



# TOP FIVE WAYS TO WASTE LESS FOOD

On average, we don't eat 25% of what we bring home. That's a lot of wasted food, resources and grocery money! But there are small shifts we can all make to waste less food. Here are five ways to get started:

## 1. MAKE A GREAT SHOPPING LIST

- Before making your list each week, shop your kitchen first to see what you already have on hand and figure out how many meals you and your family members will eat at home.
- Include quantities next to each item on your list, so you buy only what you need.
- Make a note next to fresh items on your shopping list of how many meals you will make with each. For example: salad greens—enough for two lunches.

## 2. PREP NOW, EAT LATER

- When you get home from the store, wash, dry, chop, dice, slice and place your fresh food items in clear storage containers for snacks and easy cooking. Exception: don't wash your berries until right before you eat them to prevent mold.
- Freeze food such as bread, sliced fruit or meat, that you know you won't be able to eat in time.
- Batch cook food items or entire meals ahead of time that can be stored in the fridge or freezer (and watch your weekly food prep time drop by half).

## 3. KEEP FRUITS AND VEGETABLES FRESH

- Learn which fruits and vegetables stay fresh longer inside or outside the fridge.
- Many fruits give off natural gases that hasten the spoilage of nearby produce. Store fruits like bananas, apples and tomatoes by themselves and store fruits and vegetables in different bins.
- Consider using storage bags or containers designed to help extend the life of your produce.

## 4. BUY WHAT YOU NEED

- Stick to your list and shop on a full stomach to avoid impulse buys.
- Avoid marketing gimmicks that encourage you to buy more than you need. If you get 10 items for \$10 and only eat 5 before they spoil, that's \$5 wasted.
- Choose loose fruit and vegetables over pre-packaged to better control the quantity you need and ensure fresher ingredients. Buy only enough fresh produce to last the week.

## 5. EAT WHAT YOU BUY

- Move food that's likely to spoil soon to the front of the shelf or a designated "eat now" area in your fridge or pantry each week.
- Learn the difference between "sell-by," "use-by," "best-by" and expiration dates ([www.fsis.usda.gov/factsheets/food\\_product\\_dating/index.asp](http://www.fsis.usda.gov/factsheets/food_product_dating/index.asp)).
- Casseroles, frittatas, soups and smoothies are great ways to use leftovers, and odds and ends. Plan an "eat the leftovers" night each week.

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# SMART STRATEGY:

Know which fruits and vegetables stay fresh longer inside or outside the fridge.

By storing them for maximum freshness, they will taste better and last longer.



## FRUIT AND VEGETABLE STORAGE GUIDE



**TOO GOOD  
TO WASTE**

### INSIDE THE FRIDGE

- Apples, berries, and cherries
- Grapes, kiwi, lemons, and oranges
- Melons, nectarines, apricots, peaches, and plums (after ripening at room temperature)
- Avocados, pears, tomatoes (after ripening at room temperature)
- Almost all vegetables and herbs

### OUTSIDE THE FRIDGE

- Bananas, mangos, papayas, and pineapples: store in a cool place
- Potatoes / onions: store in a cool, dark place
- Basil and winter squashes: store at room temperature—once cut, store squashes in fridge

### MORE STORAGE TIPS

- If you like your fruit at room temperature, take what you will eat for the day out of the fridge in the morning.
- Many fruits give off natural gases that hasten the spoilage of other nearby produce. Store bananas, apples, and tomatoes by themselves and store fruits and vegetables in different bins.
- Consider storage bags and containers designed to help extend the life of your produce.
- To prevent mold, wash berries just before eating.

FOR MORE STORAGE TIPS VISIT: <http://ecologycenter.org/factsheets/veggie-storage.pdf>

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