

Conservation Corner

From the field, through processing, through retail, and to us as consumers, it is estimated that up to 50% of the food that is produced is actually wasted. While most of us cannot control what happens to food before we buy it, there are things we can do to reduce the amount of food we waste, and what we do with that food waste. Our actions with food can not only save us money, by purchasing only the food we need, but it can also have positive impacts on our environment.

Whether at a restaurant or a grocery store, be sure to be thoughtful about the amount of food you and your family will consume. The most important step to ensuring we don't waste food, is to not overbuy.

- Take stock of the food in your refrigerator and cupboards to ensure food does not expire.
- Plan meals and portions and develop a shopping list of what you need and at the right time. (Coupons and store circulars can help you buy needed items at the best price.)
- Avoid buying items just to have them in stock, buying in bulk for more than you need, or impulse buys of items not on your list.



- Store your food properly, in quality reusable storage containers so it does not expire earlier than it needs to.
- Overeating is also food waste and is not good for you. Control your portion size.

With your own food preparation, cooking, and what is left uneaten, there will be food waste generated in your home. What you do with that food waste also impacts our environment. Do not use your sink as a means to dispose of food waste. Food waste entering the sewer system increases the chance of clogs and adds to the amount of nutrients that ultimately go to our creeks and rivers.

- Never pour cooking oil or grease down your sink drain.
- Scrape all of your dishes and cooking tools so food solids do not go down your sink drain.
- If you have room on your property, consider composting to turn food waste into soil for your garden. (Avoid composting meats, dairy, grease, and oil.)
- Reduce the amount of food that you throw in your garbage. Landfill charges are based upon weight; less food waste means lower landfill costs, which means lower trash hauling rates.

Cutting down on food waste will save you money and improve our environment. Thank you for your help in reducing food waste and its impact on our community.