

Join the Challenge!



Keep your food and your money from going to waste while helping your community.



Costing our nation billions of dollars, adding massive amounts of greenhouse gases to the atmosphere, and perpetuating food insecurity in millions of Americans, edible food that goes to waste is not often recognized as the problem it is. Get the facts on food waste and see what you can do!

What is the Challenge?

The **Food Too Good To Waste Challenge** will show you how much edible food goes to waste in your own home and help you to waste less. With some easy planning and slight changes to your shopping, prep, and storage habits, this challenge will help you save time, money and keep the food you buy from going to waste.



Content courtesy of City of Tacoma Solid Waste Management

Challenge Format

How does the Food Too Good to Waste Challenge Work?

To begin the challenge and receive the toolkit, contact the Mansfield Recycling Coordinator at waltonvd@mansfieldct.org or 860-429-3333.

The Challenge runs for four weeks. Week 1 will help you discover how much food you typically waste. In weeks 2, 3 and 4 you will use SMART tips and a toolkit to reduce wasted food in your home.

Each week, use the provided container to collect all edible food that goes uneaten. This includes spoiled food, table scraps, uneaten leftovers and all other PREVENTABLE food waste. This challenge does not track non-edible food waste such as banana peels, carrot tops or egg shells – please compost or discard them as usual.

At the end of each week, record the weight of wasted food you collected on the next page. Then empty your container and start collecting for the next week.

In weeks 2, 3 and 4 it's time to start saving! Use the "Eat First" bin, freezer labels, Fresh Paper® and food storage guide from the toolkit. Also, use all of the SMART tips that you can from the last page to reduce your wasted food. During these final three weeks, see how much wasted food you can prevent and how much money you can save.

At the end of the fourth week, go online to submit your results or mail them in.



Tips for taking the Challenge

- Explain the challenge to everyone in your household and ask for participation.
- Except for the new strategies you try in weeks 2, 3 and 4, keep your usual routine as much as possible during the challenge. For example, unless you regularly clean out your freezer, do not clean it throughout the challenge.
- If you fill the container before a week is over, empty it and keep collecting. Make sure you include the entire amount from the week in "Total Weight."

Track Your Waste



Week 1: Discover your baseline household waste. Don't change your habits, just collect all wasted edible food.

WEEK 1 Date: _____ - _____.

Total Weight:

Notes: _____

Week 2, 3 and 4: Implement as many SMART tips as you can. Also, try to use the storage guide, eat first bin, and freezer labels for these weeks.

WEEK 2 Date: _____ - _____.

Total Weight:

Notes: _____

WEEK 3 Date: _____ - _____.

Total Weight:

Notes: _____

WEEK 4 Date: _____ - _____.

Total Weight:

Notes: _____

Congratulations, you successfully completed the Food Waste Challenge!

Submit your results online at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/MansfieldPreventWastedFood> or mail this whole page to Food Waste Challenge Attn: Virginia Walton, Town of Mansfield, 4 South Eagleville Road, Storrs, CT 06268. If mailing in results, please provide contact information:

Name _____

Street Address _____

Email _____

Phone Number _____

Number of Participants in Household _____

SMART Planning

- ³⁵/₁₇ Plan out what meals you will make that week.
- ³⁵/₁₇ Know your schedule and plan for nights you will eat out.
- ³⁵/₁₇ Keep a list of recipes that you're comfortable with and your family enjoys to help with meal planning.
- ³⁵/₁₇ Plan one leftovers night per week.
- ³⁵/₁₇ Plan to make a double recipe some nights in order to freeze an easy meal for later.



- ³⁵/₁₇ Plan on shopping once weekly and only for what is needed that week.
- ³⁵/₁₇ Serve smaller first portions and allow for seconds.

SMART Shopping

- ³⁵/₁₇ Make a shopping list based on your meal plan for the week.
- ³⁵/₁₇ Include quantities based on how much you will use that week.
- ³⁵/₁₇ Shop through your fridge, freezer, and pantry first to see what you already have.
- ³⁵/₁₇ Buy fresh foods in smaller quantities, more often.
- ³⁵/₁₇ Buy loose fruit and vegetables rather than prepackaged produce to control quantities.
- ³⁵/₁₇ Choose grains, pasta, and beans from the bulk section to control quantities.
- ³⁵/₁₇ Avoid "buy one, get one" deals and impulse buys that may go uneaten.
- ³⁵/₁₇ Stick to the list!



SMART Prep



- ³⁵/₁₇ Set a specific time each week to prep fresh produce for meal purposes and for snacks.
- ³⁵/₁₇ Marinate chicken or brown ground beef while you are prepping the fresh foods.
- ³⁵/₁₇ Getting the whole family involved with food prep can make it more fun.
- ³⁵/₁₇ Let kids help! Kids are more likely to eat a meal they helped prep or cook.
- ³⁵/₁₇ Prepare double portions of rice or beans. Freeze the extra portions as ingredients for a future meal.
- ³⁵/₁₇ Try prepping your food right when you get home from shopping.

SMART Storage

- ³⁵/₁₇ Use clear storage containers so you can easily see what food you have.
- ³⁵/₁₇ Label all freezer items with the contents and date.
- ³⁵/₁₇ Use the Storage Guide to keep your produce fresh as long as possible.
- ³⁵/₁₇ Freeze fruits and greens that are about to go bad for smoothies and soups.
- ³⁵/₁₇ Know the difference between "use-by," "sell-by," and other dates.
- ³⁵/₁₇ Put an "Eat First" box in your fridge for fresh items that need to be eaten soon.
- ³⁵/₁₇ Tidy your fridge and freezer regularly.

