

Seasonal Kitchen Guide



Tips, Tricks, & Techniques
for Reducing
Food Waste at

Home



TABLE OF CONTENTS

04	January	BROCCOLI
05	February	ORANGE
06	March	SPINACH
07	April	CUCUMBER
08	May	GREEN ONION
09	June	STRAWBERRY
10	July	TOMATO
11	August	CORN
12	September	CABBAGE
13	October	BASIL
14	November	WINTER SQUASH
15	December	SWEET POTATO
16	Our Community Wisdom	
17	StopFoodWaste.org Resources	
18	Special Thanks	

About Food Shift

Food Shift recovers overlooked, but perfectly edible, produce that would otherwise go to waste. That recovered food is transformed with the skills of overlooked talent in our culinary program. Those meals are then redistributed to nourish our overlooked neighbors. We amplify our community's assets to overcome employment discrimination and provide equitable access to food. Food Shift is a fiscally sponsored project of Earth Island Institute.

About StopWaste

StopWaste is a public agency that helps residents, businesses, schools, and local jurisdictions in Alameda County take sustainable actions to increase community resilience to climate change. StopWaste has partnered with Food Shift to ensure the stopfoodwaste campaign reaches all our community members.

Stopwaste's food waste prevention website, [StopFoodWaste.org](https://www.stopfoodwaste.org), provides tips, recipes and tools and resources to help make small shifts in how we shop, prepare, and store food, so we can toss less, eat well, and save money.



Seasonal Kitchen Guide

—Tips, Tricks & Techniques for Reducing Food Waste at Home—

The Food Shift Seasonal Kitchen Guide, in partnership with StopWaste, celebrates the bounty of nature, our resilience, and well-being by highlighting 12 produce items, readily available and affordable in Alameda County, in a calendar-style format. Our template allows for a more inclusive and holistic approach that rethinks our roles in the kitchen and reimagines it as a place where we come together to nourish and be nourished.

As a trained chef, I'm accustomed to using recipes as precise instructions, but we've redesigned the concept of a recipe to be more seasonal and flexible, to simplify the process of cooking for everyone, from beginners to foodies. Recipes specifying exact ingredients and amounts can lead to food waste, not to mention anxiety of getting techniques exactly right. Our template explains basic, resilient techniques, paired with suggested types of suitable produce, that encourages us to use what's already in our kitchens. With this unique and fluid format, we can all create meals that first and foremost satisfy our palates, but are also kind to our bodies, the environment, as well as our budgets. The guide reveals creative ways to use all edible parts of the produce, from "roots to shoots," to reduce food waste, maximize your food budget and capture all of a vegetable's nutrients.

We hope our guide will help you identify and take advantage of what's overlooked in your own kitchen, and let no ingredient be left behind.

Jen Franco

Food Shift Culinary Director

Food isn't merely fuel for our bodies, but nourishment for our minds. By practicing mindful kitchen habits and eating intentionally we can stretch household budgets and improve our environment. Over 35% of food produced in the US goes to waste, not just in farms, factories and grocery stores, but often within our own homes. The actual cost of overbuying, wasting edible parts of produce, and relying on "expiration dates" can exceed \$1,500/year for a household of 4. Selecting, buying, storing, preparing, and eating food mindfully can be both activism and a show of honor and respect, to the entire cycle intertwined with seeds, land, farmers, and food.

Yuka Nagashima

Food Shift Executive Director

January: Broccoli



Storage Pointers

Store broccoli in an unsealed bag or breathable container in the drawer of your refrigerator. Rinse just before using.

Tips for Reducing Waste

Broccoli stems are perfectly edible. Peel the tough outer skin with a peeler or knife and then slice or shred the stem and use in dishes wherever you use the broccoli florets.

Broccoli can also be frozen and used later! Here's how:

1. Blanch, shock or steam broccoli first.
2. Place in a single layer on a baking sheet and cool completely.
3. Put baking sheet in the freezer for 3-4 hours, then transfer broccoli to a freezer bag for easy storage.

I don't de-stem broccoli, kale, chard, etc. Sometimes using the harder parts as a salad topping or pasta topping, but also just sauté or make into pesto.

—JP Hailer
Homies Empowerment
Freedom Store

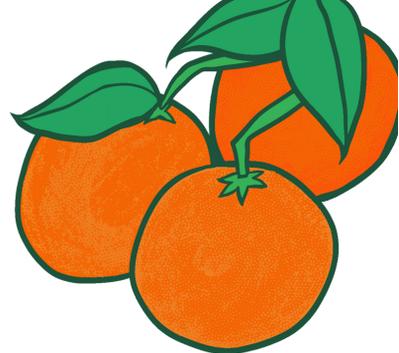
Stir Fry

Be sure to have all of your ingredients prepped before you start cooking: this process goes fast.

- 3 Tbsp soy sauce
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 2 tsp minced ginger
- 2 Tbsp oil
- ½ cup chopped onion
- 3 cups chopped hearty vegetables (broccoli florets and stems, carrots, bell peppers)
- 2 cups greens or delicate vegetables (spinach, chopped kale, snap peas, shredded cabbage)
- 1 cup beans or medium diced tofu
- 2 Tbsp fresh herbs, sliced green onions or toasted nuts (optional)
- 1½ cups leftover cooked rice or grain, reheated
- Salt to taste

1. In a small bowl, whisk together soy sauce, garlic and ginger. Set aside.
2. Heat a large skillet over medium-high heat. Once the skillet is hot, add the oil. Add the onion with a pinch of salt and stir constantly for about 1 minute.
3. Stir in hearty vegetables with another pinch of salt and continue to stir for about 2 minutes until the broccoli turns bright green.
4. Add in greens/delicate vegetables and continue to stir fry until the greens begin to wilt, about 2 minutes. Stir in beans or tofu and cook for another minute.
5. Pour soy sauce mixture into the skillet and stir to coat the vegetables. Cook for another minute stirring constantly.
6. Serve over leftover grain and top with a garnish if desired.

February: Orange



Storage Pointers

Oranges and other citrus fruits such as lemons, limes, and grapefruits can be stored at room temperature for up to a week. To prolong your citrus fruit's shelf life, store them in a bag in the refrigerator. This will help them keep for 3-4 weeks.

Tips for Reducing Waste

Make the most out of your oranges by freezing the zest and the juice. Before you start, be sure to rinse the fruit!

For zest: Use a grater to remove the colorful part of the peel. Be gentle and stop grating when you see the pith, which can taste bitter. Rotate the fruit and continue to grate. Place small amounts of zest in ice cube trays and freeze. The zest has a concentrated flavor and can be used in baked goods like pie crust and muffins, or jam.

For juice: Roll the fruit on the countertop with slight pressure to get the most juice from your orange. This makes the orange easier to squeeze! Juice the orange, remove any seeds and place in ice cube trays. Freeze overnight before moving into a freezer bag.

Orange Vinaigrette

This recipe uses both orange zest and juice. The vinaigrette tastes great on salads or drizzled over roasted vegetables.

- 1 tsp orange zest
- Juice of 1 large orange
- 1 Tbsp honey
- 2 Tbsp vinegar
- ½ cup olive oil
- ½ tsp sea salt
- pinch fresh black pepper

1. In a small bowl, whisk together orange zest and juice, honey and vinegar.
2. While whisking, slowly drizzle in olive oil.

Non-Toxic Citrus Peel Cleanser

While most of the fun in the kitchen comes from cooking and eating, let's not forget about cleaning up afterwards! Citrus peels contain a natural solvent that helps break down grease. Before composting your citrus peels, use them to make a safe household cleaner.

- Citrus peels
- Distilled vinegar
- Glass Container
- Spray Bottle

1. Pack a glass container or wide-mouth jar full of your choice of citrus peels (lemons, oranges, mandarins, grapefruit, etc.).
2. Pour in distilled vinegar to cover the peels.
3. Seal the container and label it with a name and date. Leave it to sit for about two weeks until the vinegar takes on a light yellow color and smells of citrus.
4. Strain the contents to separate the peel, and pour the liquid into a spray bottle.
5. Depending on your desired strength, dilute the vinegar/citrus infusion with water: a solution of 1:1 (one part vinegar, one part water) for an effective all-purpose cleaner.

March: Spinach



Storage Pointers

Place in a clean container with a kitchen towel underneath and over the top of the unwashed spinach to absorb excess moisture. Seal the container and refrigerate. Rinse and dry spinach just before eating. Store other leafy greens the same way!

Tips for Reducing Waste

Swap out leafy greens in your recipes to use what you have. Spinach can be a great substitute for greens like kale or bok choy.

For longer term storage, freeze your spinach one of two ways.

1. Blend with a small amount of water and store in ice cube trays for smoothies, or
2. Add spinach to a pot of boiling water for about 30 seconds. Place the spinach in a bowl of ice water to stop the cooking process. Remove the spinach from the ice water, squeeze out all the excess water and store in the freezer for up to 6 months.

Use trimmings like carrot peels, mushroom stems or celery leaves in vegetable stocks or as a soup base.

—Ian Humphrey
Just Fare

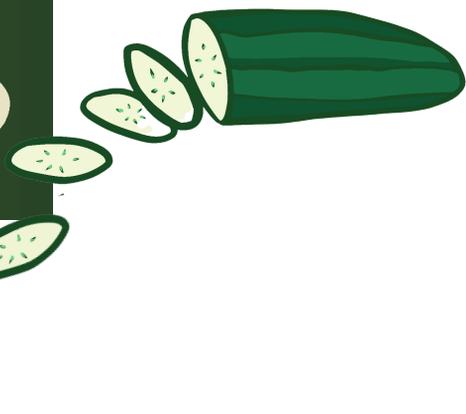
Pantry Vegetable Soup

Make a hearty soup out of your leftovers and vegetables that need to be used.

- 2 Tbsp oil or butter
- 4 cups of fresh mixed vegetables such as onions, garlic, carrots, celery, mushrooms, green beans or potatoes, chopped small
- 1 tsp salt, divided
- 1 tsp dried spices (try cumin or curry powder or your favorite seasoning)
- 4 cups of vegetable broth or water (you can add tomato sauce or condiments from the fridge)
- ¼ tsp black pepper
- Already cooked grains, beans, pasta or vegetables (optional)
- 2 cups spinach

1. Heat a soup pot over medium heat. Once the pot is warm, add the oil and swirl the pot so the oil coats the bottom. Stir in chopped vegetables and ½ tsp salt. Cook for about 5 minutes, stirring occasionally, until vegetables begin to soften. Stir in dried spices and sauté for another minute.
2. Pour in ½ cup broth or water. Use a spoon to make sure that nothing is sticking to the bottom of the pot. Add the remaining 3 ½ cups of broth or water, ½ tsp salt, ¼ tsp black pepper and bring to a boil.
3. Turn the heat down to medium, bringing the liquid to a simmer until the vegetables are tender, about 20 minutes.
4. Add in cooked leftovers, if using, and heat through.
5. Stir in spinach until wilted. Taste the soup and add more salt and/or pepper as needed.

April: Cucumber



Storage Pointers

Wrap unwashed cucumbers in a kitchen towel and store in an unsealed bag. They do best in the crisper drawer or in the warmer part (towards the front) of the refrigerator. Wait to wash cucumbers until ready to enjoy.

Some thinner skinned cucumbers come wrapped in plastic. Leave intact in the refrigerator until ready to use.

Tips for Reducing Waste

You can add pickle juice to your potato salad, or use pickle juice as an alternative to vinegar in a salad dressing recipe.

Use stale bread, cucumber and vegetables you have in the kitchen that need to be used to make a "Bread Salad."

1. Cut bread and cucumbers into 1" cubes.
2. Chop vegetables such as tomatoes, red onion, bell pepper, snap peas and/or asparagus into bite-sized pieces.
3. Whisk together equal parts vinegar and olive oil, about $\frac{1}{4}$ cup each, with a pinch of salt.
4. Toss the bread and vegetables in the vinegar and oil, let set 30 minutes and serve.

Simple Refrigerator Pickles

You can make pickles out of many vegetables. Try this recipe with carrots, cauliflower or green beans.

- 1 cup water
- 1 cup vinegar of choice
- 1 Tbsp salt
- 1 Tbsp to $\frac{1}{4}$ cup sugar, depending on how sweet you like your pickles
- 1 tsp spices, such as mustard seeds, fresh ginger slices, black peppercorns, peeled garlic cloves, and/or red pepper flakes (optional)
- 2 sprigs of fresh herbs such as dill or cilantro (optional)
- 1 large or 2 medium cucumbers, sliced however you like

1. To make the brine: add water, vinegar, salt and sugar to a small pot. Bring to a boil and stir to dissolve the salt and sugar, about 3 minutes. Remove from heat and let cool to room temperature.
2. In a glass jar that holds at least 2 cups of liquid, add spices and herbs, if using, to the bottom of your jar.
3. Pack the cucumbers into the jar and pour the cooled brine over the vegetables until they are covered.
4. Place a lid on the jar and store in the refrigerator. Let sit at least 24 hours before enjoying. Pickles will last for about 2 months or longer.

May: Green Onion



Storage Pointers

Wrap green onions in a slightly damp kitchen towel. The dampness provides the humidity needed for proper storage; if the towel is too wet though, it can promote rotting. Place the wrapped green onions in a storage bag and close the bag (it doesn't need to be sealed).

Tips for Reducing Waste

Did you know you can regrow green onions?

1. Save the white root end (bottom 2-3 inches).
2. Place in a glass of water, leaving the top part exposed.
3. Place in a sunny windowsill and watch them regrow.
4. Refresh the water every other day.

Green onions also make a colorful and flavorful garnish. Thinly slice and use as a topping on a savory dish.



Ginger Scallion Sauce

Use this sauce to top your stir fry, dollop on top of a soup, or drizzled over cooked protein or roasted vegetables.

- 3 Tbsp neutral oil
- 1 ½ Tbsp minced ginger
- 4 green onions (white and green parts), minced
- ½ tsp salt

1. Heat a skillet over medium heat.
2. Once the skillet is hot, add oil. When the oil begins to shimmer, stir in the ginger. Continue stirring for 30 seconds then add the green onions. Stir for another 30 seconds then transfer ginger and green onions to a bowl.
3. Add salt to green onion mixture and mix well. Taste and add more salt if needed.

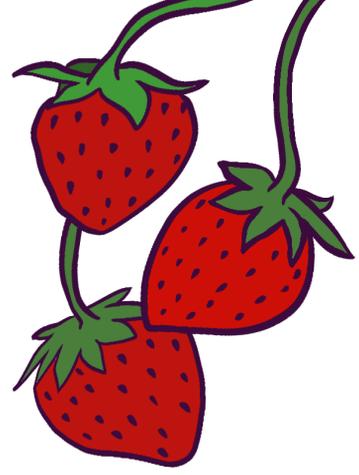
Grilled Green Onions

These grilled onions can be enjoyed on just about anything—eat as a snack, chop up and add to tacos or salsa, add to a salad or put on a sandwich. No grill, no problem! Cook the onions on high in a skillet on the stove.

- 1 bunch green onions, root end trimmed
- 1 Tbsp oil
- Salt and black pepper

1. Heat a grill over medium heat.
2. Toss green onions with oil and sprinkle with salt and pepper.
3. Place onions on the grill and cook until beginning to wilt and have grill marks, about 2 minutes per side.

June: Strawberry



Storage Pointers

Line a container with a kitchen towel and arrange the strawberries in single layer. Repeat if you have more berries and lay a towel on top of the last layer of berries before storing in the refrigerator.

Do not wash berries until you are ready to eat them to avoid excess moisture.

Tips for Reducing Waste

Enjoy your strawberries in the winter by freezing them. Rinse your berries and remove the stems. To prevent your berries from sticking together, place them on a baking tray in the freezer for 2 hours. Once frozen, transfer them to a freezer-safe storage container. Frozen berries are perfect for smoothies. You can even add them to pancakes or make a delicious compote with them.

Did you know that you can eat strawberry stems? They have all the same nutrients as leafy green vegetables. You can also add strawberry stems to your water for a refreshing strawberry-infused beverage.

Strawberry Agua Fresca

A refreshing summer drink that can be made in minutes. If you don't have strawberries, try using watermelon, mango or a combination of fruit.

Freeze your agua fresca in popsicle molds, ice cube trays, or old yogurt containers for a delicious treat on a hot summer day (or use as ice cubes for your "spa water").

- 2 cups roughly chopped fruit
- 1 tsp sugar, honey or agave
- 1 cup water
- 1 tsp fresh lemon or lime juice
- 1 - 2 tsp chopped fresh herbs such as mint or basil (optional)

1. Place all ingredients in a blender and blend until smooth. Taste and add more lemon/lime or sweetener if necessary. Blend once again. Pour over ice and enjoy.

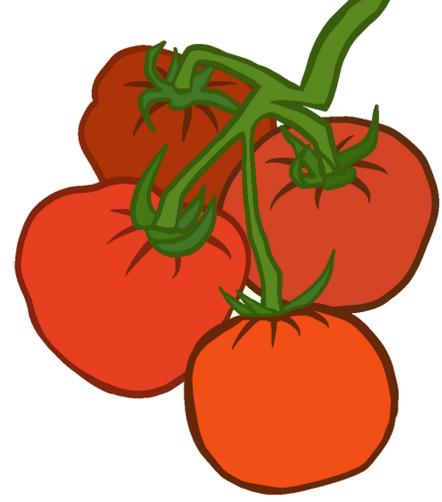
Fruit Compote

Making compote is a tasty way to use bruised fruit. Swirl it into yogurt or oatmeal, or drizzle it over ice cream.

- 3 cups fresh or frozen fruit
- 2 Tbs sugar
- Pinch of salt
- Optional Add-ins: lemon/orange zest and juice, grated ginger, cinnamon

1. Add fruit, sugar, salt and add-ins, if using, to a medium saucepan. Bring to a boil over medium heat. Reduce heat to medium-low, cook until fruit is soft, about 30 minutes, stirring occasionally.
2. Remove from the heat, taste and add more sweetener if necessary. Let cool.
3. Store in a sealed container in the refrigerator for up to 2 weeks.

July: Tomato



Storage Pointers

Leave your tomatoes on the counter out of direct sunlight, unless your kitchen is very warm. Storing your tomatoes stem side down will help them last longer.

Tips for Reducing Waste

Freezing is the best option for long-term storage of very ripe tomatoes.

1. Wash and dry tomatoes.
2. Core full-sized whole tomatoes. Leave cherry tomatoes whole.
3. Freeze on a baking sheet or flat surface with space in between, so they don't stick together.
4. When they are completely frozen, put them into a container or freezer bag and label.

Note: the whole frozen tomatoes will resemble whole canned tomatoes

Use up cherry tomatoes by roasting them with some oil, salt, and pepper. Roast for 30 minutes at 375°F and stir halfway through. Serve them as a side dish or add them to pasta, salad, or cooked grains. You can also roast them with other vegetables.

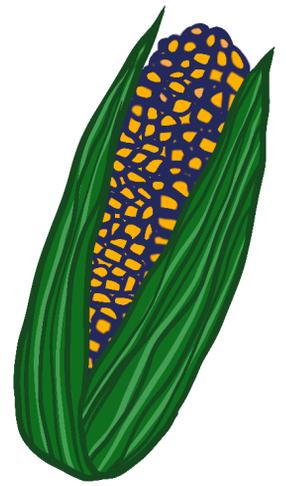
Homemade Tomato Sauce

Use this sauce tossed with pasta, in stuffed bell peppers, or pour it over stale bread to give it new life—the possibilities are endless! You can even use bruised or overly ripe tomatoes. Just be sure to cut away the damaged parts.

- 8 medium tomatoes, about 2 lbs
- ¼ cup olive oil
- 1 medium onion or shallot, chopped small
- 2 cups carrots and/or bell peppers, chopped small (optional)
- 4 cloves garlic, minced or 1 tsp garlic powder
- 2 tsp dried herbs such as Italian seasoning, basil, oregano (optional)
- 1 large pinch sugar
- 1¼ tsp salt, divided
- Black pepper to taste

1. Remove stems from tomatoes and roughly chop. Set aside.
2. Heat the oil in a medium saucepan over medium heat. Add the onion or shallot with a 1/4 tsp salt and sauté about 5 minutes, until onions begin to soften.
3. Add carrots and bell peppers, if using, and sauté another 5 minutes.
4. Stir in garlic and dried herbs, if using, and cook for another minute.
5. Add the tomatoes with their juices, sugar, 1 tsp salt and bring to a boil. Reduce the heat and let simmer uncovered. Stir occasionally until the sauce thickens, about 1 hour.
6. Add salt and pepper to taste. Serve immediately or store covered in the refrigerator for up to 5 days. If you'd like to freeze your sauce, let cool and put into containers (remember to leave about 1" space at the top to account for expansion.)

August: Corn



Storage Pointers

Keep the husks intact to help keep the corn from drying out. Place in an unsealed bag and store in the refrigerator.

Tips for Reducing Waste

Shuck and cut the corn kernels off of the cob. Place kernels in a bag, remove air from the bag and freeze. Frozen corn can be used later in soups, chili or sautés.

Save the cobs and use them to make a stock.

1. Add corn cobs (and other veggie scraps) to a pot and cover with water.
2. Bring to a low boil and reduce to medium-low heat.
3. Simmer for an hour and strain. Use the stock to make corn chowder or replace water when cooking grains like rice or grits.

Make Mexican rice with leftover veggies in the refrigerator drawer: broccoli and cauliflower stems cut small, lost carrots, corn from the cob can all go in to make a healthier veggie filled Arroz Mexicano!

—Leticia Padilla
Oakland Pallet

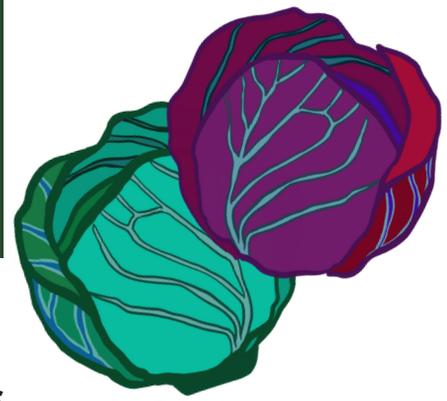
Summer Succotash

This dish traditionally uses corn and lima beans as a base, but feel free to be creative and use the vegetables and pantry items you have on hand.

If you have leftover succotash, add it to salad greens, turn it into a soup or even use it as a filling in a taco or a burrito.

- 1 cup dried beans or 2 cans beans, drained
 - 2 Tbsp oil
 - 1 onion, diced small
 - 3 cups medium diced vegetables such as bell pepper, zucchini, celery or a combination
 - 4 ears of corn, kernels removed
 - 1 tsp dried thyme, basil or parsley (optional)
 - 1 tsp garlic powder or 2 small garlic cloves, minced
 - Salt and black pepper, to taste
1. If you are using dried beans, place in a large pot with enough water to cover beans by 2". Bring to a boil, reduce heat and simmer until tender, stirring occasionally, about 1 hour. Drain and season with salt.
 2. Heat a large skillet over medium heat. Add oil. Stir in onion with a pinch of salt and sauté until translucent, about 5 minutes.
 3. Add vegetables and continue to sauté for 5 more minutes. Add the corn with another pinch of salt and sauté for 3-4 minutes. Add dried spices, if using, and garlic. Sauté for 1 minute.
 4. Stir in beans and continue to cook until the beans are heated through. Taste and adjust seasoning as needed.

September: Cabbage



Storage Pointers

Do not wash cabbage until you are ready to use it.

Place the whole head in a plastic bag or a reusable container in the refrigerator for up to 2 months.

For cut cabbage, put a few drops of water on the cut side, to help the cabbage retain moisture, and place in a sealed bag or container in the refrigerator.

Tips for Reducing Waste

Cabbage can be eaten raw, cooked, or even fermented (think sauerkraut or kimchi). Cabbage can be used as a substitute for recipes that call for broccoli or cauliflower.

One way to enjoy your cabbage raw is to massage it! Thinly slice cabbage and add it to a bowl. Sprinkle with salt and oil then squeeze cabbage firmly until it begins to soften. Squeeze citrus on top or add some mayo and eat with tacos or a sandwich.

To enjoy cooked cabbage, thinly slice it and add it to a vegetable stir fry, steam it, or braise it in a crock pot.

Roasted Cabbage Wedges

This simple and versatile side dish has lots of flavor and crunch. When roasting the cabbage, it caramelizes in the oven and brings out a natural sweetness.

- 1 whole cabbage, cut into 1" wedges
- ¼ cup oil
- Dried Spices, use one type of spice or a blend (chili flakes and garlic powder work well)
- Salt and black pepper

1. Preheat oven to 425°F.
2. Line a baking sheet with foil or parchment paper.
3. Toss cabbage wedges with oil. Sprinkle spices, salt and pepper to taste on both sides of the cabbage, then lay flat on the baking sheet.
4. Roast for 15 minutes, then carefully flip each wedge. Roast 15 minutes more, until cabbage edges are browned and have started to crisp.

Zesty Coleslaw

Eat this slaw on its own, as a side dish, or pile it on your favorite sandwich or burger. Personalize your slaw by adding sweet or savory ingredients.

- 1 Tbs Dijon or other mustard
- 3 Tbs vinegar or lime/lemon juice
- ½ tsp salt
- ⅓ cup olive oil
- 4 cups shredded cabbage
- ½ cup fruit or vegetable of choice (grated apple, shredded carrot, sliced red or green pepper)

1. In a bowl, whisk together mustard, vinegar or citrus juice, salt. Slowly whisk in oil until combined.
2. Add cabbage and fruit/vegetables to a medium bowl. Drizzle dressing over the cabbage mixture and let sit for a few minutes. Taste and adjust seasoning.

October: Basil



Storage Pointers

Keep basil on the counter, out of the sun. Trim the stems and place in a jar or glass with 1-2 inches of water, like a bouquet of flowers. Change the water regularly and remove any slimy leaves when you notice them. Leave basil out of the refrigerator – it doesn't like the cold and will turn brown very quickly.

Wait to wash your herbs until you are ready to use them and be sure to dry them thoroughly.

Tips for Reducing Waste

Make an herb paste that can be used to flavor soups and pasta, added to dips like hummus or to jazz up a salad dressing. Add basil or other herbs and some olive oil to a blender or food processor. Pulse to a smooth paste, adding more oil if needed. Store in a container in the refrigerator for a few days or freeze in ice cube trays to use later.

Fresh herbs add flavor and brighten up any meal. Use whole leaves or chop the herbs and sprinkle them over a dish just before serving.

Go beyond only using the leaves of soft herbs like parsley, dill and cilantro. The stems are also edible and loaded with flavor.

Pesto

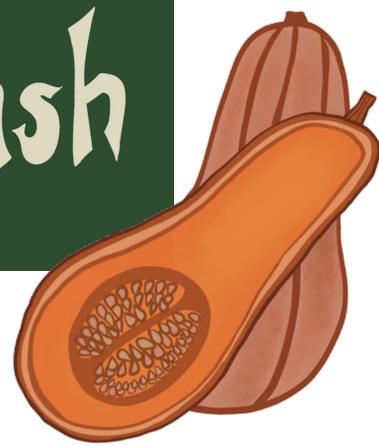
Pesto is the perfect sauce to add to pasta, pizza, potato salad, or as a sandwich spread. Pesto also freezes beautifully. Don't be afraid to play around with different herbs and even leafy greens. See some examples below.

- ¼ cup nuts or seeds such as pumpkin seeds, sunflower seeds or almonds
 - 2 cups basil
 - 1 medium clove garlic, smashed
 - ½ tsp lemon zest
 - 1 Tbsp lemon juice
 - ¼ - ⅓ cup olive oil
 - ¼ tsp salt
 - Pinch of black pepper
1. Preheat oven to 300°F. Spread nuts or seeds evenly on a baking sheet. Toast until fragrant, tossing once, about 8-10 minutes. Let cool. (Note: you can skip this step if your nuts/seeds are already roasted).
 2. Add nuts/seeds, basil, garlic, lemon zest and juice, salt and pepper to a blender or food processor. Process until nuts are finely chopped and everything is combined.
 3. With the machine running, drizzle in ¼ cup of olive oil and continue processing until the pesto is smooth. Add more oil if necessary to get a smooth consistency.

Other herbs or greens to try in pesto

- Parsley
- Mint
- Cilantro
- Kale (stemmed)
- Spinach
- Arugula

November: Winter Squash



Storage Pointers

Store in a cool, dark, well ventilated place. When stored properly, winter squash will last for several weeks.

Tips for Reducing Waste

Prepping your squash all at once can save you time in the kitchen when you're cooking up a storm.

1. Using a sharp knife, trim the ends to create a flat side to stabilize your squash.
2. Cut the squash in half vertically, scoop out the seeds and save them.
3. For squash varieties with inedible skin, use a peeler or knife to remove, being very careful of your fingers.
4. Cut squash into uniform pieces and cook as desired.

Did you know that the skin of kabocha, delicata, and acorn squash is edible?

Make an easy squash side dish by tossing it with a little oil and salt. Bake for 30 minutes at 400°F. Be sure to stir halfway through roasting. Squash should be tender and golden around the edges.

Don't forget to use the seeds! Rinse them thoroughly and toss with oil and a sprinkle of salt. Roast in the oven at 275°F for about 20 minutes.

Winter Squash Bread Pudding

Bread and dairy are commonly wasted items in the home. This recipe helps you use both ingredients to make a tasty breakfast or dessert. Feel free to adapt to make a savory version.

- 1 tsp neutral oil
 - 4 cups day-old bread, cubed
 - 3 cups cubed and roasted winter squash
 - 2 cups milk (any type)
 - 2 eggs or 3 Tbsp corn starch as a vegan version
 - 3 Tbsp sugar
 - 1 tsp vanilla extract (optional)
 - 1 tsp ground cinnamon (optional)
1. Preheat oven to 375°F. Coat an 8" x 8" baking dish with oil.
 2. Combine bread and squash and add to the prepared baking dish.
 3. Lightly beat eggs in a medium bowl. Whisk in milk, sugar, vanilla and cinnamon, if using. (Vegan version: In a small bowl, whisk 1/4 cup cold milk with cornstarch until completely smooth. In a separate bowl, whisk together remaining 1 3/4 cups milk, sugar, vanilla and cinnamon. Once combined, stir in cornstarch mixture).
 4. Pour milk mixture over the bread, toss to combine and let sit for 30 minutes.
 5. Bake for about 35-45 minutes until golden brown and the liquid has set.

December: Sweet Potato

An illustration of several sweet potatoes with their green stems and leaves. Some potatoes are whole, while others are sliced into rounds. The background is a dark green with a white outline of a sweet potato plant.

Storage Pointers

Like potatoes, the best way to store sweet potatoes is in a cool dry place, loosely in a paper bag, unwashed. Avoid refrigeration or storing in plastic bags which can promote softening. Keep potatoes away from onions to prevent early sprouting.

Tips for Reducing Waste

The skin of sweet potatoes and potatoes have lots of nutrients, but be sure to scrub and rinse them thoroughly before eating. Keep the skin on when cooking your potatoes or peel it and use it to make veggie chips. Toss skin with olive, salt and pepper and roast in the oven until crisp.

Sweet potatoes can also replace potatoes in dishes like fries, hash or a mash.

Never toss a stem, peel, or rind if possible! If I'm making a dish like mashed potatoes or a poached pear tart, I'll always collect the skins and throw them in the oven with some sweet or savory spices to make a quick snack for while I'm cooking, or to box up for later.

—Riley Bright
ReGrained

Stuffed Sweet Potatoes

This template is a fun and creative way to use what you have on hand, using sweet potatoes as the base to make breakfast, lunch or dinner.

Sweet potatoes can be roasted in advance and will keep in the refrigerator for about 3 days. Reheat at 350°F until warmed through.

- At least 2 medium-large sweet potatoes or yams
 - Oil
 - Salt
 - Toppings of choice (see below)
1. Preheat the oven to 400°F.
 2. Scrub and rinse your sweet potatoes under cool water. Pat dry and prick the skin a few times with a fork. Lightly coat each sweet potato with oil and sprinkle with salt. Place sweet potatoes on a baking sheet and roast for about 40 minutes. You will know they are done when they can be easily pierced with a fork. Set aside.
 3. While the sweet potatoes roast, prepare your toppings (cook, re-heat, chop).
 4. When sweet potatoes are cool enough to handle, cut a slit lengthwise and fluff the inside with a fork and stuff with toppings.

Topping Ideas

- Breakfast: peanut butter, jam, diced apples with cinnamon
- BBQ Style: baked beans, green onion, coleslaw
- Taco Style: black beans, salsa, sliced avocado, pickled jalapenos, tortilla strips

Our Community Wisdom

Food waste prevention has been a part of many traditional cultures as a means of necessity and respect for what is available. By re-learning from those before us, we move towards healing for the generations after us.

—Nina Arroccena
Mandela Partners

Growing food consumes lots of human energy, water and soil nutrients so we need to eat whatever we grow.

—Elaine O.
LEAF

I have recently learned several ways to use the avocado pit and skin. To make your own avocado oil, dry out and chop up the avocado seed (remove its skin) and skin, pour grape seed oil with a bit of olive oil over it, then use the double-boiler method to heat it. Let it sit overnight or longer to get more of the benefits to infuse into the carrier oil.

—Laurenteen Brazil
Saint Columba Catholic Church

Salvage as much as possible from blemished and distressed produce and compost the rest.

—Paddy Iyer
Daily Bowl

Bag fresh ginger cut into small pieces and put tomato paste into ice trays to freeze for later use.

—Barbara Stott
Eden Garden

StopFoodWaste.org Resources

Fruit & Veggie Storage Guide

Learn which fruits and vegetables stay fresh longer inside or outside the fridge with this storage guide.

<https://stopfoodwaste.org/StorageGuide>

Shopping List

Before you shop, use this sheet to help plan the meals you'll eat at home and list items needed. "Shop" your fridge, freezer and cupboards for ingredients first.

<https://stopfoodwaste.org/ShoppingList>

"Eat This First" Sign

Place this sign inside your fridge or cupboard to designate foods that need to be eaten soon.

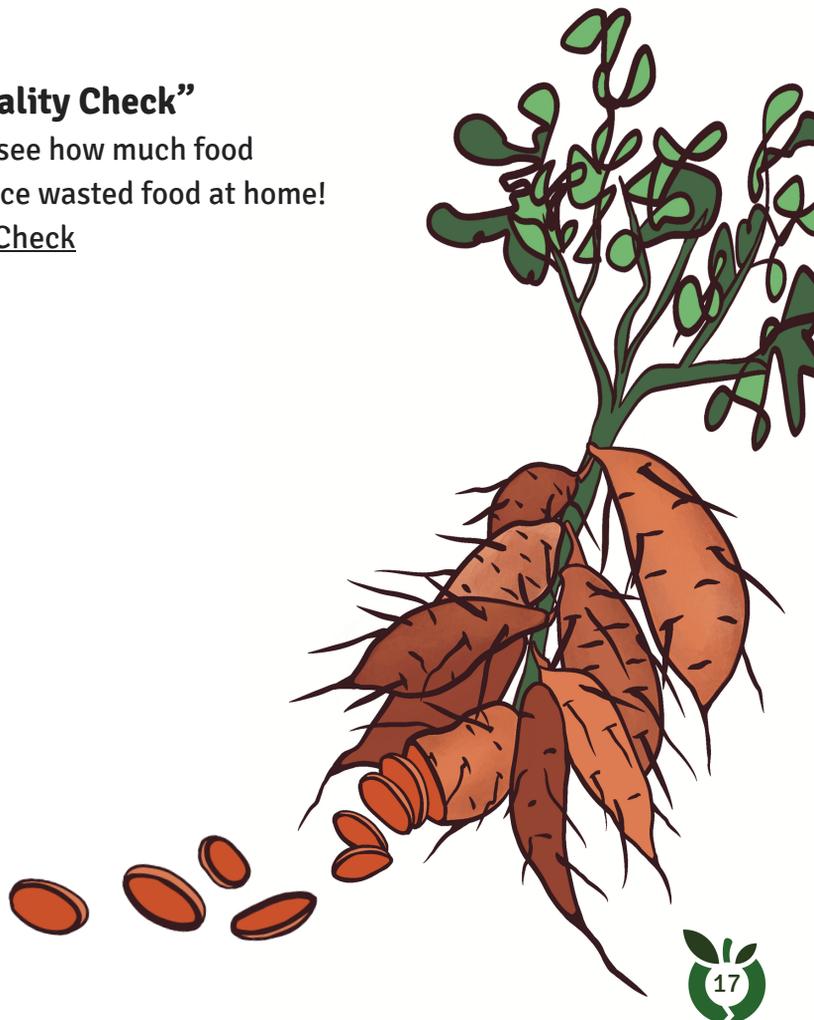
<https://stopfoodwaste.org/Sign>

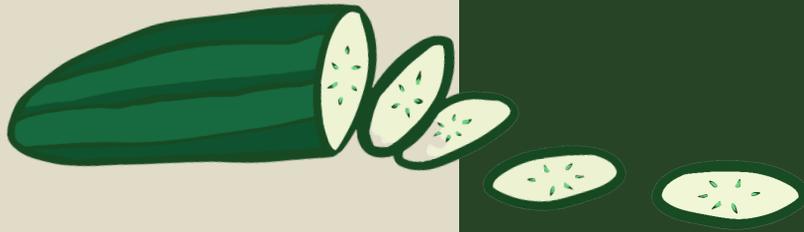
Fridge Audit "10-Minute Fridge Reality Check"

The 10-minute fridge check will help you see how much food is going uneaten and give you tips to reduce wasted food at home!

<https://stopfoodwaste.org/FridgeRealityCheck>

Find more on social media





StopFoodWaste.org

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Special Thanks

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