

# FOOD WASTE IN THE U.S. IS...

## EXCESSIVE

40%

OF ALL FOOD PRODUCED IN THE U.S. IS WASTED



133 BILLION POUNDS

Food wasted per year. That represents 1,249 calories per person, per day.

## EXPENSIVE



\$161 BILLION

Uneaten food at retailers, restaurants, and homes costs \$161 billion annually



\$1,500

Per capita, this amounts to over \$1,500 for a family of four

## ENVIRONMENTALLY HARMFUL



Food makes up 20% of landfill weight—the single largest municipal waste source



The methane released by food is a greenhouse gas 21 times more powerful than carbon dioxide

## AN OPPORTUNITY



Diverting 15% of the food that currently goes to waste would be enough to cut the number of food insecure Americans in half

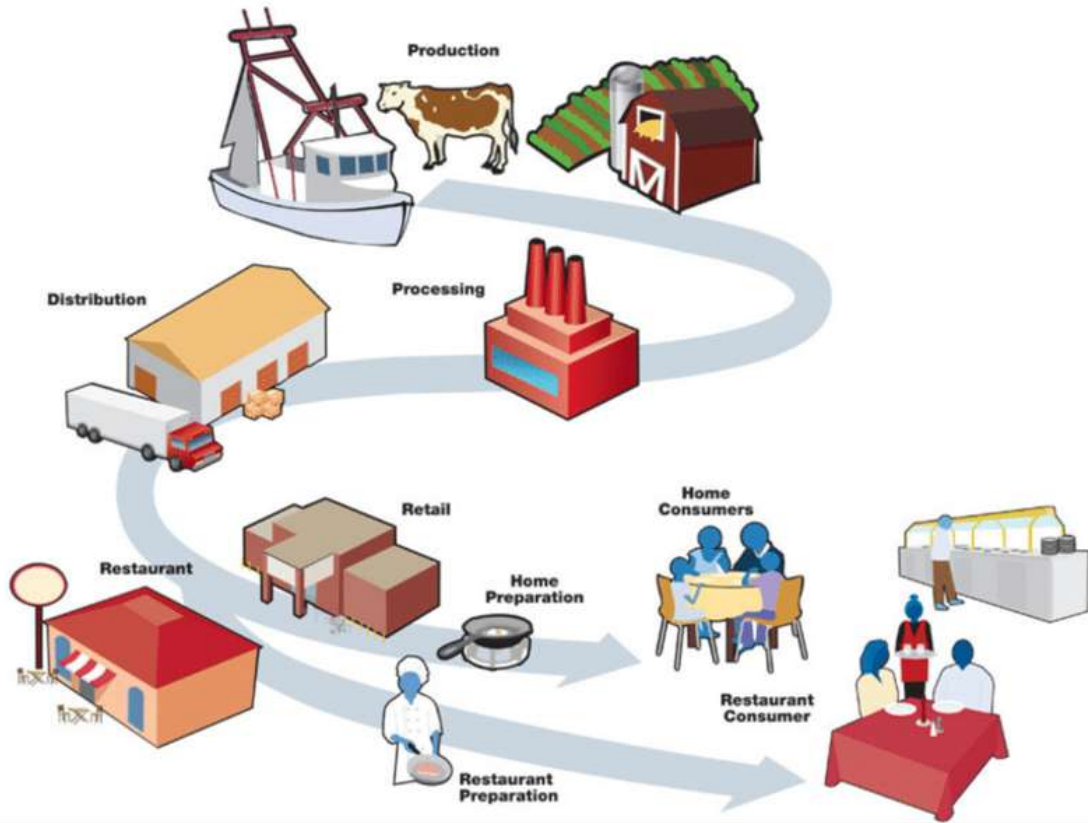


Food waste can be composted into sustainable soil additives or be used to generate electricity



Encouraging institutions to purchase so-called "ugly" produce would help farmers find new markets for healthy products that currently go to waste

# The Food Production Chain



## 9 Things you can do

[www.fao.org/save-food](http://www.fao.org/save-food)

**DO GOOD: SAVE FOOD!** nine easy tips to reduce food waste.

- 1 ASK FOR SMALLER PORTIONS**  
Make sure you start your meals with a small portion on your plate. You can always go back for more if you're still hungry.
- 2 LOVE YOUR LEFTOVERS**  
Instead of scraping leftovers into the bin, use them as ingredients for tomorrow's meal, or simply reheat them as the same meal again. Remember, if you want to use leftovers, it's very important to store them in the fridge or freezer within two hours of preparing your meal.
- 3 SHOP SMART**  
We often buy more food than we can eat before it goes off. To avoid over-shopping, try to plan ahead, make a shopping list, and don't go shopping on an empty stomach!
- 4 BUY 'UGLY' FRUITS AND VEGETABLES**  
Many shops and farmers' markets offer irregularly shaped fruit and vegetables, which are just as good to eat as regularly shaped and coloured ones. Buy 'ugly' fruits and vegetables to show that you do not want any food wasted!
- 5 CHECK YOUR FRIDGE**  
To make sure that food is properly stored and kept fresher for longer in your fridge, set it to the right temperature (between 1 and 5 °C), store products in the right places in the fridge, and follow the instructions on the packaging or the fridge manual. Don't pack the fridge too full: you will use less energy and you'll be less likely to forget to use the food you bought.
- 6 PRACTICE FIFO: FIRST IN, FIRST OUT!**  
When you put your shopping away, rotate the food in your fridge and cupboard so that the older food comes forward and the most recent shopping – which will keep the longest – goes to the back. But keep an eye on the use-by and best-before dates – some of the new food you have bought may need to be eaten quickly.
- 7 UNDERSTAND DATES ON YOUR FOOD**  
After the "use-by" date has passed, food is not safe to eat anymore. "Best-before" dates, on the other hand, only show when the food is at its best quality in terms of smell, texture, and taste. If well stored, most of non-perishable food is still edible after the "best-before" date!
- 8 TURN WASTE INTO COMPOST**  
If you do end up wasting some of your food, recover it by turning it into garden food: instead of throwing it to your regular bin and contributing to the greenhouse-gas emissions connected to the transport and disposal of waste, why not set up a compost bin for food waste and fruit and vegetable peelings?
- 9 SHARING IS CARING: GIVE TO HELP**  
Give your surplus to help those who need it. When hygiene and sanitary conditions and traceability requirements are ensured, it's easy to give your surplus food to those in need. Learn about existing initiatives in your canteenas, your stores and your city to give a boost to food aid associations and reduce waste.

**Together, we can fight food waste. So, Do Good: Save Food!**



# READING FOOD LABELS ON PACKAGING

## INTERPRETING DATES SHOWN ON PREPACKAGED FOODS

**“Best before” is not an indicator of food safety**, but it does give you valuable information about freshness and potential shelf-life of an unopened product.

**This must appear on pre-packaged foods** that keep fresh for 90 days or less.

### BEST BEFORE

### EXPIRATION DATE

This date must be shown on packaging for formulated liquid diets, foods intended for low-energy diets, meal replacements, nutritional supplement foods and infant formulas.

**If the expiration date has passed, the food should be thrown away.**

### PASSED ‘BEST BEFORE’?

Foods can be eaten and purchased after “best before” date has passed, although it may have lost some flavour, nutritional value and freshness.

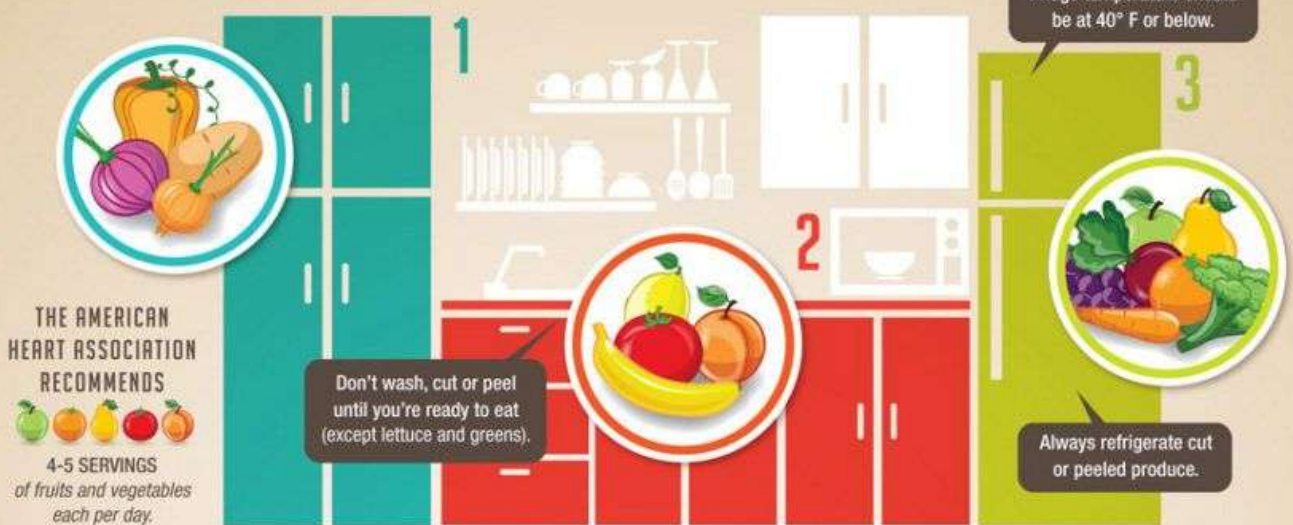
**“Best before” is not an indicator of food safety.**

Once opened, shelf life may change.

# Get Fresh WITH FRUITS & VEGETABLES



Stretch your produce and your dollars by knowing how to store fresh fruits and vegetables.



THE AMERICAN HEART ASSOCIATION RECOMMENDS

4-5 SERVINGS of fruits and vegetables each per day.

### PANTRY 1

Pack away in a cool, dark place like your pantry or cellar:

|                                      |   |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| <b>ONIONS, GARLIC &amp; SHALLOTS</b> | <b>SWEET POTATOES, POTATOES, &amp; YAMS</b> |
| <b>HARD SQUASH</b>                   | <b>WATERMELON</b>                           |

*(Winter, Acorn, Spaghetti, Butternut)*

### COUNTERTOP 2

Store loose and away from sunlight, heat and moisture:

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <b>BANANAS</b>   | <b>STONE FRUIT</b>   |
| <b>CITRUS FRUIT</b>  | <i>Ripen avocados, apricots, nectarines, peaches and plums in a paper bag, then move to the fridge where they'll last a few more days.</i> |
| <i>Store lemons, limes, oranges and grapefruit loose or in a mesh bag. Refrigerate for longer storage.</i> | <b>TOMATOES</b>  |

- #### KEEP THEM APART:
- Fruits like apples, bananas and pears give off ethylene gas, which can make other produce ripen and rot faster.
  - Store vegetables and fruits separately.
  - Keep apples, bananas, broccoli, cauliflower, cucumbers, onions, pears, potatoes and watermelon away from other produce.

### REFRIGERATOR 3

Store in plastic bags with holes, in your produce drawer, unless noted:

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>APPLES &amp; PEARS</b>  | <b>FRESH HERBS</b>  |
| <b>BEETS &amp; TURNIPS</b>   | <i>Except basil. Keep stems moist and wrap loosely in plastic.</i>  |
| <i>Remove greens and keep loose in the crisper drawer.</i>               | <b>GREEN BEANS</b>  |
| <b>BERRIES, CHERRIES &amp; GRAPES</b>                                    | <b>LETTUCE &amp; LEAFY GREENS</b>   |
| <i>Keep dry in covered containers or plastic bags.</i>                   | <i>Wash, spin or pat dry, wrap loosely in a dishtowel or paper towels and place in a plastic bag in vegetable drawer. Keep stems moist.</i> |
| <b>BROCCOLI &amp; CAULIFLOWER</b>  | <b>MELONS</b>   |
| <b>CARROTS &amp; PARSNIPS</b>  | <b>MUSHROOMS</b>  |
| <i>Remove greens.</i>  | <i>Keep dry and unwashed in store container or paper bag.</i>   |
| <b>CELERY</b>  | <b>PEARS</b>  |
| <b>CORN</b>  | <b>ZUCCHINI &amp; SUMMER/YELLOW SQUASH</b>  |
| <i>Store inside their husks.</i>   |   |
| <b>CUCUMBERS, EGGPLANT &amp; PEPPERS</b>                                 |   |
| <i>Store on the upper shelf, which is the warmer part of the fridge.</i> |   |



# THE SHELF LIFE OF FOOD

## LEFTOVERS

1 DAY ← → 1 MONTH

|                        |                               |
|------------------------|-------------------------------|
| MACARONI & CHEESE      | 3-5 days                      |
| PIZZA                  | 3-4 days                      |
| SALAD WITH DRESSING    | 3-5 days                      |
| SANDWICHES             | 1-2 days                      |
| SPAGHETTI & MEAT BALLS | 1-2 days                      |
| BROCCOLI               | 2 days                        |
| CARROTS                | Up to 4 days                  |
| CUCUMBERS              | 1-3 days                      |
| GREEN BEANS            | 1 day, <u>not recommended</u> |
| LETTUCE                | 1 day, <u>not recommended</u> |
| POTATOES               | 1 month                       |
| TOMATOES               | 10-18 months                  |
| BACON                  | 2 hours                       |
| BOLOGNA                | 7 hours                       |
| CHICKEN                | 2 hours                       |
| FISH                   | 2 hours                       |
| HAM                    | 2 hours                       |
| HAMBURGER              | 2 hours                       |
| STEAK                  | 2 hours                       |
| BREAD                  | 5-7 days                      |

## What's the Deal with Expiration Dates?

The little dates you find on food packages refer to quality, not safety. If properly stored, you can eat food beyond its expiration. It is always best to use your eyes and nose to check for possible food safety issues.

### USE-BY & BEST BEFORE

Provided voluntarily by the manufacturer to let you know how long the product will remain at its absolute best. The product is still edible after this date but the taste may decline.

### EXPIRES ON

Found on perishable like meat and dairy. This is a guide for stores to know how long they can display the product. You can eat the product beyond this date as long as it is stored properly.

### SELL-BY

This is usually found only on fatty food or other products the government regulates with regard to dating. Do not consume past this date.

|            |               |
|------------|---------------|
| 7-14 days  | 8-12 months   |
| 4-5 weeks  | 8-12 months   |
| 1 week     | 8-12 months   |
| 1 week     | 8-12 months   |
| 1 week     | Do not freeze |
| 2-4 months | 8 months      |
| 2 weeks    | 8-12 months   |
| 2 weeks    | 4 months      |
| 1-2 weeks  | 2-3 months    |
| 1-2 days   | 1 year        |
| 1-2 days   | 6-9 months    |
| 1 week     | 6 months      |
| 1-2 days   | 6-8 months    |
| 1-2 days   | 6-8 months    |
| 1-2 weeks  | 2-3 months    |

Food's unopened, date or unopened unless stated otherwise

|               | COUNTER/PANTRY                  | REFRIGERATOR                    | FREEZER       |
|---------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------|
| APPLES        | 2-4 weeks                       | 1-2 months                      | 8-12 months   |
| BANANAS       | 2-7 days                        | 5-9 days                        | 2-3 months    |
| CANTALOUPE    | Until ripe                      | 1 week                          | 8-12 months   |
| GRAPES        | 3-5 days                        | 7-10 days                       | 3-5 months    |
| LEMONS        | 2-4 weeks                       | 1-2 months                      | 3-4 months    |
| PEACHES       | Until ripe                      | 2-5 days                        | 8-12 months   |
| STRAWBERRIES  | 1-2 days                        | 5-7 days                        | 6-8 months    |
| BUTTER        | 10 days                         | 1-3 months                      | 6-9 months    |
| CHEESES, HARD | 1-3 months                      | 2-4 months                      | 6-8 months    |
| CHEESES, SOFT | Few hours                       | 2-4 months                      | 6-8 months    |
| EGGS          | Few hours                       | 3-4 weeks                       | Do not freeze |
| MILK          | Few hours                       | 5-7 days                        | 1 month       |
| YOGURT        | Few hours                       | 2-3 weeks                       | 1-2 months    |
| HONEY         | OO Forever                      | OO Forever, but not recommended | OO Forever    |
| KETCHUP       | 1 year                          | 1 year                          | Do not freeze |
| MAYONNAISE    | 2-3 months                      | 1 year, 2 months if opened      | Do not freeze |
| SODA          | 6-9 months, 3-5 months for diet | 6-9 months, 2-5 days if opened  | Do not freeze |

### SOURCES

USDA  
[www.fda.gov](http://www.fda.gov)  
[www.nrdc.org](http://www.nrdc.org)  
<http://www.collegeofagriculture.com>  
<http://www.collegeofagriculture.com>  
<http://www.collegeofagriculture.com>  
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### DESIGN

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FOREVER!

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