NEW ZEALAND’S FOOD WASTE PROBLEM

Globally the UN Environmental Programme estimates that one-third of the food produced for human consumption is wasted.

New Zealand households throw away 122,547 tonnes of food annually, enough to feed 262,917 people or the population of Dunedin for two years.

That costs $872 million a year.

For Kiwi families, that is the equivalent of three shopping trolleys of edible food going to landfill each year. For the average household that is at least $560 worth of food going to waste and for some it’s over $1,000 per year.

Eliminating this food waste would have the same effect as reducing CO² equivalent emissions by 325,975 tonnes – that’s like planting 130,390 trees or taking 118,107 cars off the road for a year.

NZ’S TOP 10 MOST WASTED FOODS

1. Bread*
2. Leftovers
3. Potatoes
4. Apples
5. Chicken
6. Bananas
7. Lettuce
8. Oranges
9. Pumpkin
10. Carrots

*20 million loaves are thrown away each year

WHAT IS LOVE FOOD HATE WASTE?

Love Food Hate Waste is a three-year campaign to help Kiwis reduce the amount of food they waste.

It is being run by 59 councils across the country in conjunction with the Waste Management Institute New Zealand (WasteMINZ) and Wanaka Wastebusters.

VISIT THE LOVE FOOD HATE WASTE WEBSITE FOR:

Facts about food waste in New Zealand
Tips for reducing food waste
Guides on planning, portioning and storage
Recipes using commonly wasted ingredients
Profiles of people working to reduce food waste in New Zealand
A calendar of events such as cooking classes, workshops, expos and food rescue events

lovefoodhatewaste.co.nz

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WHAT THE FOOD INDUSTRY CAN DO TO HELP REDUCE FOOD WASTE

As a chef, food writer or blogger, you have the ability to influence the way people cook and eat, which can determine how much food goes to waste.

For example, 59 tonnes of leeks end up in the rubbish bin every year because people have been taught to only use the white part of the leek. 2,541 tonnes of broccoli stalks are also wasted because people don’t know they are edible.

Here are some things you can do to help people waste less food:

Promote root-to-stalk eating and encourage people to use all of the vegetable. Consider if it is really necessary to peel potatoes, apples etc.

Scale recipes to use all of a speciality ingredient. If a container of sour cream is 250g, write the recipe to use the whole container, or provide a tip for what to do with the remainder of the ingredient.

Give people advice on how to store their leftovers. How long will your dish last for in the fridge? Is it freezable? Will it taste better the next day?

If you are using an exotic or speciality ingredient include other recipes or ideas on how it can be used.

Give suggestions on how leftovers could be used e.g. made into a pie or used in a pasta.

Share your tips on what you do to waste less food.

HOW YOU CAN REDUCE FOOD WASTE

AT HOME:

Store your bread in the fridge or freezer
Keep bananas separate from other fruit and freeze them if they are getting too ripe
Plan your meals and shop with a list
Keep one night free per week to zero down your fridge and eat leftovers and what needs using up
Create an “eat me first” shelf in your fridge

SET AN EXAMPLE:

Tell other people about it #lovefoodhatewaste
Share your food waste tips or recipes with us to go on the Love Food Hate Waste website
Offer excess food you’re not going to eat to your friends and neighbours
Attend or participate in a Love Food Hate Waste event
Volunteer with your local food rescue group
Host an event or run a Love Food Hate Waste day at your workplace
Show leadership and champion the cause