



# **NUTRITION & WELLNESS**

Military Families Learning Network

## **Food Waste vs. Food Safety: A Balancing Act** **March 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2021; 11am-12:00pm EDT**

### **1.) Wasted Food: U.S. Consumer's Reported Awareness, Attitudes, and Behaviors**

<https://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0127881>

This peer-reviewed journal article discusses the statistics of food waste in the US. It also includes a survey to Americans about how much food they waste and how they think retailers/restaurants can reduce food waste among consumers. The article concludes that Americans tend to underreport food waste and that their common reasons for wasting food would be due to cosmetic reasons (wanting to only eat the freshest-looking foods) and concern about foodborne illness.

### **2.) Relationship between Food Waste, Diet Quality, and Environmental Sustainability**

<https://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0195405>

In this peer-reviewed journal article, the authors explain how a higher quality/healthier diet can help reduce environmental impact (via lower greenhouse gas emissions and crop use). However, the article concludes that a higher quality diet can also lead to greater waste of agricultural irrigation water and pesticides. The article also emphasizes the impact of food waste in America.

### **3.) Reducing Wasted Food at Home**

<https://www.epa.gov/recycle/reducing-wasted-food-home>

In this organizational website by the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the EPA provides a few tips on how to reduce food waste in one's household. Some ways that one can reduce food waste are planning meals ahead of time, checking inventory of the pantry before shopping, and buying only what one needs and avoiding buying in bulk if not necessary.

### **4.) Keeping Produce Fresh: Best Practices for Producers**

<https://extension.psu.edu/keeping-produce-fresh-best-practices-for-producers>

In this educational website by the Penn State Extension, one can learn more about gardening vegetables and preventing certain diseases from entering the produce by rotating crops and controlling weeds. It also recommends storing ethylene-producing items separate from



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vegetables (ex: apples should not be stored alongside broccoli because apples tend to produce high amounts of ethylene, which destroys broccoli plants).

### **5.) How to Extend Food Expiration Dates**

<https://www.consumerreports.org/food-storage/how-to-extend-food-expiration-dates/>

Consumer Reports discusses how consumers can increase the shelf life of their groceries. Some helpful tips that the website discusses are to freeze grapes, puree herbs and freeze with olive oil in an ice cube tray, and placing strawberries in the fridge after taking off the stems and placing them in a paper-towel-lined container.

### **6.) Strategies Used to Prolong the Shelf Life of Fresh Commodities**

<https://www.longdom.org/open-access/strategies-used-to-prolong-the-shelf-life-of-fresh-commodities.pdf>

In this peer-reviewed journal article, the authors review postharvest treatments to reduce microbial contamination of fruits and vegetables. Some examples of postharvest treatments used to protect produce are heat treatments, edible coatings, and irradiation.

### **7.) Buy, Store, and Serve Safe Food**

<https://www.fda.gov/food/resources-you-food/consumers>

The FDA describes how consumers can learn more about foodborne illnesses, what foods to inspect/judge for food safety, and the FDA also provides educational materials that can be downloaded about food safety for consumers.



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### **8.) What is Food Waste?**

<https://toogoodtogo.org/en/movement/knowledge/what-is-food-waste>

The Movement Against Food Waste officially defines food waste, discusses how food waste is quantified, and provides some statistics on food waste around the world. This website also provides links to where food is wasted, production knowledge, and handling and storage knowledge.

### **9.) Food Safety and the Coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19)**

<https://www.fda.gov/food/food-safety-during-emergencies/food-safety-and-coronavirus-disease-2019-covid-19>

The FDA compiles a list of resources that relate to how food production settings can be safe in the midst of a pandemic and a food safety checklist for operations during COVID. It also includes a perspective from the FDA about food shortages and outbreaks of foodborne illness.

### **10.) Estimates of Foodborne Illness in the United States**

<https://www.cdc.gov/foodborneburden/index.html>

The CDC incorporates several links and publications about the reality of foodborne illness in the US. They also discuss how to improve food safety in America.

### **11.) Food Waste FAQs**

[Food Waste FAQs | USDA](#)

The USDA responds to commonly asked questions about the extent and causes of food waste. They also explain ways to reduce food waste.

### **12.) Sustainable Management of Food**

[Sustainable Management of Food | US EPA](#)

The EPA discusses the food recovery hierarchy and provides several resources that include how to compost or donate food. The EPA also encourages readers to look at the call to action by stakeholders about food waste.



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### **13.) Extension Food Safety**

[Food Waste \(k-state.edu\)](https://www.k-state.edu/extension/food-waste/)

In this educational website, Kansas State University provides information about how to cut food waste and maintain food safety, pollution prevention, and food labels.

### **14.) Working Together to Reduce Food Waste**

[MF3482 Working Together to Reduce Food Waste, Fact Sheet \(k-state.edu\)](https://www.k-state.edu/extension/mf3482-working-together-to-reduce-food-waste-fact-sheet/)

In this informative PDF, Kansas State University and the University of Minnesota Extension discuss how meal planning, strategic shopping, and proper food storage can help consumers reduce food waste; the PDF also describes how composting can be utilized for food scraps and how donating extra food to food banks can help people who struggle with food insecurity.

### **15.) Twenty Easy Ways to Reduce Your Food Waste**

[20 Easy Ways to Reduce Your Food Waste \(healthline.com\)](https://www.healthline.com/nutrition/20-ways-to-reduce-food-waste/)

In this article by RD Julian Kubala, the author offers several ideas to decrease the amount of food that goes into the trash. Some ideas she offers are to blend smoothies out of kale and strawberry leftovers, freeze extra food, and making homemade stock with vegetables.

### **16.) Tips to Reduce Food Waste**

[Tips to Reduce Food Waste | FDA](https://www.fda.gov/food/food-waste-reduction/tips-to-reduce-food-waste/)

The FDA discusses how one can reduce food waste while following food safety guidelines. One can use imperfect produce to make soups or smoothies and also follow the 2-Hour Rule, which involves not leaving any perishables out for more than 2 hours.

### **17.) Is My Food Safe?**

[Is My Food Safe? on the App Store \(apple.com\)](https://www.fda.gov/food/food-waste-reduction/is-my-food-safe/)

This app website (created by the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics) is an excellent resource for common food safety questions such as “Are my leftovers still safe to eat?” or “Is my burger done yet?” This app also includes food safety tips in the kitchen with quizzes and opportunities to contact an expert.



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