted: _____

At the end of week 2, pay attention to foods that are ending in the trash more than others and the reasons for the waste. What is something you can do to reduce this waste as you move into weeks 3 and 4?

Week 3

| Day | Food being thrown away | Amount (grams, cups, etc.) | Reason for waste |
|-----------|------------------------|----------------------------|------------------|
| Sunday | | | |
| Monday | | | |
| Tuesday | | | |
| Wednesday | | | |
| Thursday | | | |
| Friday | | | |
| Saturday | | | |

Total amount wasted: _____

Week 4

| Day | Food being thrown away | Amount (grams, cups, etc.) | Reason for waste |
|-----------|------------------------|----------------------------|------------------|
| Sunday | | | |
| Monday | | | |
| Tuesday | | | |
| Wednesday | | | |
| Thursday | | | |
| Friday | | | |
| Saturday | | | |

Total amount wasted: _____

At the end of four weeks take note of your grand total. Was it a surprise? What were the most common foods you threw out? Did you make improvements along the way?

FOOD SCRAP RECIPES

Coffee-Sugar Body Scrub Recipe

¼ cup used coffee grounds, dry
¼ cup brown sugar
¼ cup oil (olive, coconut, almond, apricot kernel, etc.)
½-1 tsp vanilla extract or other fragrance oil (optional)

Mix all ingredients together in a bowl until well combined. Add to a jar and use within 2 months.

Yield: about ¾ cup

Broccoli Slaw

| | |
|---|--|
| Stems and leaves from about 2 bunches broccoli (about 4 cups) | ½ cup nonfat plain Greek yogurt |
| 2 Tablespoons chopped red onion | 1 Tablespoon red wine vinegar |
| ¼ cup chopped celery | 3 packets artificial sweetener of choice |
| ¼ cup chopped green or orange pepper | ¼ teaspoon salt |
| | ¼ teaspoon pepper |

Remove tough, darker in color, outer skin of broccoli stalks with vegetable peeler or knife until you reach a lighter color & smooth interior; discard tough skin. Using a spiralizer or julienne peeler, slide along the stalks and thinly shave. Cut into ½-inch long pieces. Place shavings in the bowl and add onion, celery and green pepper. In a small bowl, whisk yogurt, vinegar, sweetener, salt and pepper. Add to bowl of broccoli stem mixture and stir until covered. Refrigerate two hours before serving.

Yield: 6 servings

Nutrition Facts (per serving): 45 calories, 0 grams fat, 125 milligrams sodium, 8 grams carbohydrate, 2 grams fiber, 3 grams protein

Beet Greens Strata

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 teaspoon olive oil | 1 cup skim milk |
| Greens and stems from 1 bunch beets, washed and patted dry | 3 large eggs |
| ½ cup chopped onion | 3 cups whole grain bread (preferably hearty and stale), cut into 1-inch cubes |
| ¼ teaspoon salt | 1 cup shredded Swiss cheese, divided |
| ¼ teaspoon black pepper | |

Cut stems from beet leaves. Thinly slice stems and cut leaves into thin ribbons. In large skillet, heat olive oil over medium heat. Add beet stems and onion. Cook, frequently stirring, until partly tender, about 4 minutes. Add the leaves and cook until wilted, 1 to 2 minutes. Add 1-2 Tablespoons water, cover, and cook until greens and stems are fork tender, 2 to 3 minutes. Season with salt and pepper; set aside.

In a medium bowl, whisk milk and eggs. In a separate bowl, toss the bread cubes with the green mixture and half the cheese. Spread the mixture in an 8x8-inch baking dish coated with nonstick spray. Slowly pour egg mixture over the bread. Poke down any pieces of bread so that they are coated. Top with remaining cheese. Cover and refrigerate overnight.

Bring strata to room temperature for 10 to 20 minutes. Preheat oven to 350°F. Bake until custard is set, 40-45 minutes. Let cool 10 minutes before serving.

Yield: 4 servings

Nutrition Facts (per serving): *210 calories, 7 grams fat, 460 milligrams sodium, 20 grams carbohydrate, 3 grams fiber, 17 grams protein*

EXPIRATION

DATES

vs.

EAT BY

DATES

Sometimes dates on food are confusing!

The examples below show how long past the dates that food is still safe to eat.



BEST BY
USE BY
SELL BY

What it means

SELL BY
3/15/16

ENJOY BY
3/15/16

This is a freshness date. Food is freshest by the date on the label, but still safe to eat after that date. Examples are milk (up to 1 week after the sell by date) and eggs (3-5 weeks after the sell by date).

BEST BY
3/15/16

BEST IF
USED BY
3/15/16

This is a quality date. Food has the best quality if eaten by this date. You can eat acidic canned foods 12-18 months after this date. Examples are canned tomatoes or pineapples. You can eat non-acidic canned foods up to 2-5 years after this date. Examples are canned soup or vegetables.

EXP 3/15/16
USE BY
3/15/16

This is a true expiration date. After the expiration date, the food is not safe to eat and must be thrown away. Examples are baby food and infant formula.

Frozen Food

Frozen foods remain safe indefinitely, though they eventually get freezer burn. Cook immediately after thawing. The cooked food may be refrozen.

Nothing

If there is no expiration date, use the can within one year from when you got it.

3/15/2016
or 07516

This is a manufacturing date. It is not an expiration date. Treat this as a "Best By" date and follow the above guidelines.

A series of
numbers and
letters, like
W15KA253XJ

This is a packing code. It is used only by the manufacturer. It is not an expiration date. Use the above guidelines.

If you know you won't eat food in your home that is still safe, don't toss it - DONATE IT!



RIVER BEND
FOOD BANK



Never use a can if it is bulging, leaking, rusty, or if the rim is dented.



Storing Fresh Fruits and Vegetables for Best Flavor

Store in the refrigerator

| FRUIT | | VEGETABLES | | | | |
|------------------------------|-----------|-------------------|-------------------|------------------|-----------------|--|
| Apples (more than 7 days) | Berries | Belgian Endive | Cauliflower | Leafy Vegetables | Radishes | |
| Apricots | Cherries | Broccoli | Celery | Leeks | Spinach | |
| Asian pears | Cut Fruit | Brussel Sprouts | Cut Vegetables | Lettuce | Sprouts | |
| | Figs | Cabbage | Green Onions | Mushrooms | Summer Squashes | |
| | Grapes | Carrots | Herbs (not basil) | Peas | Sweet Corn | |

1. Place fruits and vegetables in separate, perforated plastic bags.
2. Use within 1-3 days for maximum flavor and freshness.
3. Store each group in different produce drawers in the refrigerator to minimize the detrimental effects of ethylene produced by the fruits on the vegetables.

Ripen on the counter first, then refrigerate

Avocados Kiwi Nectarines Peaches Pears Plums Plumcots

1. To prevent moisture loss, store fruits and vegetables separately in a paper bag, perforated plastic bag, or ripening bowl on the counter away from sunlight. Ripening fruit in a bowl or paper bag can be enhanced by placing an apple with the fruit to be ripened.
2. After ripening, store in refrigerator and use within 1-3 days.

Store only at room temperature

| FRUIT | | | VEGETABLES | | | |
|-------------------------------|---------------|--------------|-----------------------|----------------------|-----------------|--|
| Apples (fewer than 7 days) | Citrus fruits | Persimmons | Garlic* | Peppers [†] | Tomatoes | |
| Bananas | Mangoes | Pineapple | Ginger | Potatoes* | Winter Squashes | |
| | Melons | Plantain | Jicama | Pumpkins | | |
| | Papayas | Pomegranates | Eggplant [†] | Sweet Potatoes* | | |

1. Many fruits and vegetables should only be stored at room temperatures. Refrigeration can cause cold damage or prevent them from ripening to good flavor and texture. For example, pink tomatoes ripen to a better taste and red color if they are left at room temperature. In the refrigerator, they do not turn red, and even red tomatoes kept in the refrigerator lose their flavor.
2. Keep away from direct sunlight.
 - *Store garlic, onions, potatoes, and sweet potatoes in a well-ventilated area in the pantry.
 - [†]Cucumbers, eggplant, and peppers can be refrigerated for 1-3 days if they are used soon after removing from the refrigerator.

Cleaning Your Produce

Always keep produce separate from raw meat, poultry, and seafood. Never use detergent or bleach to wash produce. Instead, rinse produce under running tap water immediately prior to use, including those with skins and rinds that are not eaten. Washing too far in advance removes some of nature's natural preservatives. However, head lettuce or leafy greens remain crisper when washed right away and then refrigerated. Packaged fruits and vegetables labeled "ready-to-eat," "washed," or "triple washed" need not be washed. Refrigerate all cut, peeled, or cooked fruits and vegetables within 2 hours.

For information on how to store other fruits and vegetables go to FruitsAndVeggiesMoreMatters.org

Source: UC Davis Postharvest Technology