

HUNGRY FOR SUSTAINABILITY

GET WASTED

It is estimated that around 1/3 of the food produced globally is wasted - In the EU around 20% of the total food produced is lost or wasted (FCRN, 2014).

One estimate suggests that between 30-50% of all food produced is wasted – which not only undermines food security but represents a waste of land, water and other resources and input, plus generates “unnecessary” greenhouse gas emissions (IMECHE, 2013).

Keeping good food out of the bin makes a real difference. The “Love Food Hate Waste” campaign has helped to raise awareness on the importance and impact of reducing food waste, encouraging millions to use more of the food we buy each week. **Research has shown that the UK are saving £3.4 billion a year compared with 2007, and 5.0 million tonnes of CO2 – that’s like taking 2.2 million cars off the road!** (WRAP, 2019). The impact is huge – but we still have a long way to go.

HOW CAN YOU REDUCE FOOD WASTE?

If you only do one thing – reduce the amount you buy.

- We can reduce waste by reducing the amount we buy to begin with, buy only what you know you will use - **make a meal plan for the week** and a corresponding shopping list.
- When writing your plan, **consider what may be leftover** – if you are making a Thai curry on Monday and will have half a tin of coconut milk leftover, plan in creamy aubergine and chickpea curry for the next day.
- **Check the use-by dates of fresh food**, and only buy what you can use before it expires – sometimes buying in bulk isn’t cheaper if you end up having to throw half of it away.
- **Don’t overlook the wonky veg!** These veg may not look as beautiful as the others, but they taste exactly the same, with the same nutritional value – embrace the ugliness. They are usually a fraction of the cost, too. Great for jams, soups, smoothies and stews.
- **Cooked food often lasts longer than raw food**, even in the fridge – if you have food that is getting close to its’ use-by-date, cook it off ahead of time and you can have it for lunch over the next few days.
- **Tinned and frozen foods** last for a very long time, and nutritionally are often superior as the nutrients are “locked in” at the foods freshest point – not to mention quick and convenient. Store cans for a quick meal option, and always keep veggies in the freezer, and use as and when you need.

- **Love your freezer** - If you won't be able to eat all the food you have prepared in time, try freezing in individual portions – emergency bolognese on hand when you have no time over the next few months, sorted!
- **Be savvy with your scraps** – When you have too much leftover, scraps or offcuts, be inventive with ways to use them up – spare filo pastry can be used to make mini individual egg tomato and spinach tarts, and soft fruit can be stewed and used to top porridge or Greek yoghurt!
- **Choose your vessel carefully** – some foods are available in different containers. If you won't be able to eat all of a product once it's been opened, consider buying it in a different, resealable container. For example, if you won't get through an entire tin of tomato puree, buy it in resealable metal tubes instead. Feta comes wrapped in a block and once opened, will last up to 3 days - or you can buy feta cubes in brine in a small tub, which will last for weeks.

Reducing waste in the home will also save you money, less food thrown away is less money wasted – good for the environment, good for the pocket! **According to the latest figures from WRAP, cutting food waste could save each household up to £700 a year, as well as producing less waste.**

“Get Wasted” is our new initiative to help you put your leftovers to good use and reduce your food scraps by encouraging you to use what might otherwise get wasted. With such staggering global food wastage figures, tackling food waste needs to start at home. Over the coming months, Get Wasted will touch upon more hints and tips for reducing waste and using leftovers – keep your eyes peeled for recipes and blogs!

If you would like to see the references for this blog please email hfl@aramark.co.uk

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