

# Save the Food

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*Cooking Up a Food Waste Prevention  
Campaign for Tompkins County*



**RECYCLING AND  
SOLID WASTE**  
OF TOMPKINS COUNTY



**New York State  
Pollution Prevention Institute**

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## Introduction

It is estimated that the average American family discards about a quarter of their food purchases, which translates to approximately \$1,600 every year in preventable food waste.<sup>12</sup> At the same time, food insecurity is a real problem, with approximately 14% of New York State's population reportedly food insecure.<sup>3</sup> Simple strategies that translate to food budget cost savings can therefore enable individuals to afford more healthy food, while reducing unnecessary waste. Reducing food waste at the source also eliminates pollution across the entire supply chain, providing a win-win-win situation that reduces air and water pollution, conserves resources, cuts greenhouse gas emissions, saves money, and reallocates resources to help feed hungry people.

This manual is the product of a comprehensive program for residential food waste prevention, developed by the Tompkins County Solid Waste Management Division (TCSW), funded in part by a grant from the New York State Pollution Prevention Institute.

This document is designed to help communities and organizations that are interested in developing a food waste prevention program in their own area. It contains a summary of benchmarking research, overviews of the TCSW program, lessons learned, and sample outreach materials. The original program was designed to compliment previously existing programs in order to facilitate ease of replication and use resources widely. As you consider implementing your own program, we highly encourage that you consider how you can use these strategies to enhance existing efforts, while encouraging the prevention of edible food waste.

This project would not have been successful without the support from the NYSP2I, TCSW staff and food scraps recycling drop spot attendants, Food Waste Challenge participants, the Finger Lakes Environmental Film Festival (FLEFF), FDN, EPA, Emma Frisch, Flourish Designs, and Tom Hoebbel. We express our sincere gratitude for their hard work and dedication.

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<sup>1</sup> Jonathan Bloom, *American Wasteland: How America Throws Away Nearly Half of Its Food (and What We Can Do About It)*. 2011.

<sup>2</sup> Kumar Venkat, "The Climate Change and Economic Impacts of Food Waste in the United States," *International Journal of Food System Dynamics* 2 (4), 2011: p.431-446.

<sup>3</sup> Feeding America, *Map the Meal Gap*, <http://feedingamerica.org/hunger-in-america/hunger-studies/map-the-meal-gap.aspx> (2012).

## Project Overview

The goal of this project was to minimize pollution and promote sustainable materials management practices by encouraging residential source reduction of food waste, which in turn saves money and minimizes resource use. The project draws on existing networks and outreach initiatives to model simple, yet effective strategies that reduce food waste and pollution. These components easily fold in with outreach at schools, events, or recycling centers as well as via social media and websites.

### *Benchmarking*

Research was conducted to benchmark best practices and existing initiatives for promoting source reduction of food waste. These best practices were merged with staff experience and feedback from partnering programs, as well as food scraps recycling drop spot attendants and contractors of the County to then develop program materials. Included in this manual is a summary of highlights from this research.

### *Film Screening*

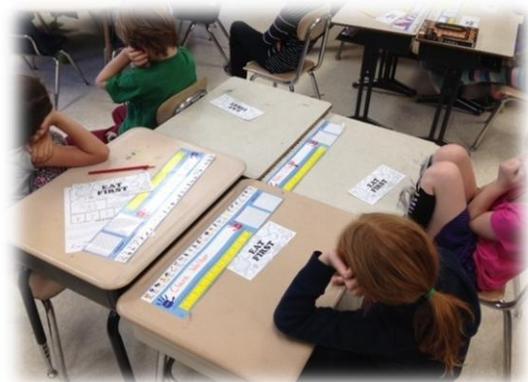
In partnership with the Finger Lakes Environmental Film Festival, TCSW screened a renowned food waste prevention film, “Just Eat It,” complete with a panel and community discussion. This section provides an overview of the process for establishing the screening. By partnering with an existing event in the community, TCSW drew a larger audience to the screening, while minimizing invested resources.

### *Social Media Campaign*

A social media campaign was also developed and integrated into existing TCSW outreach initiatives, including Facebook, Twitter, and the RecycleTompkins website. In addition, a short waste reduction video was developed and shared widely. This section includes basic guidelines for creating a campaign and an outline of TCSW’s social media posts.

### *School Presentations*

A module for school tours or presentations was developed to focus on this subject. Included in this manual is an outline for the module, which includes talking points and an activity to work with students in creating an “Eat First” box for their fridge at home.



### *Food Scraps Recycling Drop Spots*

With an existing model of food scraps recycling drop spots, Tompkins County focused on developing a Food Waste Prevention Challenge that implemented community based social marketing strategies to help participants modify behavior. Food Scraps Drop Spot Attendants assisted in implementing this program by distributing handouts and collecting data through periodic food scraps weigh-ins. Data was collected over time, to observe trends in material generation as food waste prevention materials were distributed. This manual includes an overview of the steps taken to implement this effort, as well as a brief summary of findings and lessons learned.



## Benchmarking Research

The following is a brief summary of key findings based on research from other programs, including EPA's Food Too Good To Waste initiative; Love Food, Hate Waste from the UK; and various webinars and reports. Many resources were found through resources on the [West Coast Climate and Materials Management Forum](#), which provides information about other communities and programs worldwide and was an invaluable resource in benchmarking food waste prevention programs.

### *Messaging Tips*

- Target only a few, easy behavior changes.
- Keep the overall message simple.

### *Available Tools*

- Key tools for residents target specific behavior changes
  - Smart shopping guide: reduce waste from shopping by inventorying what you have on hand and shopping with a list of needed items.
  - Food storage guide and infograph: proper storage minimizes spoilage.

### *Data Tracking*

- Account for seasonal fluctuations.
- Overestimate participant recruitment to account for retention; personal recruitment is more effective than email.
- Focus on largest diversion opportunities:
  - Fruit and veggie waste;
  - Young, full-time workers and families with children; and
  - Resource intensive foods like meat and dairy.
- Pilots indicate an average 25% decrease in household food waste after implementation.
- Barriers to change include:
  - Lifestyle/ Automatic behavior
  - Gratification
  - Skills
  - Knowledge
  - Convenience
- Other program's main data collection methods include food diaries, trained observers, plate exam, inferential (compare food purchases to consumption).
  - Methods recommended by the EPA
    - To isolate unpreventable waste, collect avoidable waste in one bag (spoiled food, overproduction, etc.), and non-edible (coffee grounds, banana peels, etc.) in another.
    - To track by weight: use a scale, bathroom or otherwise, to weigh bags, once full and record weight of all bags used within a 7 day week.

- To track by volume: mark bag fullness and record fraction.
- Track how many meals each person eats away from home.
- Continue data collection while implementing one prevention strategy each week, for at least 2 weeks per strategy.
- Using a simple tracking sheet: track food wasted by weight.
- Using an in depth tracking sheet: track food wasted by weight and volume in addition to why the food was wasted (made too much, spoiled, etc.) and how many people were served. Note which waste reduction strategies were used after the baseline data collection.

Case Studies *From Communities Using EPA Tools*

- Honolulu, HI
  - Resources include a cookbook, links to mobile apps and web tools, a food storage guide, and an “Eat Me First” sign.
- Iowa City, IA
  - This 6-week program measured preventable and inedible waste, with a 1 week baseline; suggested a longer baseline and measurement period, but noted difficulty with participant retention.
- King County, WA
  - Focused on community networks and recreating social norms through tabling, workshops, and social media; video series focused on smart shopping, smart storage, and smart prep.
- Palo Alto, CA
  - Features an extensive webpage devoted to food waste, including facts, EPA measurement tools, and links to videos and tips for simple behavior changes.

## Community Film Screening

Screening a film focused on food waste can be a terrific method for partnering with local community organizations to generate conversation and raise awareness about the topic. Below is a summary of the process that Tompkins County followed in conducting a film screening.

### *Film*

Just Eat It (Grant Baldwin, Canada, 2014; 75 min.). Filmmakers and food lovers Jen and Grant dive into the issue of food waste from farm, through retail, all the way to the back of their own fridge. After catching a glimpse of the billions of dollars of good food that is tossed each year in North America, they pledge to quit grocery shopping and survive only on discarded food. What they find is truly shocking.

Watch the trailer [here](#).



### *Film Procurement & Logistics*

Tompkins County Solid Waste collaborated with Finger Lakes Environmental Film Festival (FLEFF) for this film screening. FLEFF is an annual film festival sponsored by Ithaca College that focuses on sustainability. After staff members initially contact the film distributor, FLEFF negotiated the licensing and screening costs on the film. They also coordinated with the venue, Cinemapolis, a non-profit theatre in Downtown Ithaca, NY.

The film was followed by a panel discussion, facilitated by a FLEFF representative, Anne Stork, and featuring local representatives: Kat McCarthy, Waste Reduction and Recycling Specialist at Tompkins County Solid Waste, Kate McArdle, Community Outreach Specialist with the New York State Pollution Prevention Institute (NYSP2I) and Meaghan Sheehan Rosen, Program Coordinator at Friendship Donations Network. Each panelist was provided a few minutes to introduce their organization and perspective, and then the floor was opened for questions. Talking points had been developed for the panel conversation, which were not used as the audience was highly engaged and asked numerous questions.

### *Outreach*

Through the partnership with FLEFF, Tompkins County Solid Waste was responsible for the screenings promotion, which focused on marketing through Facebook, Twitter, email blasts, posters and flyers. Materials were distributed at locations throughout the community, as well as at food scraps recycling drop spots. Information was also shared with local organizations that may have an interest in promoting the topic. A press release was shared following the screening to highlight the event and increase reach.

## Results

The FLEFF screening of the food waste movie “Just Eat It” was a great success; 88 people attended the event (the film sold out). After the screening more than half of the audience stayed for the panel discussion. The audience was engaged and asked many questions that sparked conversations about local resources to reduce food waste for both retailers and individuals.

## Tips and Take-Aways

- Partner with local organizations to appeal to a wider audience and conserve organizational resources.
- Plan at least four months ahead to ensure sufficient time to secure a film for the screening.
- Prepare a list of talking points to start community conversation if there are few questions from the audience.



## Community Based Social Media Strategy

### *Social Media*

Social media is another simple way to provide wide-spread outreach on a subject. The [tips and tools](#) in the appendix outline considerations for replication as well as sample posts that were shared through Tompkins County's campaign.

### *Food Waste Prevention Video*

Tompkins County also produced a short video, [Smart Cooking: It Makes Cents](#). Hosted by YouTube, this five to six minute clip was designed to promote tips and techniques for food waste prevention in the home, with a goal of showcasing the components of smart storage, smart shopping and smart preparation. Ideas for the short were based on elements of the [Chef Jackie videos produced in King County, Washington](#) for the Food: Too Good to Waste campaign.

Through collaboration between TCSW, a local videographer and a celebrity chef, a storyboard and script were developed to guide the project.

Production took place over several months, with one day of filming on location at a local food coop and a resident's home. Several review sessions and subsequent editing resulted in the finished product. This video was then posted on the Tompkins County Solid Waste Division's website and shared with a number of community partners and other agencies whose mission is consistent with the food waste prevention message.



### *Tips*

- Draw in viewers by featuring local celebrities, individuals from various communities, or using humor.
- Develop a timeline that allows space for editing and reviews. For reference, it took Tompkins County about four months from planning to video completion.
- Remember that with video it can be difficult to change scenes after the fact: start with an outline of what you would like to develop and stick to the script.
- To keep the audience engaged, aim for a short video.
- Once created, promote the finished product widely by reaching out to community groups with overlapping interests, such as food donation, local food, sustainability, municipalities, and more.

## School Presentations

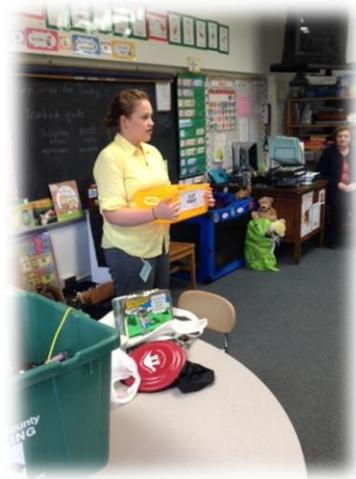
### Food Waste Prevention Module with “Eat First” Box Activity

**Objective:** To let students experience an easy, fun way to reduce food waste in their homes.

**Overview:** The presenter will demonstrate the project described in the steps below and explain the connection with reduce, one of the 4Rs. Materials will be distributed to participants once the project has been demonstrated.

Presentation Talking Points (focusing on Reduction):

- Reduce: what does it mean?
  - Avoid waste before it is created.
  - Top of the hierarchy because it requires the least energy and saves the most resources.
- Preventing/reducing food waste can help families save money, and keep food out of the landfill.
  - Why does this matter? Limited resources and food insecurity right here in our county.
  - Since we all eat, this is an issue that affects everyone.
  - Other benefits include: saving resources, energy, and water; saving food for others who need it; feed hungry animals.
- Where does food waste happen?
  - Production, shipping, shopping, cooking, plate, fridge, etc.
  - One quarter of food purchased in the U.S. is never eaten; that’s like leaving 1 out of 4 bags at the grocery store.
- What could you do with all that food if it wasn’t wasted?
  - i.e. I would make smoothies.
  - i.e. Create soup stock.
  - i.e. Transform stale bread into croutons or bread crumbs.
- What are some ways to prevent food waste?
  - Go to the store with shopping lists.
  - Eat what’s in the fridge first.
  - Buy only what you need.
  - Freeze items before they go bad.
  - Store leftovers in clear containers so you don’t forget about them.
  - Store potatoes and onions separately.
  - Don’t refrigerate tomatoes.
  - Buy ugly fruits and vegetables (*bring pictures or samples*).
  - Don’t always buy in bulk – for example, if you only need one lemon, don’t buy a whole bag.
  - “Eat First” box – see page 12 for activity.



## “Eat First” Box Activity to Prevent Fridge Food Waste

### Materials Needed:

- “Eat First” box label
- Crayons, colored pencils, or markers
- Glue stick
- Small wooden or cardboard box (shoebox, Clementine box, cereal box, etc.)

1. Color or decorate the “Eat First” label.
2. Attach the label to the box.
3. At home, place the box in a visible area of the fridge. Fill the box with items that need to be eaten first to prevent them from going bad.

### Tip:

- Teachers may want to give parents advanced notice of this project to find boxes. Students can bring home the label if boxes don’t make it to school.



## Food Waste Prevention Challenge

### *Overview*

Tompkins County has several food scraps recycling drop spots throughout the county, where residents can drop off up to 10 gallons of food scraps at a time; some drop spots are staffed and open during select weekend hours, and are located in neighborhoods to be easily accessible. A food waste prevention challenge was initiated at select food scraps recycling drop spots over a period of six months, encouraging residents to make changes in their homes after receiving education materials when they attended the drop spot. Staff attended each drop spot once during operations to recruit participants with the help of drop spot attendants. Baseline data was then collected for participants through an initial survey and ongoing bucket weigh-ins over 8 weeks; each time a resident attended the drop spot, the transport container was weighed, so some residents had several baseline data points and others had 2 to 3 data points. Collecting baseline data was important to be able to compare it to subsequent data and track progress over time.

**All drop spot users** were separated into categories and given different levels of education to measure the reduction in food waste from the implementation of education materials. All drop spot users make up the total weight collected at each drop spot, each week.

**Non-Participants:** Already users of the drop spots did not have their transport container weighed and may also be home composting.

- No “ask” or additional contact was made to these residents
- May have witnessed the recruitment process and known about the weighing, but were not weighed individually
- Could have seen or taken some education materials

**Participants:** Recruited users of the drop spots who agreed to participate and provide feedback.

- Had their transport container weighed at each drop (weekly or as often as they came to the drop spot)
- Attended only that specific drop spot so that they could be tracked
- Discontinued home composting and included all acceptable items in the transport container
- Filled out a baseline survey and then a once monthly survey
- Received and considered education materials (1 material every other week)

Educational materials were distributed to participants at the drop spots for a period of three months, during which material was continually weighed. Each month focused on a separate topic: smart shopping, smart storage, and smart prep. Physical materials like the shopping list and magnets were distributed at the drop spot, while the surveys were available in paper copy and also via a Constant Contact email survey.

Materials that were distributed include:

- *Smart Shopping*
  - *Shopping list*
  - *Eat First label*
  - *Monthly survey*
- *Smart Storage*
  - *EcoJarz clear storage container*
  - *Food Storage Guide leaflet*
  - *Fridge magnet*
  - *Monthly survey*
- *Smart Prep*
  - *Caddy decals*
  - *Recipe cards*
  - *Monthly survey*



### *Surveys*

In order to gather qualitative data and account for seasonality and individual habits, participants were surveyed on paper at each drop spot and also via a monthly email to capture the most responses. Upon recruitment, participants completed a demographic survey with information about household size, age of the grocery shopper, diet (vegetarian or not) and whether they planned to subscribe to a farm share (which could increase the amount of fresh food in the household). The challenge began with about 20 people at three different drop spots signing a pledge to participate and agreeing to fill out the survey, but many did not follow through. The three monthly surveys were approximately five questions long and asked participants to: share information about the household's food and waste habits for each month; list some common preventable and, separately, non-edible food waste items; note which strategies the household tried; and evaluate how successful these strategies were in decreasing food waste. These questionnaires varied with the month's education focus of shopping, storage, or prep.

With the monthly surveys, it was noted that participants were often in a hurry at the drop spots and few paper copies were returned. When paper surveys were completed, they did not always include contact information, which means that tracking perceived behavior change with quantitative data was not possible, but could be a useful future consideration. Because some participants were slow or remiss in completing surveys, the email version was re-sent some months to increase response rates. This may have skewed responses as individuals could have participated through multiple surveys, or changed answers over time. To increase responses in June, EcoJarz were offered as a waste reduction incentive to anyone who returned May and June's surveys. Survey responses varied from 21 in June, down to only 4 in July, and the May survey was resent so any responses could have included already altered behavior, since the education material related to smart shopping had already been with the resident for two months. As a result of challenges with survey collection and response rates, data is not statistically significant, though it does provide certain insights.

At the end of the challenge, a total of 37 participants had enough data points to be considered significant; they attended the drop spot regularly and had their transport container weighed during each phase of the challenge and could have received each education material. Nearly every participant who reported each month felt that the waste reduction strategies were somewhat successful in decreasing their household's food waste. Some noted that they were traveling, had guests or there was some other variable that made waste reduction unique or difficult; education was applied during the busy summer months, and some participants noted that their increased fresh food consumption may have impacted their habits.

Other information gathered, including the most commonly wasted items and which tips were most useful, varied widely among participants. Because of the lack of personal identification in the paper surveys, and sending the survey electronically more than once, it is difficult to determine if the education materials were effective in creating behavior change.

#### *Data Collection*

During the challenge, drop spot attendants tracked the weights of the transport containers ("drops") of each participant. Collected information was then compiled into an Excel sheet and the tare of each container was subtracted.

Throughout the challenge, Tompkins County staff identified certain challenges, which may have influenced the collected data. These factors include:

- All "drop spot user" weights at each drop spot relied on the compost processor weighing the material, since this includes the entire weight of the tote collected – the contractor noted during this process that they were having challenges tracking which bins were collected from each site.
- Challenge participants agreed to bring all of their food scraps to select drop spot during the challenge period. However, it appeared that some participants began practicing home composting during the project, delivered material to drop spots not included in the pilot and therefore not collecting data, or didn't realize that a family member may have signed their household up for the challenge.
- Multiple scales were used for weighing participant bins and various staff members participated in collecting data for the challenge; these variations may have impacted data integrity.

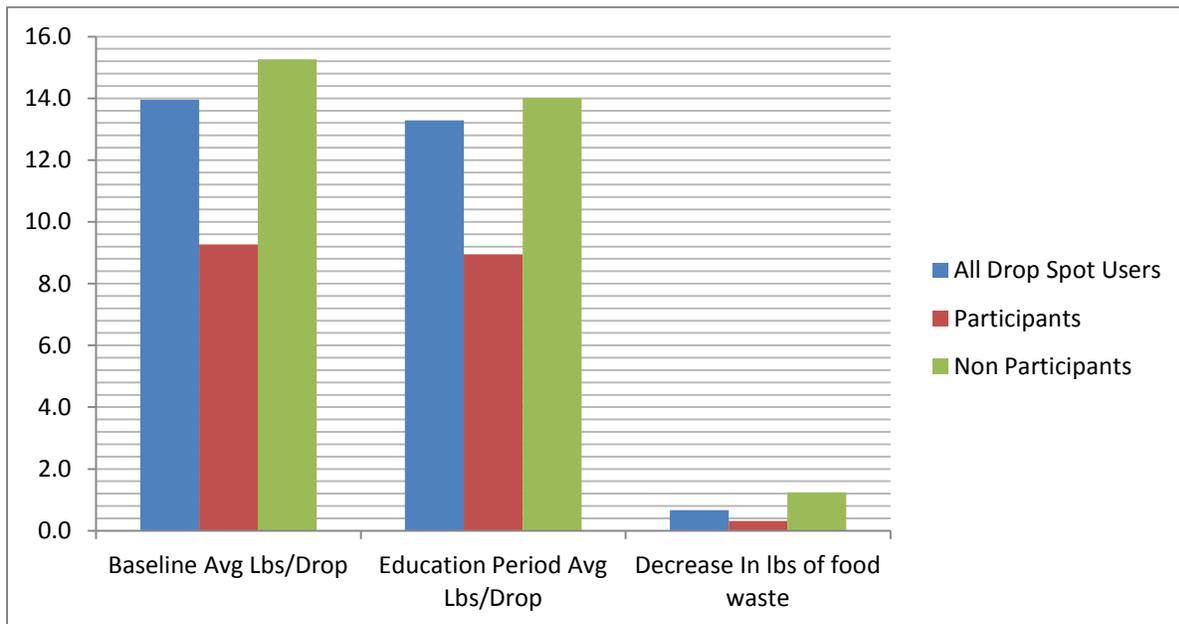


EcoJarz can be used as a clear storage container for food to help prevent waste.

Photo Credit: Eco Jarz

## Results

Throughout the Challenge time period, all Drop Spot Users reduced their food waste, meaning that the weight of totes collected at all three drop spots decreased during this measurement period. Challenge participants reduced their food waste less than non-participants, and less than all Drop Spot Users, on average. However, it is possible that participants are more avid composters to begin with, including as many items as possible, whereas non-participants may not try to divert as many items as possible. Non-participants may have been using a home composting system, and their weight only included meat, bones, dairy and compostable disposables that are excluded in those systems. Education materials were not entirely limited to participants, so it is also possible that non-participants utilized the education and reduced their waste through those methods. Another explanation for this finding is that users that agreed to participate in the challenge may have been well aware of food waste prevention methods before beginning the challenge, and may have had less food waste to begin with, so their average decrease during the tracking period was less than all users and non-participants. The complete data set can be found in the Appendix.



### **Average Food Waste Decrease**

All Drop Spot Users: 4.8%

Participants: 3.4%

Non-Participants: 8.2%

## Overall Lessons Learned and Tips

The Tompkins County Solid Waste Management Division learned a lot throughout the development and implementation of this grant project. Below are some key take-aways from the project.

- Keep things simple
  - Adding data collection to someone's already busy job can be taxing.
  - Data collection requires meticulous attention to detail; plan ahead to keep the process as streamlined as possible.
- Keep people engaged
  - Be clear with what you are asking when soliciting program participants; if possible, demonstrate "the ask."
    - Some households had different members drop off material and weren't aware of their involvement in weighing bins for the program
    - Some households began home composting during the study
    - Some households missed the drop spot hours and utilized another drop spot, resulting in lost data points
  - Personable, outgoing, consistent staff go a long way in making connections with those in the community.
  - Provide new content periodically to keep people interested.
- Thoroughly plan data collection methods and goals before recruitment; with both qualitative and quantitative data, there is a lot of information, that is best coordinated ahead of implementation.
- To engage students more, consider showcasing examples of prevention, such as ugly produce.
- When possible, include elements of food waste prevention into existing programs to reduce added workload.
- Draw on connections with partners in the community to expand program reach.

## Appendix

The following materials can be found in this section:

- *Food Waste Prevention Social Media Campaign*
- *Food Waste Challenge Data*
- *Program Handouts*
  - *Magnet*
  - *Caddy Decal*
  - *Smart Shopping Overview & Survey*
  - *Smart Storage Overview & Survey*
  - *Smart Prep Overview & Survey*
  - *Recipe cards*

2015

# Food Waste Prevention Social Media Campaign



Tompkins County Solid Waste Management

Division

5/1/2015



## Food Waste Prevention Social Media Campaign



### Social Media Campaign Goals:

- Promote food waste prevention techniques (smart shopping, smart storage and smart prep)
- Highlight stories from organizations and companies working to reduce food waste
- Network, build community, and motivate audience to make simple behavioral changes

### Tips for creating content and raising awareness on social media:

- Use these hashtags: **#FoodWaste**, **#FoodtooGoodtoWaste**, **#NoFoodWasted**, **#NoWastedFood**, **#LoveUglyFruit**
- Great resources for content include: West Coast Climate and Materials Management Forum, Waste & Resources Action Programme, European Union Food Use for Social Innovation by Optimising Waste Prevention Strategies (EU FUSIONS), Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC), U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), Local resources: universities and environmental organizations.\*
- Mention the source of your content and/or prominent individuals/organizations that are working to reduce food waste:  
**Examples for Twitter:** Jonathan Bloom (@WastedFood), Dana Gunders (@dgunders), National Resources Defense Council (@NRDC), USDA (@USDA), Love Food Hate Waste UK (@LFHW\_UK), EPA (@EPA), Food Shift (@FoodShift), Tristan Stuart (@Feeding5K), etc.
- Include graphics, pictures and videos
- Be aware of the impact that **seasonality has on food waste**. For instance, these sample posts focus on fresh fruits and vegetables that are prominent during the summer months. The holiday season marks another major change in food habits; during the period from November – January, food waste nearly doubles.

**Content Samples (Note: links have been shortened):**

<b>Timing</b>	<b>Facebook</b>	<b>Twitter</b>
<b>5/9 Smart Shopping</b>	Food waste prevention tip: Make a grocery list before heading to the store and stick to it. Lists help you save by cutting down on impulse purchases. #foodwaste <a href="http://ow.ly/i/amc9Y">http://ow.ly/i/amc9Y</a>	#Foodwaste prevention tip: Make a grocery list before heading to the store and stick to it. #foodwaste #reducewaste <a href="http://ow.ly/i/amc9Y">http://ow.ly/i/amc9Y</a>
<b>5/13 Smart Shopping</b>	Plan your menu before you go shopping and buy only what you need. More food waste prevention tips from the @ U.S. Environmental Protection Agency here: <a href="http://goo.gl/1OQde0">http://goo.gl/1OQde0</a> #foodwaste	Plan your menu before you go shopping and buy only what you need. @EPA <a href="http://goo.gl/1OQde0">http://goo.gl/1OQde0</a> #foodwaste
<b>5/16 Smart Shopping</b>	Reduce #foodwaste and save money by taking note of what you already have at home and buying only what you need. More tips here: <a href="http://goo.gl/KHGLmB">http://goo.gl/KHGLmB</a>	Reduce #foodwaste and save money by taking note of what you already have at home and buying only what you need. <a href="http://goo.gl/KHGLmB">http://goo.gl/KHGLmB</a>
<b>5/20 Smart Shopping</b>	At least 20% of all produce is wasted just because of its size, shape, color, or appearance. Let's demand ugly fruits and vegetables in U.S. grocery stores! <a href="http://goo.gl/Ssz602">http://goo.gl/Ssz602</a> #NoWastedFood, #LoveUglyFruit	Let's demand ugly fruits and vegetables in U.S. grocery stores! <a href="http://goo.gl/Ssz602">http://goo.gl/Ssz602</a> #NoWastedFood, #LoveUglyFruit
<b>5/27 Smart Shopping</b>	Shop the bulk section to get just what you need! More smart shopping tips here: <a href="http://goo.gl/wbERTZ">http://goo.gl/wbERTZ</a> #foodwaste	Shop the bulk section to get just what you need! More smart shopping tips here: <a href="http://goo.gl/wbERTZ">http://goo.gl/wbERTZ</a> #foodwaste
<b>5/23 Smart Shopping</b>	Consider getting an "eat me first box" in your fridge. You could save hundreds of dollars a month! #foodwaste #Nofoodwasted <a href="http://goo.gl/Rb4HeK">http://goo.gl/Rb4HeK</a>	Consider getting an "eat me first box" in your fridge. You could save \$100 a month! #foodwaste #Nofoodwasted <a href="http://goo.gl/Rb4HeK">http://goo.gl/Rb4HeK</a>
<b>5/ 30 Smart Storage</b>	Choosing loose produce over pre-packaged allows you to get just what you need. Watch the video for more smart shopping tips from Chef Jackie #foodwaste #FoodtooGoodtoWaste <a href="http://goo.gl/28Fccr">http://goo.gl/28Fccr</a>	Choosing loose produce over pre-packaged allows you to get just what you need. #foodwaste @LFHW_UK <a href="http://goo.l/28Fccr">http://goo.l/28Fccr</a>
<b>6/3 Smart Storage</b>	Did you know? Most vegetables should be kept in the high humidity fridge drawer and most fruit should be kept in the low humidity drawer. <a href="http://goo.gl/px043L">http://goo.gl/px043L</a> #foodwaste @NRDC (Natural Resources Defense Council)	#Didyouknow Most veggies=high humidity drawer & fruit=low humidity drawer. More food storage tips <a href="http://goo.gl/px043L">http://goo.gl/px043L</a> #foodwaste @NRDC

<b>6/6 Smart Storage</b>	Not sure when foods in your fridge will go bad? Download the FoodKeeper app, it offers users storage timelines for the refrigerator, freezer, and pantry! <a href="http://goo.gl/lqadee">http://goo.gl/lqadee</a> #foodwaste @U.S. Department of Agriculture	Not sure when foods in your fridge will go bad? Download FoodKeeper for food storage timelines <a href="http://goo.gl/lqadee">http://goo.gl/lqadee</a> #foodwaste @USDA
<b>6/10 Smart Storage</b>	Use your freezer more! Freezing foods you won't get to in time helps reduce food waste. More food storage tips from here: <a href="http://goo.gl/vRng5y">http://goo.gl/vRng5y</a> #foodwaste #NoFoodWasted	Use your freezer more! Freezing foods you won't get to in time helps reduce #foodwaste #NoFoodWasted @WastedFood <a href="http://goo.gl/vRng5y">http://goo.gl/vRng5y</a>
<b>6/13 Smart Storage</b>	<b>Wrap lettuce</b> and cucumbers in paper towels to keep them fresh! More food waste prevention tips here: <a href="http://goo.gl/60A9nw">http://goo.gl/60A9nw</a> #foodwaste #NoFoodWasted @The Seattle Times	<b>Wrap lettuce</b> and cucumbers in paper towels to keep them fresh! <a href="http://goo.gl/60A9nw">http://goo.gl/60A9nw</a> #foodwaste #NoFoodWasted @SeattleTimes
<b>6/17 Smart Storage</b>	Food waste prevention tip: Include quantities on your shopping list to help you avoid over buying certain foods. #foodwaste #FoodtooGoodtoWaste <a href="https://goo.gl/Von2dv">https://goo.gl/Von2dv</a>	#Foodwaste prevention tip: Include quantities on your grocery list to avoid over buying. #foodwaste @LFHW_UK <a href="https://goo.gl/Von2dv">https://goo.gl/Von2dv</a>
<b>6/20 Smart Storage</b>	Did you know? It is best to store meat, poultry and fish on the bottom shelf, the coldest place in the fridge. <a href="http://goo.gl/px043L">http://goo.gl/px043L</a> #foodwaste @NRDC (Natural Resources Defense Council)	#Didyouknow It's best to store meat & fish on the bottom shelf, the coldest place in the fridge. <a href="http://goo.gl/px043L">http://goo.gl/px043L</a> #foodwaste @NRDC
<b>6/24 Smart Storage</b>	Download the FoodKeeper app for tips on cooking and food storage. <a href="http://goo.gl/lqadee">http://goo.gl/lqadee</a> #foodwaste @U.S. Department of Agriculture	Download the FoodKeeper app for tips on cooking and food storage. <a href="http://goo.gl/lqadee">http://goo.gl/lqadee</a> #foodwaste @USDA
<b>6/27 Smart Prep</b>	Store food in clear containers to keep better track of what's in your fridge and reduce food waste. <a href="http://goo.gl/vRng5y">http://goo.gl/vRng5y</a> #foodwaste #NoFoodWasted	Store food in clear containers to keep track of what's in your fridge & reduce #foodwaste #NoFoodWasted @WastedFood <a href="http://goo.gl/vRng5y">http://goo.gl/vRng5y</a>
<b>7/1 Smart Prep</b>	Here are a few great tips for reducing food waste in your kitchen! <a href="http://goo.gl/60A9nw">http://goo.gl/60A9nw</a> #foodwaste #NoFoodWasted @The Seattle Times	Here are a few great tips for reducing food waste in your kitchen! <a href="http://goo.gl/60A9nw">http://goo.gl/60A9nw</a> #foodwaste #NoFoodWasted @SeattleTimes
<b>7/4 Smart Prep</b>	Got leftover rice? Here's a recipe for rice pudding <a href="http://ow.ly/i/c085F">http://ow.ly/i/c085F</a> #foodwaste #Nofoodwaste	Got leftover rice? Here's a recipe for rice pudding <a href="http://ow.ly/i/c085F">http://ow.ly/i/c085F</a> #foodwaste #Nofoodwaste

<b>7/ 8 Smart Prep</b>	Did you know? 31% of fresh tomatoes bought by U.S. households are thrown out—that’s 21 tomatoes a year per person! #Nofoodwaste #foodwaste <a href="http://goo.gl/AqV0bK">http://goo.gl/AqV0bK</a>	#Didyouknow? 31% of fresh tomatoes bought by U.S. households are thrown out! #foodwaste <a href="http://goo.gl/AqV0bK">http://goo.gl/AqV0bK</a>
<b>7/ 11 Smart Prep</b>	Prep food when you get home from the grocery store. It makes for faster meals during the week! <a href="http://goo.gl/0sjFPJ">http://goo.gl/0sjFPJ</a> #Nofoodwaste #smartprep	Prep food when you get home from the grocery store. Have faster meals during the week! <a href="http://goo.gl/0sjFPJ">http://goo.gl/0sjFPJ</a> #Nofoodwaste #smartprep
<b>7/ 15 Smart Prep</b>	Too much zucchini? Here’s a recipe for zucchini boats <a href="http://ow.ly/i/bLjZv">http://ow.ly/i/bLjZv</a> #foodwaste #Nofoodwaste #LoveUglyFruit	Too much zucchini? Here’s a recipe for zucchini boats <a href="http://ow.ly/i/bLjZv">http://ow.ly/i/bLjZv</a> #foodwaste #Nofoodwaste #LoveUglyFruit
<b>7/ 18 Smart Prep</b>	Making homemade stock is a great way to get more out of spare vegetable parts. Here are more tips on how to use the whole vegetable! <a href="http://goo.gl/gZ9Pkl">http://goo.gl/gZ9Pkl</a> #Nofoodwaste #LoveUglyFruit	Making homemade stock is a great way to get more out of your spare vegetable parts. <a href="http://goo.gl/gZ9Pkl">http://goo.gl/gZ9Pkl</a> #Nofoodwaste #LoveUglyFruit
<b>7/ 22 Smart Prep</b>	Take the pledge to reduce food waste in your home! #foodwaste NYS Pollution Prevention Institute <a href="http://ow.ly/i/c07BZ">http://ow.ly/i/c07BZ</a>	Take the pledge to reduce food waste in your home! #foodwaste @NYSP2I <a href="http://ow.ly/i/c07BZ">http://ow.ly/i/c07BZ</a>
<b>7/ 25 Smart Prep</b>	Prep and freeze foods you won’t eat in time. Those sliced carrots could make a great addition to a soup later on. <a href="http://goo.gl/0sjFPJ">http://goo.gl/0sjFPJ</a> #Nofoodwaste #smartprep	Prep and freeze foods you won’t eat in time; Use them in soup later on. <a href="http://goo.gl/0sjFPJ">http://goo.gl/0sjFPJ</a> #Nofoodwaste #smartprep
<b>7/ 28 Final survey/goodies</b>	The Last Week Tonight host says America has an embarrassing food waste problem.#foodwaste #JohnOliver <a href="http://goo.gl/077QZv">http://goo.gl/077QZv</a>	The Last Week Tonight host says America has an embarrassing food waste problem.#foodwaste #JohnOliver <a href="http://goo.gl/077QZv">http://goo.gl/077QZv</a>

### Other tools & tips

- You can repost the same content by highlighting different aspects in your post.
- Consider using other social media outlets like [Instagram](#) and [Pinterest](#).
- Use a social media management tool like [Hootsuite](#) to plan and schedule your posts weeks in advance. These tools also allow you to work on several social media platforms at the same time.
- Shorten links using [Google’s URL Shortener](#).
- Collect and organize content on an Excel sheet or an archiving program like [Evernote](#).

## Resources

### \*Content:

- West Coast Climate and Materials Management Forum, <http://westcoastclimateforum.com>
- Waste & Resources Action Programme, <http://www.WRAP.org.uk>
- European Union Food Use for Social Innovation by Optimising Waste Prevention Strategies (EU FUSIONS), <http://www.Eu-fusions.org>
- Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC ), <http://www.nrdc.org>
- U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), <http://www.usda.gov>
- Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), <http://www.fao.org>

### Social media tools:

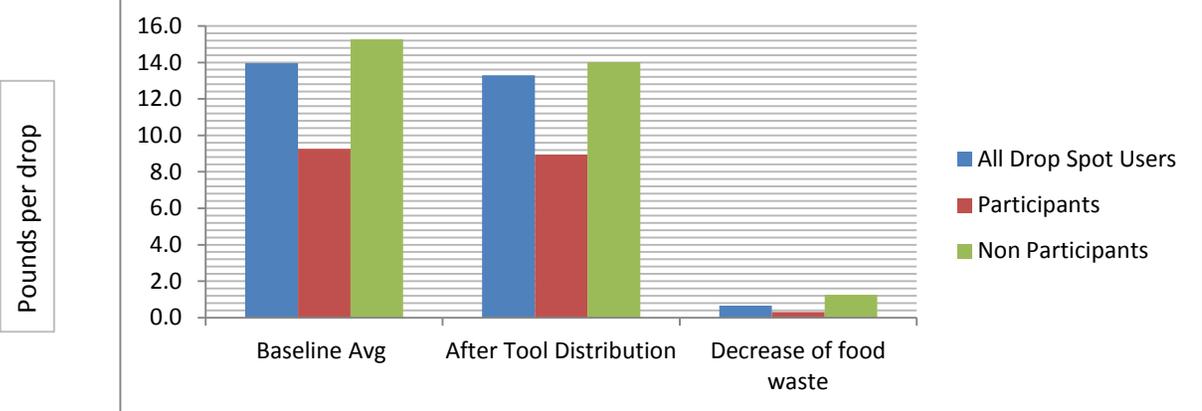
- Hootsuite, <https://hootsuite.com/>
- Evernote, <https://www.evernote.com/>
- Google URL Shortener, <https://goo.gl/>

**Food Waste Challenge Drop Spot User Data**

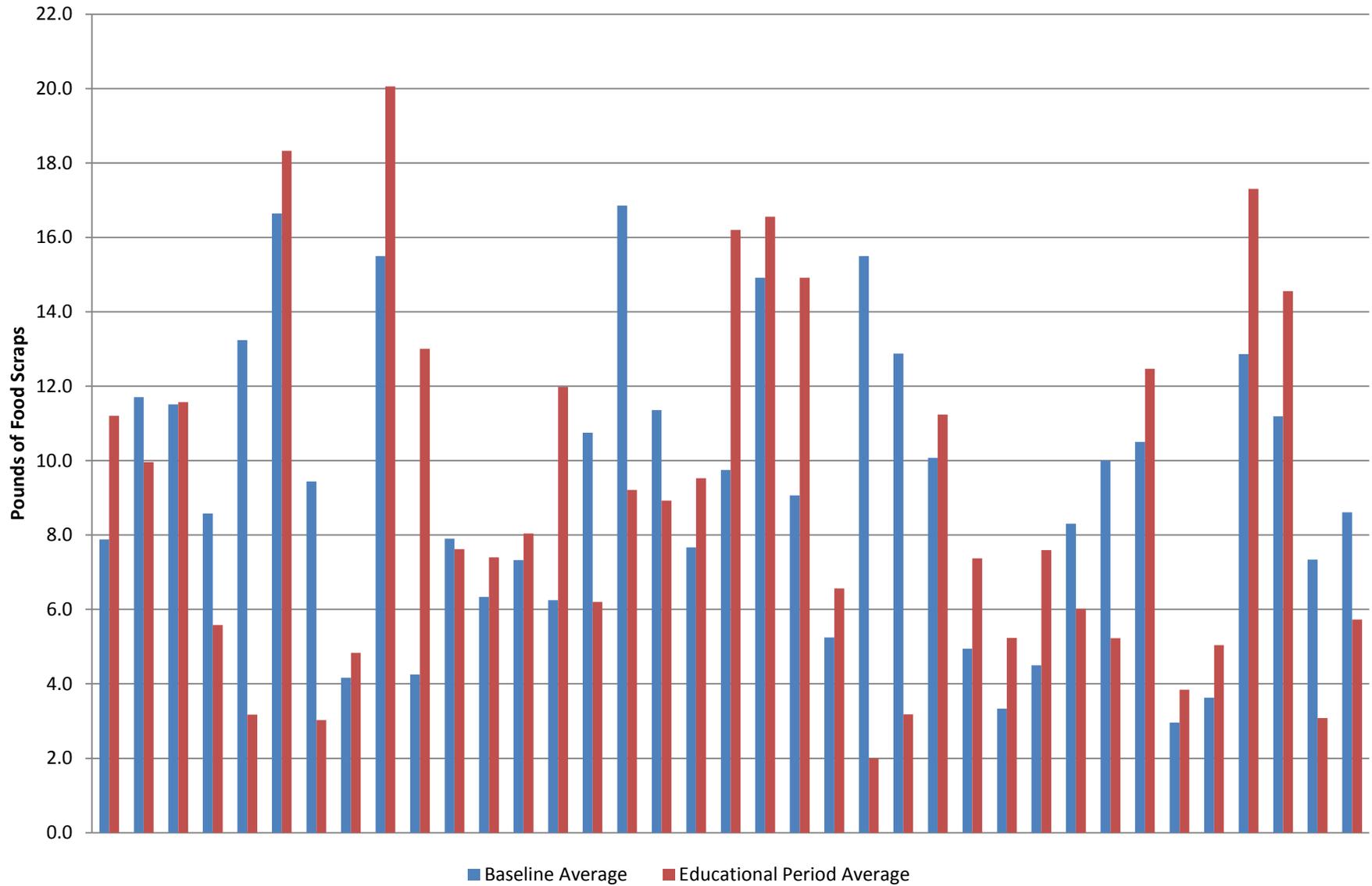
Participant	Education Period Avg Lbs/Drop			Variance		
	Baseline Avg	Starting Date 5/9	After Tool Distribution Starting Date 5/9	Decrease of food waste		
Pounds per Drop						
1	7.879	11.203	9.967	3.324	2.088	
2	11.710	9.962	9.962	-1.748	-1.748	
3	11.511	11.572	12.256	0.061	0.744	
4	8.580	5.578	7.400	-3.002	-1.180	
5	13.240	3.171	3.757	-10.069	-9.483	
6	16.640	18.329	18.762	1.689	2.122	
7	9.438	3.028	3.171	-6.409	-6.266	
8	4.167	4.831	4.660	0.664	0.493	
9	15.500	20.056	18.650	4.556	3.150	
10	4.250	13.005	13.005	8.755	8.755	
11	7.900	7.622	7.518	-0.278	-0.383	
12	6.338	7.400	7.643	1.063	1.305	
13	7.325	8.040	8.040	0.715	0.715	
14	6.250	11.980	11.980	5.730	5.730	
15	10.750	6.200	6.200	-4.550	-4.550	
16	16.857	9.213	9.141	-7.644	-7.716	
17	11.360	8.922	8.993	-2.438	-2.367	
18	7.667	9.528	9.400	1.861	1.733	
19	9.749	16.201	16.201	6.453	6.453	
20	14.917	16.554	16.554	1.637	1.637	
21	9.067	14.916	14.249	5.849	5.182	
22	5.248	6.562	6.857	1.314	1.608	
23	15.500	2.000	2.000	-13.500	-13.500	
24	12.876	3.180	3.263	-9.696	-9.613	
25	10.075	11.240	11.240	1.165	1.165	
26	4.943	7.374	7.002	2.431	2.059	
27	3.333	5.232	5.266	1.898	1.933	
28	4.500	7.597	7.783	3.097	3.283	
29	8.300	6.013	5.358	-2.287	-2.942	
30	10.000	5.229	5.229	-4.771	-4.771	
31	10.503	12.468	11.290	1.965	0.787	
32	2.963	3.844	3.941	0.881	0.978	
33	3.630	5.042	5.114	1.412	1.484	
34	12.867	17.301	15.811	4.434	2.944	
35	11.190	14.559	14.559	3.369	3.369	
36	7.340	3.082	3.320	-4.258	-4.020	
37	8.613	5.730	5.730	-2.883	-2.883	
Pounds per Drop						
Overall (37)	9.270	9.021	8.953	-0.249	0.316	-3.4%
Decreased (14)	8.094	7.011	7.111	-1.084	-0.983	
Increased (23)	9.281	9.635	9.456	0.354	0.175	
Total Pounds						
Overall (37)	342.974	333.763	331.271	-9.210	-11.703	
Decreased (14)	152.464	78.930	81.041	-73.534	-71.423	
Increased (23)	190.510	254.833	250.229	64.323	59.720	
Pounds per Drop						
All Drop Spot Users	13.952	13.306	13.287	0.646	0.664	4.8%
Non-participants	15.265	14.011	14.016	1.254	1.249	8.2%

### Food Waste Challenge Drop Spot User Data

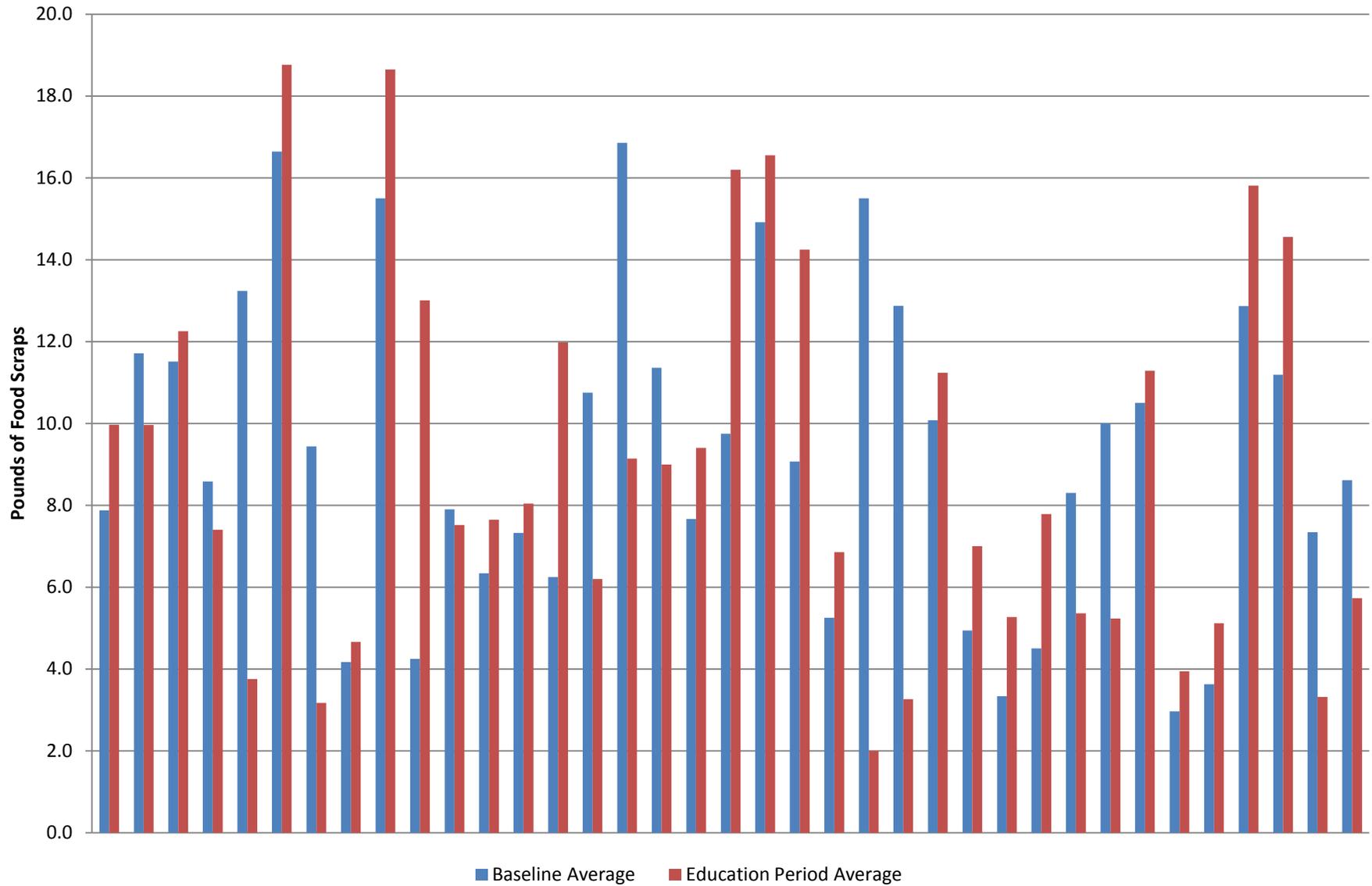
Participants include anyone who had 2 or more Baseline Data Points and 3 or more Education Period Data Points. Using 5/9 as the Education Period Start Date, when materials went into participant's hands, there was a 2.3% decrease in weight. Using 5/16 as the Start Date, when materials had been in the household for a week, potentially, and may have effected behavior, there was a 3.4% decrease in weight. **Red text indicates decreases.**



## Average Food Scraps before and after Education by participant (starting 5/9/15)



## Average Food Scraps Before vs. After Education by participant (starting 5/16/15)



# Program Handouts

# Food Storage Tips

Did you know that **40%** of food in the US is never eaten?



## To Save Food and Money:

- Freeze items in smaller portions directly after purchasing
- Put leftovers in clear containers
- Store the Eat First box somewhere visible
- Store delicate veggies in the high-humidity crisper
- Keep most fruits in the low-humidity crisper



For more information  
visit [recycletoompkins.org](http://recycletoompkins.org)  
or call us at 607-273-6632



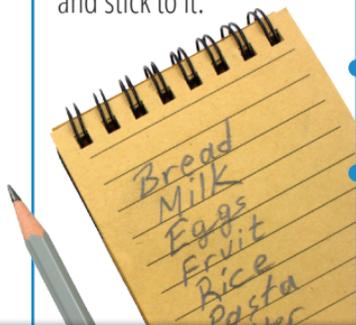
**New York State  
Pollution Prevention Institute**

Funding provided by the NYS Pollution Prevention Institute through a grant from the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation. Any opinions, findings, conclusions or recommendations expressed are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Department of Environmental Conservation.

# Save the Food: Tips for reducing food waste

## SMART SHOPPING

- Avoid buying food you already have: check your fridge and cupboards before shopping.
- Minimize impulse buys: make a shopping list before going to the store and stick to it.



## SMART STORAGE

- Store delicate veggies in the high-humidity crisper.
- Keep most fruits in the low-humidity crisper.
- Keep certain vegetables like onions, garlic and potatoes, outside of the fridge.
- Store leftovers in clear containers to see what's in your fridge.
- Move food that's likely to spoil soon to a visible area.



## SMART PREP

- Freeze food such as bread, sliced fruit, or meat that you know you won't be able to eat in time.
- Prepare and cook perishable items, then freeze them for use throughout the month.
- Plan meals around leftover ingredients.



For more information visit [recycletompkins.org](http://recycletompkins.org) or call us at 607-273-6632



New York State  
Pollution Prevention Institute



# Food Waste Prevention Challenge

**MAY: SMART SHOPPING**



The goal this month is to **change shopping habits to create less food waste.**

This month we focus on what to buy, based on what you already have, and on rescuing food before it goes bad. Participants receive a grocery list notepad with shopping tips, then a label to create an "Eat First" box.

For more tips on reducing food waste visit [www.recycletompkins.org](http://www.recycletompkins.org)



# Monthly Food Waste Prevention Tracking Form:

## SMART SHOPPING (May)

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Answer the following questions throughout the month to help identify food waste trends within your household. Return this form to your Drop Spot Attendant.

### **PREVENTABLE Food Waste:**

List a few of the most common wasted items from your household, which could have been prevented (by buying less, using before it went bad, freezing, etc.)

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---

### **NON-EDIBLE Food Waste:**

List a few of the most common non-edible items that your household placed in your transport container (melon rinds, coffee grounds, corn husks, etc.)

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---

### **Which strategies did you try during the challenge?**

- Make a shopping list with meals in mind (grocery pad provided at Drop Spot)
- Buy no more than you need
- Prevent food from spoiling (Eat First Box information at Drop Spot)
- Consider items you already have before shopping for new food

### **How successful do you feel these strategies were in decreasing your household's food waste?**

- Very successful
- Somewhat successful
- Unsuccessful
- Household did not try these strategies

**Additional comments or feedback:** \_\_\_\_\_

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# Food Waste Prevention Challenge

**JUNE: SMART STORAGE**



The goal this month is to **change food storage habits to create less food waste and focus on how to store food to preserve freshness.**

You will receive a fridge magnet with storage tips, and then an informational fridge leaflet.

For more tips on reducing food waste visit [www.recycletompkins.org](http://www.recycletompkins.org)



## Monthly Food Waste Prevention Tracking Form: SMART STORAGE (June)

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Answer the following questions throughout the month to help identify food waste trends within your household. Return this form to your Drop Spot Attendant.

### **PREVENTABLE Food Waste:**

List a few of the most common wasted items from your household, which could have been prevented (by moving items to the Eat First Box, storing in clear containers, freezing, etc.)

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### **NON-EDIBLE Food Waste:**

List a few of the most common non-edible items that your household placed in your transport container (melon rinds, coffee grounds, corn husks, etc.)

---

---

### **Which strategies did you try during the challenge?**

- Store delicate produce and most fruits inside the fridge and keep certain vegetables like onions, garlic and potatoes outside the fridge for optimum freshness
- Store leftovers in clear containers to see what's in your fridge
- Freeze excess items in smaller portions directly after purchasing
- Move food likely to spoil soon to a visible area, like an Eat First Box

### **How successful do you feel these strategies were in decreasing your household's food waste?**

- Very successful
- Somewhat successful
- Unsuccessful
- Household did not try these strategies

**Additional comments or feedback:** \_\_\_\_\_

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# Food Waste Prevention Challenge

**JULY: SMART PREP**



The goal this month is to **change food preparation habits to create less food waste.**

We'll focus on how to prepare food to create the least amount of waste. You'll receive recipe cards, first focusing on reusing leftovers, and then focusing on using seasonally abundant foods.

For more tips on reducing food waste visit [www.recycletompkins.org](http://www.recycletompkins.org)



# Monthly Food Waste Prevention Tracking Form: SMART PREP (July)

---

Answer the following questions throughout the month to help identify food waste trends within your household. Return this form to your Drop Spot Attendant.

## **PREVENTABLE Food Waste:**

List a few of the most common wasted items from your household, which could have been prevented (by transforming leftovers, creating meals based on seasonal items, etc.)

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---

## **NON-EDIBLE Food Waste:**

List a few of the most common non-edible items that your household placed in your transport container (melon rinds, coffee grounds, corn husks, etc.)

---

---

## **Which strategies did you try during the challenge?**

- Create meals from leftovers
- Freeze foods like bread, sliced fruit or meat you know you won't eat in time
- Prepare and cook perishable items, then freeze them for use throughout the month
- Plan ahead to use items that are abundant in season

## **How successful do you feel these strategies were in decreasing your household's food waste?**

- Very successful
- Somewhat successful
- Unsuccessful
- Household did not try these strategies

**Additional comments or feedback:** \_\_\_\_\_

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# Almond Rice Pudding

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## Ingredients

- 3 cups almond milk
- 1 cup white or brown rice
- 1/4 cup sugar
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 1/4 teaspoon almond extract
- cinnamon to taste
- 1/4 cup toasted almonds (optional)

## Directions

1. Combine almond milk and rice in a 2-3 quart saucepan, and bring to a boil.
2. Reduce heat and simmer for 1/2 hour with the lid on until the rice is soft.
3. Add sugar, vanilla, almond extract and cinnamon. Stir and serve warm.
4. Refrigerate leftovers within 2 hours.

## Notes

- Add your favorite berries to the top for some color and a yummy taste!
- Add an extra cup of almond milk for a creamier texture.
- No almond milk? Use non-fat or 1% milk and 1 1/2 teaspoons almond extract.

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**Prep Time:** 5 minutes

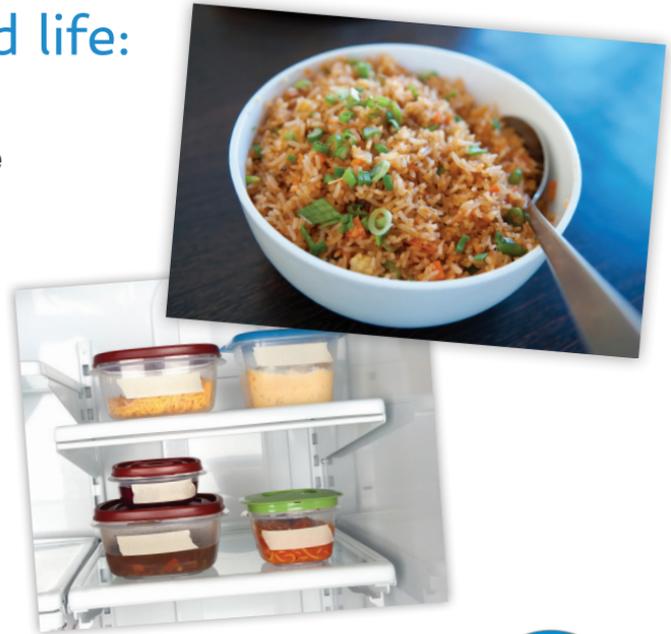
**Cooking Time:** 30 minutes

**Yield:** 6 servings

**Serving Size:** 1/2 cup

# Give leftovers a second life:

- **Reinvent your leftovers:** one night's stir fry can yield rice for tomorrow's rice pudding.
- **Cook less:** check your recipe to be sure you're only cooking as many servings as you really need.
- **Store leftovers in clear containers to serve as a reminder of what you need to eat.**



For more tips on reducing food waste visit [www.recycletompkins.com](http://www.recycletompkins.com)



Funding provided by the NYS Pollution Prevention Institute through a grant from the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation. Any opinions, findings, conclusions or recommendations expressed are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Department of Environmental Conservation.



# Pasta Primavera

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## Ingredients

3 Tbs. olive oil  
3 cloves garlic, minced (1 Tbs.)  
1 tsp. grated lemon zest  
8 oz. fusilli pasta  
2 small yellow squash, halved and cut into ½-inch-thick slices  
1 medium orange bell pepper, cut into 1-inch pieces  
8 oz. small broccoli florets (3 cups)  
2 cups halved cherry tomatoes  
8 green onions, thinly sliced (½ cup)  
½ cup torn fresh basil leaves  
Grated Parmesan cheese or vegan Parmesan-style cheese for garnish, optional

## Directions

Combine oil, garlic, and lemon zest in small bowl. Set aside.

Cook pasta in large pot of boiling, salted water according to package directions. Add squash and bell pepper 4 minutes before end of cooking time. Add broccoli 3 minutes before end of cooking time. Drain pasta and vegetables, reserving 1/2 cup cooking water.

Return pasta mixture to pot, and stir in tomatoes, green onions, basil, oil mixture, and reserved cooking water. Heat over medium-low heat until tomatoes are hot. Serve with Parmesan cheese, if desired.

## Notes

This easy recipe lends itself to endless variations. In place of fresh basil, try 1/4 cup chopped cilantro or parsley, 2 Tbs. chopped fresh tarragon, or 1 Tbs. finely minced fresh rosemary or oregano. Add an extra cup of almond milk for a creamier texture. No almond milk? Use non-fat or 1% milk and 1½ tsp almond extract.

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**Prep Time:** 10 minutes

**Cooking Time:** 20 minutes

**Yield:** 4 servings

# Using the Eat First Box:

**Use what you have:** this flexible recipe can be adapted to use whatever fresh veggies are in the Eat First box.

**Reinvent leftovers:** save time and food by using leftover pasta from another meal.

**Adapt to your tastes:** change this recipe to fit veggies that are in season, or add some chicken or bacon, according to your tastes.



For more tips on reducing food waste visit [www.recycletompkins.org](http://www.recycletompkins.org)



# Zucchini Pizza Boats

---

## Ingredients

4 medium zucchini  
½ cup marinara or pizza sauce  
¼ cup nutritional yeast (optional)  
¼ red onion, sliced  
¼ cup kalamata olives, chopped  
½ cup cherry tomatoes, sliced  
2 tablespoons fresh basil chiffonade

## Directions

Preheat oven to 400 F.

Cut the zucchini in half lengthwise and scoop out the inside seeds.

To help them lay flat on the pan, you can also cut a piece off the bottom of the “boat” to create a flat surface.

Mix tomato sauce and nutritional yeast (if using).

Spread a light layer of sauce (about 1 tablespoon) inside each zucchini

Top with onions, olives, and tomatoes.

Bake for 20-25 minutes, until zucchini is tender (but not mushy).

Top with basil and serve.

---

**Prep Time:** 10 minutes

**Cooking Time:** 25 minutes

**Yield:** 2 servings

# Utilizing Abundance:

**Garden surplus:** this recipe uses 4 zucchini, which are plentiful in summertime.

**Cook now, eat later:** create this dish while zucchini is fresh and freeze for easy meals post-harvest.

**Adapt to your tastes:** change this recipe to fit your tastes and diet by using pesto instead of marinara, adding cheese or foregoing the olives.



For more tips on reducing food waste visit [www.recycletompkins.org](http://www.recycletompkins.org)



Funding provided by the NYS Pollution Prevention Institute through a grant from the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation. Any opinions, findings, conclusions or recommendations expressed are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Department of Environmental Conservation.

