



# FOOD WASTE GUIDE: SMART SHOPPING

A guide to limit your food waste while grocery shopping



## ALWAYS SHOP WITH A LIST

Having a shopping list with item and quantities will ensure that you aren't tempted to buy food you don't need. Plan your purchases around food you already have and try not to shop on an empty stomach as you'll be more prone to impulse purchases.



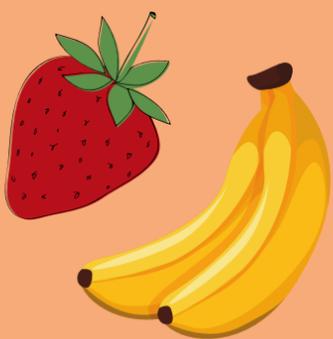
## SUBSTITUTE!

When you find a recipe that calls for a small quantity of an ingredient, see if you can substitute it for something you already have. Alternatively, see if you can buy the exact quantity you need from bulk bins. If you do buy in bulk, make sure it is something you can use up before it goes bad.



## BUY IMPERFECT PRODUCE

Fruits and vegetables with knicks and spots are completely natural but often get neglected and throw away. These are often only cosmetic imperfections and are perfectly safe to eat. If you aren't sure whether an imperfection is safe to eat, just ask!



## LEARN WHICH FRUITS WILL RIPEN AND WHICH WON'T

Some fruits will continue to ripen after you bring them back from the store, such as bananas, avocados, and apples. Others, such as berries, citruses, or grapes won't typically ripen after purchasing.



## SHOP LOCAL & IN-SEASON

Local and in-season produce will often last a few days longer than out of out-of-season. In addition, there are extra environmental costs of shipping and storing non-local and out-of-season produce.



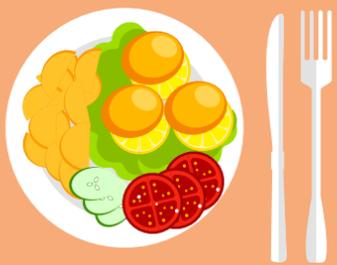
# FOOD WASTE GUIDE: SMART CONSUMPTION

A guide to limit your food waste while prepping and serving food



## MEAL PREP YOUR FOOD

Prep your meals around foods that you need to eat and to make sure that everything gets eaten. Alternatively, if you find it difficult to plan meals in advance, chop up your fruits and veggies that store well in the fridge whenever you can and use those in meals throughout the week.



## DON'T OVERSERVE AND SERVE SMALLER PORTIONS

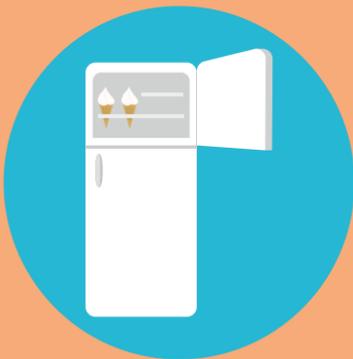
Serve your food on smaller portions and refill your plate as needed to ensure that all your food gets eaten and you don't throw away excess food.

Tip: Use smaller plates to ensure you aren't over serving.



## PLAN AN 'EAT YOUR LEFTOVERS' NIGHT

Plan a night to clear out the leftovers from your fridge. Don't forget to save leftovers if you eat out!



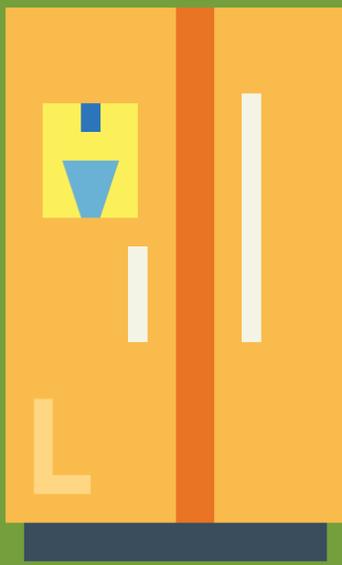
## BEFRIEND YOUR FREEZER

If you can't finish any food that is freezer-friendly, freeze it and save it for later! Foods such as bread, sliced fruit, and meat are often freezer-friendly. Don't forget to write the date that you are freezing and visit your freezer often!



## KEEP TRACK OF WHAT GETS THROWN AWAY

Evaluate which items you tend not to reach for and any items that have been in your fridge or pantry for a long time and went bad. Take note to buy smaller portions or not buy those items next time.



# FOOD WASTE GUIDE: SMART STORAGE

A guide to limit your food waste while storing your food



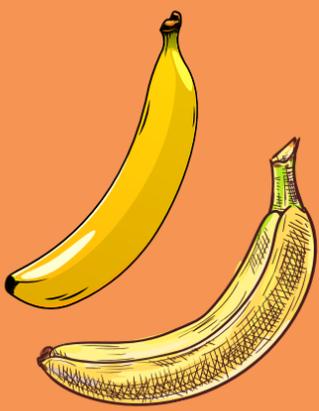
## SET YOUR FRIDGE BELOW 40°F

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration recommends setting your fridge to a temperature below 40°F, as any temperature above 40°F is when bacteria begins to multiply rapidly. The ideal temperature is between 35° to 38°F (or 1.7 to 3.3°C).



## DESIGNATE "EAT SOON" AREAS

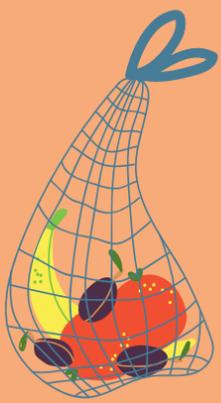
Place items that are likely to spoil soon in easy to reach areas—in the fridge this can be storing older food up front or designating a certain area for about-to-spoil food. This can also be done for pantry and freezer foods.



## LEARN HOW TO STORE YOUR FRUITS AND VEGGIES

Fruits such as bananas) produce ethylene gas, causing nearby fruits to ripen faster. Softer fruits and vegetables tend to rot faster, and store better when they are cold and dry.

See more tips here: <https://www.edgarsfruit.com/information/fruit-ripening-and-storage/>



## CONSIDER INVESTING IN REUSABLE PRODUCE BAGS

Reusable produce bags keep produce fresh longer than the plastic produce bags you find in grocery stores. Swapping your plastic produce bags for reusable ones also cuts down on your plastic waste. Alternatively, ditch the bags altogether.



## TREAT PRODUCT DATES AS GUIDELINES

Use-by, best-by, and sell-by dates identify food quality, not food safety. Use your sense of smell, sight, and taste with "Best by" and "Sell by" dates, which are more guidelines for when food is the best quality and flavor. "Use by" dates indicate the last date recommended for use, which should be taken seriously for meat, poultry or eggs.



# FOOD WASTE GUIDE: DON'T THROW IT OUT YET!

A guide to limit your food waste based on the EPA's Food Recovery Hierarchy



## 1. LIMIT EXCESS FOOD WASTE

Do you have extra ripe food or food scraps?

**Use excess veggies in:** soups, broth, stock, frittatas, sauces, pies, and baked chips OR pickle, ferment, and freeze

**Use excess fruits in:** smoothies, juice, breads, baked fruit chips, jams, and preserves



## 2. DONATE EXTRA FOOD

If you have extra food you won't be able to eat before it goes bad, donate it to food banks, soup kitchens, and shelters or share it with neighbors, friends, and coworkers.



## 3. FEED ANIMALS

You can divert food waste by feeding them to your animals, such as backyard chickens.



Make sure food is safe for your animal to consume!



## 4. COMPOST

Compost any remaining food scraps in a backyard composting system or bring them to the food scrap drop off at the Middletown Recycling Center.

See this page for composting options in Middletown:  
<http://www.cityofmiddletown.com/903/Composting>



## 5. INCINERATION

Any food scraps or waste that can't be used, donated, fed to animals, or composted should be disposed in the trash. This should be your last resort for food disposal!