



Food Waste Toolkit for the Office

FOOD WASTE: THE PROBLEM

One-third of all food that is produced for our consumption in the U.S. ends up rotting in landfills, resulting in 16% of our nation's methane emissions. All the while, 49 million Americans don't have access to enough food. In economic terms, a recent report from ReFED estimates that the United States spends over \$218 billion – 1.3% of GDP – growing, processing, transporting, and disposing of food that is never eaten. The impact on the planet is equally profound. In the U.S., getting food from the farm to our tables eats up 10% of the total energy budget, uses 50% of the land, and accounts for 80% of all freshwater consumed.



Food waste is a global issue, but it is also deeply personal. Most food waste occurs before it even hits our plate. It happens at lunchtime when you throw out the homemade salad that is less appealing once your team orders pizza. It happens in cafeterias, where a surplus of meals don't always have a place to go at the end of the night. It happens in the kitchen during the cooking process, when we throw out the stems of our broccoli.

Now is the time to question what we see as normal practices when it comes to food procurement, preparation, and consumption. Businesses and their employees are in a prime position to change the tide. Companies can spread awareness to their employees about food waste, both at home and at the office, and give them tools and advice as to how to reduce their own waste and engage in food waste reduction practices.

BENEFITS OF “FOOD WASTE WEEK”

Holding a “Food Waste Week” in your office not only creates the opportunity to raise awareness among your employees, but also allows you to highlight your company's related priorities and programs, like Corporate Social Responsibility goals or steps you are already taking to reduce the office's environmental footprint. This is also a perfect way to get employees engaged in food waste reduction and do some team building activities, like volunteering at a food bank or going on a gleaning field trip.

BENEFITS OF “FOOD WASTE WEEK” IN YOUR OFFICE

- Raise awareness among employees about the scale and significance of the food waste problem
- Highlight the company's related priorities and programs
- Provide engagement opportunities to build staff morale, while working towards an important cause
- Provide information on small, easy things people can do in their own lives to reduce waste

WHAT WILL “FOOD WASTE WEEK” LOOK LIKE IN YOUR OFFICE?

“Food Waste Week” can be modified to best fit your office’s interest and level of engagement. For example, there could be a designated “Food Waste Day” or a series of events for a whole “Food Waste Week,” with each day focused on a different aspect of the issue (e.g., the scale of the issue, what foodservice can do to address waste, or what consumers can do). A “Food Waste Week” could consist of a series of events and related communications during a week designated to build awareness around food waste issues, and share tips and best practices that staff can incorporate into their daily lives. Below are some potential ideas, but consider this a starting point as you think about what would work best at your organization and would be most exciting for your employees!

Objectives	Potential Activities
Raise General Awareness on the Scale of Food Waste and Its Importance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Announce “Food Waste Week” (or day) on your company’s internal communications platform and share some key statistics on food waste in the U.S. and other countries (particularly by consumers and foodservice). If there is no internal communication platform, individual hand-outs could be left in employee’s boxes or posted in a communal space for pick-up. • Host a lunch made with “wasted” food. • Host a movie night for employees to view documentaries about food waste, like “Just Eat It.” (see Resources for more ideas) • Host talks by professionals in the food waste sector. An example of a possible speaker is Jonathan Bloom, author of <i>American Wasteland</i>. • Experiment with different solutions to reduce food waste, such as installing a weighing station for leftovers in the cafeteria near the trash can. • Have a Leftovers Day and encourage employees to bring leftovers from home and maybe even share them with their colleagues.
Highlight Your Company’s Related Priorities and Programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hold a competition during lunch to guess how much food waste, on average, the corporate cafeteria produces daily. The closest guesses could get copies of a book on food waste like: <i>American Wasteland</i> or <i>Food Foolish</i>. If the office does not have a corporate cafeteria, this activity could be modified by guessing “How much of the food purchased by the average American consumer is wasted every year?” (Answer: 25%) • Highlight opportunities to use less than perfect produce or leftovers by featuring them in certain menu items at the corporate cafeteria. (if applicable) • Test out “tray-less” dining for a day at the corporate cafeteria. (if applicable) • Have a lunch with your operations team to talk about waste management. If you have a sustainability or corporate social responsibility team, ask them to talk about their goals for creating a sustainable supply chain.

Objectives	Potential Activities
Provide Opportunities for Employees to Do Something About the Issue	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organize volunteer opportunities, such as a fieldtrip to a local farm to go gleaning or a volunteer day at your local food bank. If staff participate in gleaning activities, you could feature the collected produce in one of your company's meals or possibly hold a guessing game to figure out which dish incorporated gleaned food. Challenge employees to keep a food waste diary for a week. This diary will help employees understand more about the types of foods they are throwing away in the home, why, and when. At the end of the week, you can invite employees to share what they found most surprising about their habits and how much food they wasted. Invite employees to submit their own recipes that use leftovers or reduce food waste in a contest and have the office vote on their favorite submissions. The winner can receive a book about food waste. (see Resources) Feature an employee pledge board (can be an actual physical board or on an internal messaging platform) with the words, "I will..." written on it, so people can write down things that they could individually do to help reduce food waste (e.g., buy ugly fruits and vegetables, donate what I don't eat, can foods, etc.).
Share Tools and Tips for Employees to Reduce Their Own Waste	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focus on a few key topics (e.g., using leftovers, composting) and push out tips, tools, and facts through online platforms and/or hard copy flyers in the lunchroom, break-room, hallway, and/or employee's mailboxes. Organize a class on canning, pickling, or other techniques to preserve food that people can do at home. Highlight resources, such as a list of smartphone apps to track sell by dates and/or waste, different recipes that encourage creative uses of leftovers at home (possibly the ones submitted by the staff), books about food waste, and tips on food storage. There are many options – find more in the Resources section.



Disclaimer of endorsement: reference herein to any specific commercial products, process, or service by trade name, trademark, manufacturer, or otherwise, does not necessarily constitute or imply its endorsement, recommendation, or favoring by the Rockefeller Foundation. The examples included in the following sections are for informational purposes only.

RESOURCE TOOLKIT

OBJECTIVE: RAISE GENERAL AWARENESS ON THE SCALE OF FOOD WASTE AND ITS IMPORTANCE

These are examples of infographics and posters that can be posted around the office, in the cafeteria, or in the break room. They could also be used as individual handouts to be left in employees' boxes or given to employees at other food waste activities. These are some ideas, but feel free to get creative with the materials that you post!

INFOGRAPHICS AND POSTERS

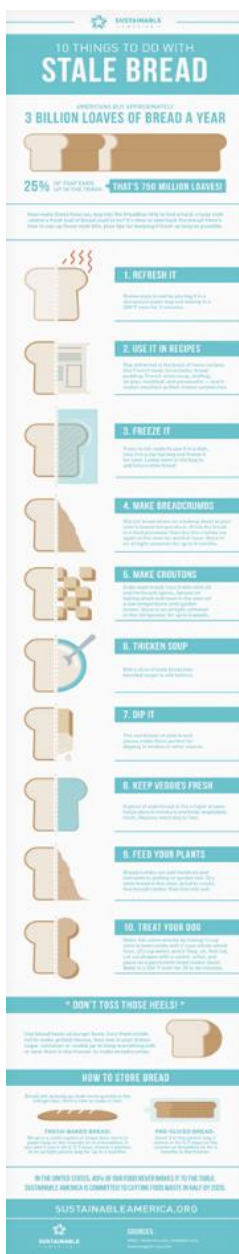
10 Things to Do with Banana Peels

(Available on Sustainable America's "I Value Food" website)



10 Things to Do with Stale Bread

(Available on Sustainable America's "I Value Food" website)

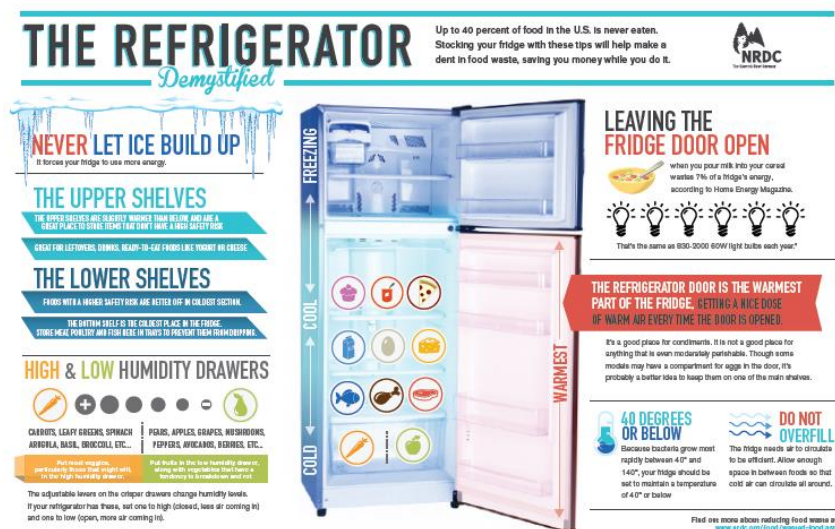


What Expiration Dates Really Mean

(Available on Sustainable America's "I Value Food" website)

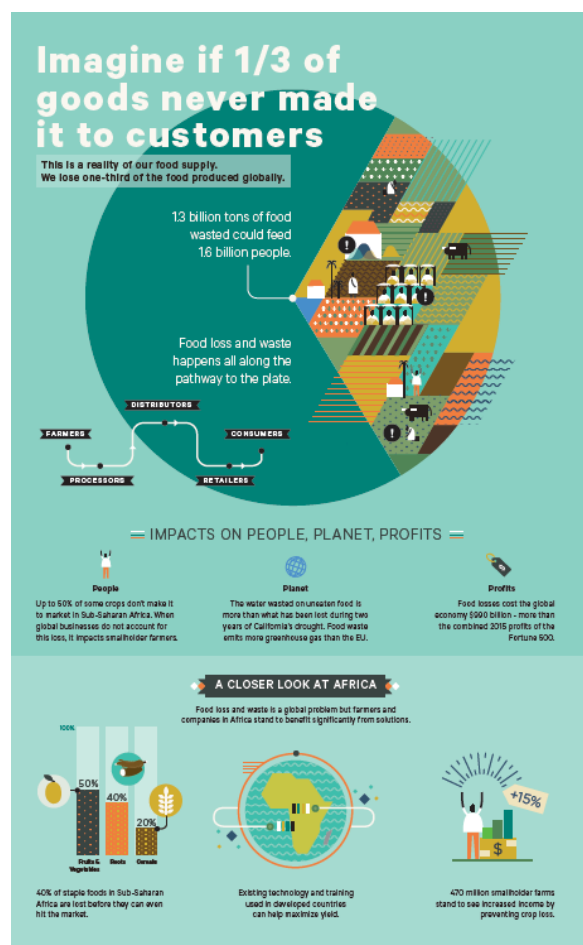


REFRIGERATOR INFOGRAPHIC



(Available on NRDC's website)

YIELDWISE INFOGRAPHIC (EXAMPLES)



YieldWise is The Rockefeller Foundation's \$130 million initiative that will work with private, public, and nonprofit actors involved in the food supply system to cut their food loss and waste by half. From how smallholder farmers harvest and get crops to market, to corporate losses across supply chains, all the way to consumer waste, we seek to create an efficient food system with minimal loss.

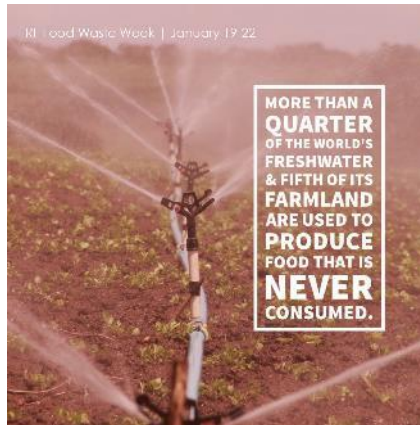
A productive food system with minimal loss is our goal - and one that is well within reach.

POSTERS

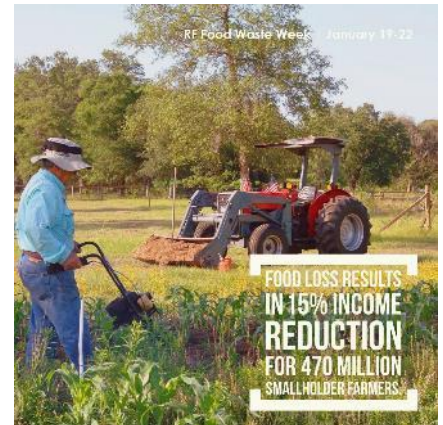
EXAMPLES FROM THE ROCKEFELLER FOUNDATION



"Food Waste Week"
Teaser 1



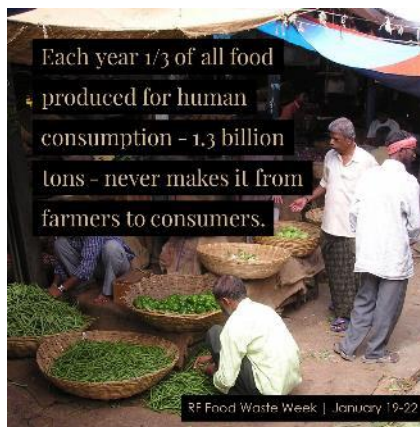
"Food Waste Week"
Teaser 2



"Food Waste Week"
Teaser 3



"Food Waste Week"
Teaser 4



"Food Waste Week"
Teaser 5



"Food Waste Week"
Teaser 6

EXAMPLES FROM “SAVE THE FOOD” CAMPAIGN BY THE ADCOUNCIL AND NRDC



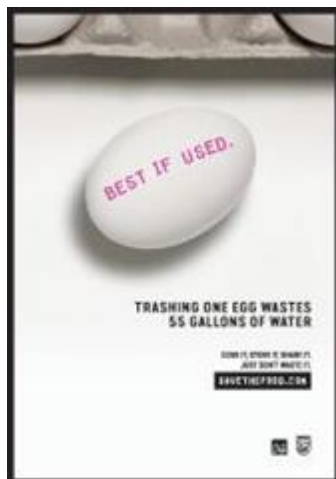
“Best If Used: Bread” Poster

(Available from “Save the Food” Campaign
by the AdCouncil and NRDC)



“Best If Used: Chicken” Poster

(Available from “Save the Food” Campaign
by the AdCouncil and NRDC)



“Best If Used: Egg” Poster

(Available from “Save the Food” Campaign
by the AdCouncil and NRDC)



“Best If Used: Milk” Poster

(Available from “Save the Food” Campaign
by the AdCouncil and NRDC)

EXAMPLES OF INTERNAL MESSAGING

In order to create excitement and spread the word about “Food Waste Week” at your office, you can utilize the internal messaging platform to send messages to the staff. If your office does not use an internal messaging platform, consider sending out messages similar to these examples in the employee newsletter or by email. These are examples used on The Rockefeller Foundation’s internal messaging platform:

- *Join us in celebrating Food Waste Week at (name of organization here). From (date) to (date), we will be hosting activities across our offices as part of Food Waste Week to raise awareness about how we can all take steps to reduce food waste in our lives. Some highlights from the week will include:*
 - *A pan-office competition for the recipes that reuse leftovers or food scraps. The submitters of the two most creative recipes from each office will receive copies of the NRDC’s “Waste Free Kitchen Handbook.” Not to mention bragging rights!*
 - *“Wasted” food menu items at the cafeteria courtesy of (insert name of food provider here).*
 - *Tips and tools shared by colleagues on how to reduce food waste at home.*
 - *A Friday lunchtime movie viewing of the “Just Eat It” documentary on food waste, which features Tristram Stuart from Feedback Global.*

Have a great weekend, Staff!

#foodwasteweek

- *Staff, did you know that each year one-third of all food produced for human consumption—1.3 billion tons—never makes it from farmers to consumers? Globally, 25% of freshwater and 20 % of farmland is currently wasted on the production of unconsumed food. On 470 million smallholder farms across Africa, lack of access to training and technology negatively impacts harvests and farmer livelihoods. And in the U.S., getting food from the farm to our tables eats up 10% of the total U.S. energy budget, uses 50% of the U.S. land, and accounts for 80% of all freshwater consumed in the U.S.*

For more facts on food loss and waste, check out some of the flyers posted across our offices. Be sure to stop by the food waste table in the cafeteria. You can learn more about how our cafeteria, (enter name here), colleagues track and measure waste in the cafeteria, and guess how much waste we generate every month (if applicable). #foodwasteweek

LIST OF POTENTIAL SPEAKERS

Here are examples of a few influential figures in the food waste space. One of the activities during “Food Waste Week” could include a hosted talk with one of these individuals, or another person that could speak about food waste. These individuals, and many others, have recorded interviews, TED Talks, podcasts, etc., that can be found online as well.



Dan Barber

Dan Barber is the Chef of Blue Hill, a restaurant in Manhattan’s West Village, and Blue Hill at Stone Barns, located within the nonprofit farm and education center, Stone Barns Center for Food & Agriculture. His opinions on food and agricultural policy have appeared in the *New York Times*, along with many other publications. Barber has received multiple James Beard awards, including Best Chef: New York City (2006) and the country’s Outstanding Chef (2009). In 2009, he was named one of *Time* magazine’s 100 most influential people in the world.



Jonathan Bloom

Author of *American Wasteland*, Jonathan Bloom writes about why we waste food, why it matters, and what we can do about it.



Dana Gunders

Dana Gunders focuses chiefly on promoting sustainability throughout our food systems and supply chains. As NRDC’s leading expert on food waste, she is the author or coauthor of several widely distributed reports, including “Wasted: How America Is Losing Up to 40 Percent of Its Food from Farm to Fork to Landfill” and “The Dating Game,” the latter of which reveals how confusion regarding food expiration dates contributes to the problem of food waste in America. She recently published *Waste-Free Kitchen Handbook: A Guide to Eating Well and Saving Money by Wasting Less Food*.



John M. Mandyck

John Mandyck serves as Chief Sustainability Officer for United Technologies Corporation, a global leader in the aerospace, food refrigeration and commercial building industries. He co-authored *Food Foolish: The Hidden Connection Between Food Waste, Hunger, and Climate Change*.



Eric B. Schultz

Eric B. Schultz currently serves in the Partner Program at Ascent Ventures in Boston. He is a consultant and former CEO of Sensitech, a unit of United Technologies Corporation. Schultz is also the co-author of *Food Foolish: The Hidden Connection Between Food Waste, Hunger, and Climate Change*.



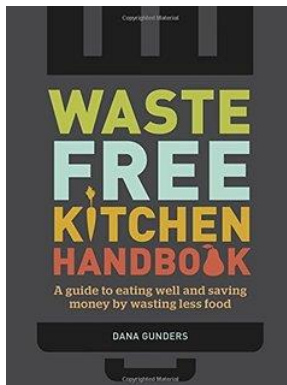
Tristram Stuart

Tristram Stuart is an international award-winning author, speaker, campaigner, and expert on the environmental and social impacts of food waste. His books have been described as "a genuinely revelatory contribution to the history of human ideas" (*The Times*), and his TED talk has been watched over a million times. The environmental campaigning organisation he founded, Feedback, has spread its work into dozens of countries worldwide to change society's attitude towards wasting food.

OBJECTIVE: DISSEMINATE TOOLS AND TIPS FOR EMPLOYEES TO REDUCE THEIR OWN WASTE

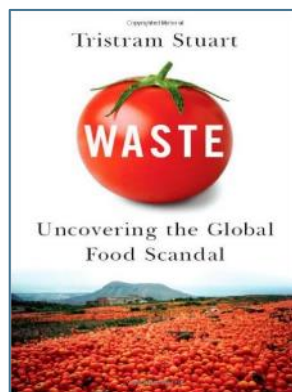
BOOKS

These books are all about food waste! They can be distributed to employees as you please, or given as prizes for different contests held in the office, such as recipe contests or a “Guess how much food waste the average American produces?” contest.



The Waste-Free Kitchen Handbook by Dana Gunders (2015)

(Available on Google Books or Amazon)



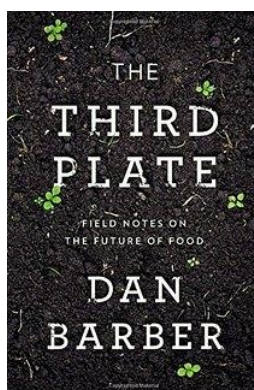
Waste: Uncovering the Global Food Scandal by Tristram Stuart (2009)

(Available on Google Books or Amazon)



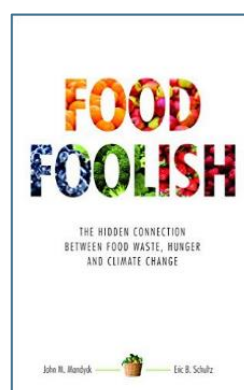
The Waste Not, Want Not Cookbook: Save Food, Save Money and Save the Planet by Cinda Chavich (2015)

(Available on Google Books or Amazon)



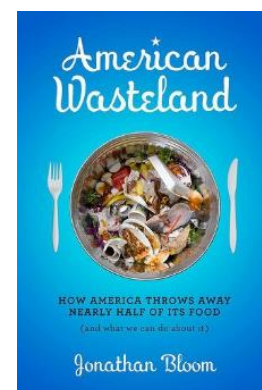
The Third Plate by Dan Barber (2015)

(Available on Google Books or Amazon)



Food Foolish by John M. Mandyck and Eric B. Schultz (2015)

(Available on Google Books or Amazon)

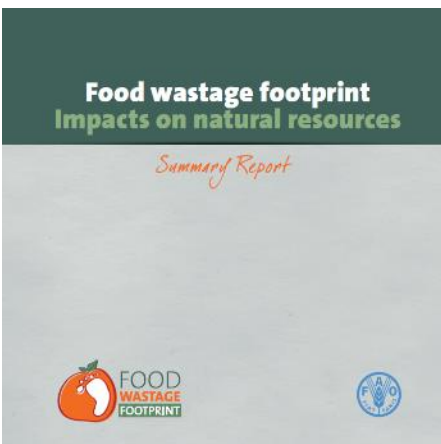


American Wasteland by Jonathan Bloom (2011)

(Available on Google Books or Amazon)

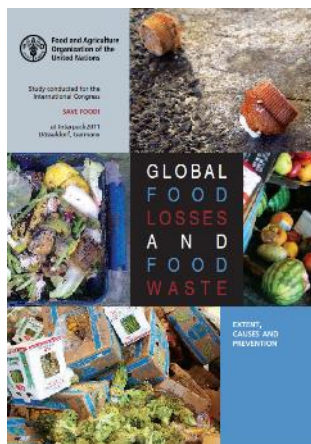
REPORTS/ARTICLES

These reports provide a lot of background data and can be useful to the point person in the office to build their knowledge around food waste. If employees are really excited about food waste, they can use the reports to learn more. Physical copies can be distributed or they can be sent out via email.



Food Wastage Footprint
Report by Food and
Agriculture Organization
(2013)

(Available on FAO website)



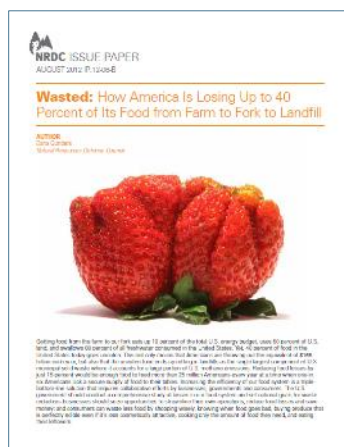
Global Food Losses and
Food Waste by Food and
Agriculture Organization
(2011)

(Available on FAO website)



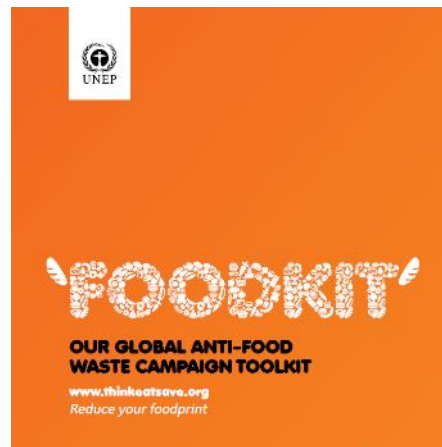
A Roadmap to Reduce
U.S. Food Waste by
20 Percent by ReFED
(2016)

(Available on ReFED website)



Wasted by the Natural
Resources Defense Council
(2012)

(Available on NRDC website)



'Foodkit' Toolkit by United Nations
Environment Programme
(2015)

(Available on the Think, Eat, Save website)

MOVIES/CLIPS

These movies and video clips are an easy way to get the word out about food waste. Consider sending the clip out over the internal messaging platform or via email. You could also screen “Just Eat It” during the lunch hour or at a movie night.



Just Eat It: A Food Waste Story

(Available on Amazon)



John Oliver

(Available on YouTube)

WEBSITES

These websites are just a few of the many websites that can provide tips to individual consumers on how to reduce their own food waste.

FOR HOME COOKS



TheKitchen



TheFrugalGirl



Purple Kale Kitchenworks



Food52

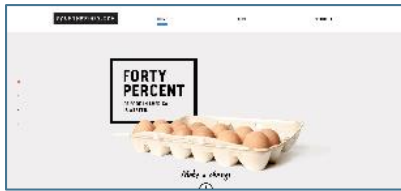


MyZeroWaste



Food and Wine

FOR MORE AWARENESS



The Ad Council's "Save the Food"



Sustainable America's "I Value Food"

SMARTPHONE APPS

These apps can help employees track their waste and even get discounts on perfectly good food around them that would otherwise go to waste.



Green Egg Shopper

In addition to tracking expiration dates on purchased food items, Green Egg Shopper also provides a tracker for coupons, vouchers, and overall food expenditures.

(Available in the iTunes Store)



FridgePal

Oftentimes, consumers throw away their groceries due to expiration dates. But FridgePal tracks the expiration dates of food items and offers consumers shopping lists, recipes searchable by lists of ingredients, and a meal planner. The app visually separates food contained in refrigerators, freezers, and pantries. It also gives cooks the option of viewing items by type, such as dairy, meals and leftovers, or sauces.

(Available in the iTunes Store)



Reta

Reta sends users timely reminders on their phones, allowing them to see all of their food at home from any location to plan their meals at any time. The feature is also useful while shopping for groceries to avoid overbuying. Also, Reta tracks how much users eat, allowing them to see lifetime statistics of what percentage of food goes uneaten.

(Available on the Reta website)



PareUp

PareUp allows consumers in New York City to purchase unsold food at a discount from a number of various retailers, who in turn increase their revenues by selling food that normally would have been thrown away at the end of the business day.

(Available on the PareUp website)

RECIPES

These recipes can be sent out to employees over the internal messaging platform or via email. By holding a recipe contest, employees can submit their favorite recipes made from “wasted” food in order to win a prize (see The Rockefeller Foundation example below).



Dan Barber WastED Recipes
(Available on Food and Wine website)



Bruised Apples into Applesauce
(Available on Food and Wine website)

EXAMPLE OF THE ROCKEFELLER FOUNDATION RECIPE ENTRY

Rockefeller Food Waste Week

January 19-22, 2016



Recipe: Leftover Oatmeal Muffins

Submitted by: Amira Bliss (c/o [Orangette](#))

Ingredients

- 1 ½ cups (210 grams) all-purpose flour
- ¼ cup (50 grams) sugar
- 4 teaspoons baking powder
- ½ teaspoon fine sea salt
- ½ cup add-ins (such as nuts, chopped chocolate, coconut flakes, fruit, etc.)
- 1 large egg
- 1 cup (185 grams) cooked oatmeal, preferably steel-cut
- ½ cup (120 ml) whole milk
- 2 tablespoons (28 grams) unsalted butter, melted and cooled slightly

Instructions

Preheat the oven to 400°F, and grease a 12-cup muffin tin.

In a large bowl, whisk together the flour, sugar, baking powder, salt, and add-ins.

In another bowl, lightly beat the egg. Add the oatmeal to the egg, and mash with a fork to break up clumps. Add the milk and the butter, and stir or whisk to combine.


Pour the wet mixture into the dry mixture, and stir briefly to just combine. Divide the batter evenly between the wells of the prepared muffin tin. Bake for 15 to 20 minutes, or until a toothpick inserted in the center of one of the muffins comes out clean. The muffins won't brown much on top and might even look a little anemic, but that's okay. Serve warm, ideally.

Yield: 12 smallish muffins

RESOURCES FOR HOME COOKERS (CAN BE USED AS HAND-OUTS)

These resources can be handed out to employees for use in the home. If available, your creative team could also develop their own versions!

(Print on labels or plain paper. Use to identify what is in your fridge or freezer and keep track of when to eat it.)

 <p>CONTENTS: _____ CREATED ON: _____ FROZEN ON: _____ EAT BY: _____</p> <p>TOO GOOD TO WASTE</p>	 <p>CONTENTS: _____ CREATED ON: _____ FROZEN ON: _____ EAT BY: _____</p> <p>TOO GOOD TO WASTE</p>
 <p>CONTENTS: _____ CREATED ON: _____ FROZEN ON: _____ EAT BY: _____</p> <p>TOO GOOD TO WASTE</p>	 <p>CONTENTS: _____ CREATED ON: _____ FROZEN ON: _____ EAT BY: _____</p> <p>TOO GOOD TO WASTE</p>
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Smart Storage Freezer Labels

(Available on Sustainable America's "I Value Food" website)

HOW LONG DO FRUITS AND VEGETABLES LAST?
PRODUCE STORAGE CHEAT SHEET

PRODUCE ITEMS	STORE AT ROOM TEMPERATURE	ONCE FROZEN & AT ROOM TEMPERATURE, REFRIGERATE	REFRIGERATE IMMEDIATELY
APPLES		3-4 WEEKS	
ARTICHOKES	Store in water in a plastic bag; use in plastic bag.		1 WEEK
ASPARAGUS	Store in water until ready to prepare.		3-4 DAYS
AZUKI BEANS		3-6 DAYS	
BANANAS	Once ripe, they can last 2-3 days in the refrigerator. Place in a plastic bag, but don't seal it.	2-3 DAYS	6-7 DAYS
BAZILL	Store in water and place in a plastic bag; store with food plastic bag.	2-10 DAYS	
BEETS			2 WEEKS
BELL PEPPERS	Once prepared, use in 3 days.		1-2 WEEKS
BLACKBERRIES, STRAWBERRIES, RASPBERRIES		2-3 DAYS	
BLUEBERRIES		1-2 WEEKS	
BRUSSELS			3-5 DAYS
BRUSSELS SPROUTS			3-5 DAYS
CABBAGE			1 WEEK
CANTALOUPE		7-10 DAYS	
CARROTS			3-4 WEEKS
CARROT LARSEN			1 WEEK
CELERY			1-2 WEEKS
CHERRIES		4-7 DAYS	
CITRUS FRUITS		2-3 WEEKS	
COLLARD GREENS			4-5 DAYS
CORN			1-2 DAYS
CUCUMBERS			1 WEEK
EDIBLE PLANT			6-7 DAYS

Produce Storage Cheat Sheets

(Available on Sustainable America's "I Value Food" website)



'Eat Me First' Sign

(Available on Sustainable America's "I Value Food" website)

Meal Planner and Shopping List

WEEKLY MENU PLAN

☐ Check what you already have in your fridge, freezer, and cupboard

☐ Write your menu for each week's activities

☐ Place your menu plan in your fridge

SHOPPING LIST

☐ Write your shopping list from your menu plan

☐ Identify how much you will need

☐ Remember to take your list to the grocery store

MENU PLAN	ITEM/AMOUNT NEEDED	ALREADY HAVE
MONDAY	FRUITS & VEGETABLES	
TUESDAY	GRAINS & CEREALS	
WEDNESDAY	DAIRY & FROZEN ITEMS	
THURSDAY	MEAT & FISH	
FRIDAY	NON-PERISHABLES	
SATURDAY	DRINKS	
SUNDAY	OTHER HOUSEHOLD ITEMS	

VISIT IVALUEFOOD.COM FOR MORE FOOD WASTE RESOURCES

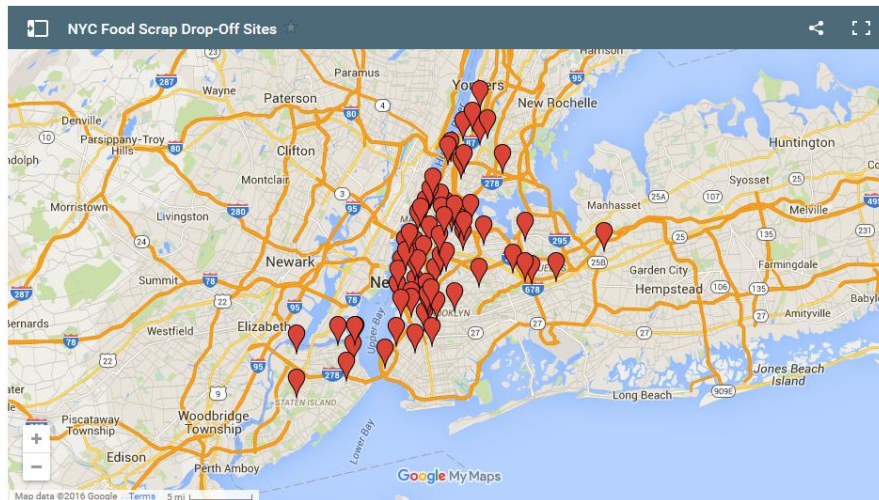
Adapted from the 52x5x5 Food Use Guide to Waste Toolkit

Meal Planning and Shopping List

(Available on Sustainable America's "I Value Food" website)

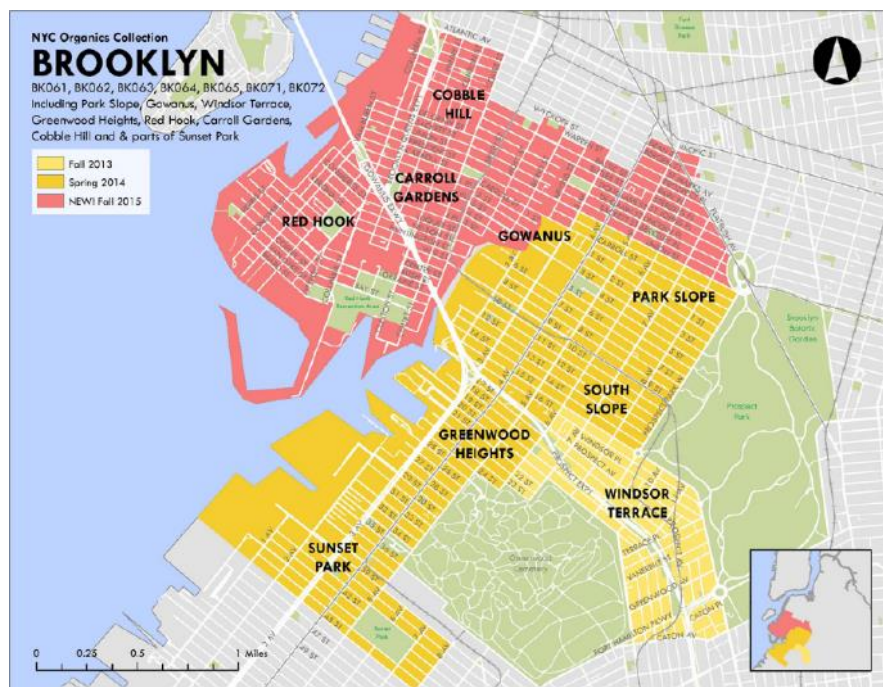
COMPOSTING TIPS

A lot of people do not know what to do with their food scraps. For NYC residents, here are some drop-off sites. For offices in other locations, if public composting drop-offs exist, similar maps can be distributed to the employees along with pamphlets or other tools with tips as to how to handle food scraps in the home.



Map of Compost Drop-Off Sites in NYC

(Available on the NYC Department of Sanitation's website)




Map of Organics Collection Pilot Program in NYC

(Available on the NYC Department of Sanitation's website)

FOOD WASTE DIARY

Engage your employees by encouraging them to keep a Food Waste Diary to track their waste. This diary will help employees understand more about the types of foods they are throwing away in the home, why, and when. Here is an example of a food waste diary from the “Love Food Hate Waste” campaign in the UK:



Day 1:


BREAKFAST : What food did you throw away from breakfast?

What?	How Much?	Where?	Why?
eg: cereal	1/2 bowl	council food waste collection	served too much

If table is left blank state why: No food waste: ☐ Meal eaten out: ☐ Meal skipped: ☐
Other: _____

Lunch : What food did you throw away from Lunch?

What?	How Much?	Where?	Why?
eg: sandwich	1/2	kitchen bin at work	didn't have time to eat

If table is left blank state why: No food waste: ☐ Meal eaten out: ☐ Meal skipped: ☐
Other: _____

Food Waste Diary

(Available on the "Love Food Hate Waste" website)