



5 Ways to Reduce Food Waste

During the spring, many people take steps to clean their closets, garages and kitchens. Have you ever had to throw out food that has become moldy in your fridge? Have any of your packaged foods lost their appealing taste or color because they were “lost” in the back of a cupboard? Have you bought a large package of food because it had a lower “unit price” and you or your family became tired of the food?

Most of us have had to toss food. No one likes to waste food because food costs money. These are several ideas to help avoid food waste and throwing your money in the trash.

★ **“Shop” your refrigerator, freezer or cupboard.**

Before going to the grocery store, take stock of what you have on hand in your refrigerator, freezer or cupboard. Incorporate those foods into your menus. Make a list of what you need.

★ **Look for recipes to use the ingredients you have on hand.**

Visit www.whatscooking.fns.usda.gov/ for recipes and ideas. Many phone apps allow you to type in the ingredients you have on hand. The app will find recipes that uses those ingredients.

★ **Rotate your stock.** When you buy “new” food, move the “old” food from the back of the cupboard or refrigerator to the front. Use the “older” food before the “new” food.

★ **Preserve your excess food.** If you find a bargain on fruit this spring, you can freeze or dry it. Check out www.ag.ndsu.edu/food and click on “food preservation” to learn about freezing, drying and other food preservation methods.

★ **Examine your trash.** Are you throwing certain foods more often? Maybe you need to buy smaller quantities of the ingredient so it doesn’t go to waste.



Ask your Extension agent/assistant for information about making a meal in a bowl, soups, sandwiches, casseroles and other menu items from what you have on hand. Visit www.ag.ndsu.edu/food and click on “Food Preparation” then “Pinchin’ Pennies in the Kitchen.”

This program is funded in part by USDA’s Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program. SNAP provides nutrition assistance to people with low income. It can help you buy nutritious foods for a better diet. To find out more contact your county Social Services office or call 1-800-755-2716.

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I noticed that lots of food packages say “use by” and “best if used by” and then list a date. Will I get sick if I eat the food after the date?

The “use by” or “best if used by” date is a quality date. If you use the food by that date, it will have an appealing flavor or color, as long as it has been stored properly in your home. However, use baby food by the use-by date.

- Keep cold foods cold. Set your refrigerator temperature at 40 F.
- Be sure your freezer keeps food solidly frozen. Set your freezer at 0 F.
- Keep packaged foods such as cereals in a cool, dry place. Be sure to close the cereal box containers or put the contents in a zip-top bag or air-tight container.

FoodWi\$e Tip of the Month

Have you had any fresh asparagus or strawberries this spring? They are “in season,” meaning they are at their best quality and price now. Throughout the year, enjoy a variety of fruits and vegetables in different forms, including fresh, frozen, canned and dried.



Visit www.fruitsandveggiesmorematters.org for more information about fruits and vegetables in season this spring.

These are some of the fresh fruits and vegetables in season during the spring:

Apricots	Honeydew melon	Snow peas
Asparagus	Mango	Spinach
Artichokes	Peas	Strawberries
Broccoli	Pineapple	Swiss chard
Corn	Rhubarb	Vidalia onions

Did you know?

SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) can help people grow their own food. SNAP participants can use their benefits to buy seeds and edible plants at SNAP retailers.

Do you have any canned mandarin oranges in your cupboard that should be used? Check out the fresh broccoli at the grocery store.

Broccoli Orange Salad

- 1 large bunch fresh broccoli, broken into florets
- 1 (11-ounce) can mandarin orange segments (packed in juice), drained
- 1 red onion, sliced and separated into rings
- ½ c. low-fat French salad dressing



Wash broccoli well and separate into florets. Add oranges and onions. Toss with dressing and refrigerate at least 30 minutes before serving.

Makes eight servings. Each serving has 50 calories, 1 gram (g) fat, 10 g carbohydrate and 1.5 g fiber.

Menu idea:

Egg salad sandwich on whole-wheat bread or tortilla, Broccoli Orange Salad, oatmeal-raisin cookie, low-fat or fat-free milk



Just for Fun

What has ears but can't hear a thing?
A cornfield.

Julie Garden-Robinson, Food and Nutrition Specialist

Contact the local office of the NDSU Extension Service for more information on food and nutrition or managing your food dollar.

