



# 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,  $\frac{1}{4}$  of a bowl, a packet,  $\frac{1}{2}$  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](https://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.

# DAY ONE

What food did you throw away?

MEAL	FOOD	HOW MUCH?	WHY?
eg. breakfast	cereal	½ of a bowl	ran out of time to finish it

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 .....

# DAY TWO

What food did you throw away?

MEAL	FOOD	HOW MUCH?	WHY?
eg. breakfast	cereal	½ of a bowl	ran out of time to finish it

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 .....

# DAY THREE

What food did you throw away?

MEAL	FOOD	HOW MUCH?	WHY?
eg. breakfast	cereal	½ of a bowl	ran out of time to finish it

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 .....

# DAY FOUR

What food did you throw away?

MEAL	FOOD	HOW MUCH?	WHY?
eg. breakfast	cereal	½ of a bowl	ran out of time to finish it

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 .....

# DAY FIVE

What food did you throw away?

MEAL	FOOD	HOW MUCH?	WHY?
eg. breakfast	cereal	½ of a bowl	ran out of time to finish it

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 .....

# DAY SIX

What food did you throw away?

MEAL	FOOD	HOW MUCH?	WHY?
eg. breakfast	cereal	½ of a bowl	ran out of time to finish it

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 .....

# DAY SEVEN

What food did you throw away?

MEAL	FOOD	HOW MUCH?	WHY?
eg. breakfast	cereal	½ of a bowl	ran out of time to finish it

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 .....

# HOW TO REDUCE YOUR FOOD WASTE

## TOP 10 FOODS NEW ZEALANDERS THROW AWAY



bread



leftovers



potatoes



apples



chicken



bananas



lettuce



oranges



pumpkins



carrots

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](http://lovefoodhatewaste.co.nz)