FOOD WASTE DIARY
How to keep a food waste diary

Every year New Zealand households throw away 229,022 tonnes of food.

Some of this food is things we can’t eat, like eggshells and bones, but most of what we are throwing away is, or once was, perfectly good food.

Wasted food is bad for the environment. Most of our food waste ends up in landfill where it rots and releases methane, a damaging greenhouse gas, which contributes to climate change. The food we throw away is also a huge waste of the energy, water and packaging used in its production, transportation and storage.

Wasting food is also a waste of your money.

Why do a food waste diary?

Everyone throws away different foods for different reasons. In order to reduce our food waste, first we need to know what foods we are regularly throwing away and why.

Using this diary to keep track of what you are throwing away will help you understand what changes you need to make in order to reduce how much food you are throwing away.

How to fill in the diary

Each day record the foods that you throw away after each meal and at other times of the day, such as in-between meals or after clearing out your cupboards, fridge or freezer.

Write down:

- The meal or the time of day that you are throwing away food e.g. breakfast, cleaning out the fridge before you unpack your groceries in the afternoon.
- What food you are throwing away e.g. cereal, toast, ham sandwich, apple, chicken, pasta.
- How much you are throwing away e.g. a handful, ¼ of a bowl, a packet, ½ of a plate, a bag, a whole item, peelings.
- Why you are throwing the food away e.g. gone past use-by date, cooked too much, didn’t like the taste, looks or smells bad.
- If you haven’t had to throw away any food, why? e.g. eaten out, skipped the meal, saved the leftovers, no food waste.

The diary is based over a period of seven days as that will give you a clear picture of common foods thrown away, although you can keep it for a shorter or longer period.

Once you've completed the diary

- Look back over your diary and try to find ways where you might be able to reduce your food waste.
- Visit lovefoodhatewaste.co.nz for helpful tips and recipes for using up food.

Why not repeat the diary after a while to see how successful you have been in reducing your food waste.
What food did you throw away?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MEAL</th>
<th>FOOD</th>
<th>HOW MUCH?</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>eg. breakfast</td>
<td>cereal</td>
<td>½ of a bowl</td>
<td>ran out of time to finish it</td>
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If you didn’t have to throw away any food today, please tell us why:

Ate out  ○  Ate leftovers  ○  Ate ready-to-eat meal  ○  Other
What food did you throw away?

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**DAY FOUR**

**What food did you throw away?**

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## DAY SEVEN

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- [ ] Ate out
- [ ] Ate leftovers
- [ ] Ate ready-to-eat meal
- [ ] Other

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DATE

LOVE FOOD

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NEW ZEALAND
If you are throwing away:

**Bread**
Store it in the freezer so it doesn’t go stale or mouldy. Encourage your kids to eat their crusts. Use crusts and stale bread to make breadcrumbs.

**Leftovers**
Eat for lunch the next day or label and freeze. Follow the 2-2-2 rule: get leftovers into the fridge within two hours of cooking, eat within two days or freeze for up to two months.

**Potatoes**
Store in a cool, dark place, away from onions. Dirty potatoes last longer than clean ones. You don’t need to peel potatoes.

**Apples**
Apples stored in the fridge last 8 times longer.

**Chicken**
You can freeze cooked chicken, but make sure to reheat it well before eating.

**Bananas**
Store bananas out of the fruit bowl and away from other fruits. Freeze brown bananas to use for smoothies or baking.

**Lettuce**
Store iceberg lettuce in a lettuce crisper or wrap in paper towels and place in a resealable bag. Keep other salad greens and spinach in an airtight container.

**Oranges**
Store in the fridge.

**Pumpkin**
Wrap cut pumpkin tightly in cling wrap and store it in the fridge.

**Carrots**
Store in an airtight container lined with a paper towel. You don’t need to peel carrots.

**Cheese**
Wrap tightly in plastic to stop it from drying out. It’s okay to cut mould off hard cheese (edam, cheddar etc).

For more helpful advice and useful tips visit lovefoodhatewaste.co.nz