Reduce Wasted Food!
Tip Sheet for Vermont Residents

Everyday

• **Use clear storage containers for leftovers.** This will allow them to be easily seen and more likely to be eaten first.

• **Designate and label an “Eat First” space in your fridge,** so everyone can easily identify the foods that need to be consumed first.

• **Learn to use the humidity settings in the fridge crispers** (see next page) to prolong the life of fruits and vegetables.

• **Take restaurant leftovers home** and place in Eat First space in your fridge.

• **Incorporate leftovers from one meal to make a new meal.**

• **Freeze foods you know you will not be able to eat soon.** You can extend the life of many vegetables, meat, and some fruit by freezing them.

Weekly

• **Make a menu for the week.**

• **Check to see what you have in the fridge and cabinets before shopping.**

• **Make a shopping list.** Only buy the items on your list. If you tend to forget the shopping list, try using a shopping list app on your phone.

• **Buy imperfect fruits and vegetables.** They taste the same as the perfect ones and usually cost less.

Other

• **Cook, bake, or freeze soft fruits to extend their life.**

• **Wilted vegetables may be used** for making stir-fries, soups, casseroles, smoothies, etc.

  • **Learn how to can and preserve food to use up summer and fall’s bounty.**

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Use Your Fridge to Reduce Wasted Food

Top & Middle Shelves = Most Consistent Temperatures – store milk and other perishables

Bottom Shelf = Coldest Area – store defrosted or fresh meat and eggs

Door = Warmest Area – store non-perishables

Crisper Settings Make a Difference

Crispers are the two bottom drawers of your fridge. Crisper settings can be used to increase the life of vegetables and fruits.

The **High-Humidity** setting is for vegetables and fruits that need moisture, such as:
- Broccoli
- Cauliflower
- Eggplant
- Herbs
- Peas
- Summer squash
- Carrots
- Cucumbers
- Green beans
- Leafy greens
- Peppers
- Zucchinis

The **Low Humidity** setting is for fruits and vegetables that aren’t sensitive to moisture and for those that produce ethylene gas (ripening gas), such as:
- Apples
- Kiwi
- Melons
- Summer fruit (nectarines, peaches and plums)
- Avocados
- Mangoes
- Pears

Freeze vegetables and fruits (bananas and berries) you know you can’t consume.

Compost spoiled and rotten foods.

Go to [VT Districts, Alliances & Towns](http://dec.vermont.gov/waste-management/solid/local-districts) to find your town’s contact for composting.

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Food Facts

- Did you know that 13% of Vermont households don’t have enough food to meet their basic needs?
- Between 30 - 40% of food produced in the U.S. each year is wasted, and households account for about 47% of that waste.
- The average American family throws out around a quarter of their food purchases, amounting to about $1,600 each year. And in Vermont, food and leaf and yard debris from residents makes up 18% of the trash.
- An estimated 13% of carbon pollution emissions in the U.S. are related to the growing, manufacturing, transporting, and disposal of food.
- Reducing wasted food helps families save money.

Links to Some Recipes & Apps

- Recipes for Foods You Have in Your Fridge  http://www.supercook.com/#/recipes