



Zero Waste Guide

Food for Thought: Surprising Food Waste Fast Facts

Globally, **1.4 billion tons of food is wasted** each year.

The U.S. wastes almost **40 million tons** of food every year – more than any other country in the world.

Food is the single largest component that **takes up space in U.S. landfills**.

The average American family of four **discards \$1,600 a year** in produce.

61% of food waste comes from households, 26% from foodservice, and 13% from retail.

8-10% of global carbon emissions are linked to **unconsumed produce annually**.

Steps You Can Take to Reduce Food Waste at Home

In the U.S., it's estimated that each person wastes 219 pounds of food every year – that's the equivalent of every American throwing 650 apples straight into the trash. But with a little resourcefulness and creativity, it's easy to reduce your household food waste, and in turn, make a big impact on the environment, local communities, and even your weekly grocery bill.

Change the way you shop for groceries.

- It's time to stop buying that bag of spinach that sits in your produce drawer unopened, only to be thrown out at the end of the week. To prevent over buying and waste, be more mindful about your purchases.
- Plan out your meals for the week and buy only what's needed for those dishes. Before shopping, be sure to take stock of what's in your fridge and pantry and incorporate anything that needs to be used up into your meal prep plan.
- You can also reduce food waste without stepping into a grocery store – consider signing up for one of the many new sustainable grocery delivery services designed to reduce food waste by selling “ugly” or imperfect produce. These platforms sell surplus “ugly” produce that gets rejected by supermarkets at a discount, delivered straight to your doorstep. By subscribing to services such as these, you can reduce waste and spending.
- In addition, there are apps available that connect consumers to surplus food that would otherwise be thrown away from local restaurants and grocery stores, such as pastries, fresh produce, sushi and more.

Know your labels.

- Many people throw out perfectly good food because they don't understand expiration labels. Expiration dates are not regulated by Federal administrators and are decided by the manufacturer, so they often refer to the freshness of food rather than safety.
 - "Sell by" lets retailers know how long an item can stay on the shelf
 - "Best if used by" specifies when a product is at its peak freshness
 - "Use by" indicates when an item will start deteriorating in quality
 - Keep these definitions in mind when deciding whether to throw something out.
-

Meal prep with purpose.

- Prepping what you buy is key to waste reduction.
 - Shortly after your shopping trip, take the time to prepare your perishable items – i.e., wash, dry, chop, and store produce and veggies in reusable containers – so they're easily available for snacking and cooking throughout the week.
 - If there are items that you won't be able to eat before the expiration date, simply pop them in the freezer for later. You can also prepare full meals and freeze them for a quick lunch or dinner.
-

Compost leftover scraps.

- No matter how creative you are when it comes to reducing your household food waste, there may be a few inedible scraps left behind. Those scraps are ideal for composting.
- You can set up your own compost bin in your backyard or even on your countertop.
- Check with your local community garden or government for compost pick up and drop off options.

Storage made simple.

- Whether inside or outside the refrigerator, storing perishable foods properly helps them stay fresher and taste better longer. A few easy ways to get the most out of your ingredients:
 - Fruits give off natural gases as they ripen, which causes nearby produce to spoil quicker. Storing items separately or in different bins will prevent this.
 - Freezing surplus meats and produce will “press pause” on spoiling. Be sure to freeze in small portions and in airtight containers to reduce freezer burn.
 - Each ingredient is different – understanding the proper temperature, container, length of freshness for your fresh items and pantry staples is crucial. Check individual packaging or online guides for best storage practices.
-

There's a use for everything.

- With a little resourcefulness, you can find a use for just about every food item you buy.
 - Use extra herbs or upcycle vegetable scraps to whip up a stock, coffee grounds to enrich the soil of your houseplants, or turn stale bread into crispy croutons.
 - Cook one protein and use for several different meals – salads, grain bowls, sandwiches and more.
 - And if you end up cooking more than you can eat in a sitting, keep those leftovers on hand for a meal the next day.
-

Donate.

- Have any ingredients you don't want or won't use in time?
- Donate any nutritious, safe and edible food to your local food bank to support those without access to healthy foods.

Waste Reducing Recipes

by Anna + Madeline Zakarian

Frozen Strawberry Lemonade

Serves **4**

Ingredients

3 cups of lemonade
2 cups of Dole frozen strawberries
1 cup leftover Dole pineapple chunks
4 cubes frozen Dole pineapple juice

Procedure

Add all ingredients to a blender.
Blend together well and pour into a carafe.

One Pan Chicken Thighs w/ Fruit

Serves **4-6**

Ingredients

6 boneless chicken thighs, skin on Kosher salt
Fresh ground pepper
1 small white onion, thinly sliced 2 medium peaches, sliced
2 medium Fuji apples, sliced
1 can of Dole pineapple chunks, reserve juice for sauce 1 tsp cinnamon
1 tbsp fresh thyme or oregano
1 tbsp fresh rosemary
2 tbsp olive oil

Sauce Ingredients

1/4 cup reserved pineapple juice 1/4 cup apple cider vinegar
1 tbsp honey

Procedure

1. Preheat an oven to 400F.
2. Heat up cast iron pan with olive oil. Season chicken thighs with salt and pepper. Once hot, add chicken thighs skin side down for 3-4 minutes until golden brown. Remove chicken thighs from pan to plate and set aside.
3. Quickly add onions to the pan and sauté until translucent. Next add in peaches, apples, and pineapple. Scatter and shake the pan until they are evenly distributed.
4. After two minutes, place chicken thighs skin side up on top of the fruit and onions. Add fresh herbs and cinnamon on top of the dish.
5. Bake in the oven for 25 minutes until fruit is soft and chicken is golden brown. While dish is baking, mix together your pineapple juice, apple cider vinegar and honey. Remove dish from oven and immediately pour your sauce on top. Let it sizzle a bit and Enjoy!