



Did You Know that more than one-third of all food produced in America is thrown away? According to the USDA, the problem of food waste in America has grown by 50% since the 1970s. Today, as much as 40% of food produced in America is tossed in the trash—tallying up to 1,400 calories per person per day and \$400 per person per year. And what's bad for the pocketbook is even worse for the planet. The bulk of food waste ends up at in the trash, with a total 31 million tons of food piled into landfills each year.



How can you do your part? Here are some helpful tips to keep food waste in check:

Pre-Shopping: Before you even THINK about heading to the store, do a quick inventory of what's in your fridge. Poke around your freezer and kitchen cupboards too. Cook or eat the food you already have before buying more. "Shop from your fridge first," as the saying goes. Repeat this mantra while planning your weekly or bi-weekly menu. THEN make your shopping list. Buy only those things on your menu, plus any basic staples. Double-check that you need these staples and gauge the amount you really need.

Shopping: Buy frozen vegetables. Buy fresh only if you know you'll eat them in the next couple days. Buy pantry items and staples in bulk.

Storing: Clean out and organize your fridge once a week. Keep leftovers in plain sight in the fridge. Freeze the extra leftovers you won't have time to eat. Invest in airtight containers to keep foods fresh and you'll save money in the long run. Freeze items like coffee and nuts to keep them fresh. Refrigerate opened jars of jams and jelly to keep them from spoiling.

The bottom line? Buy only what you realistically need and know you will really use. Be mindful of the planet and your pocketbook.