Reducing Wasted Food

Have you ever thrown away an apple or banana that was slightly bruised? Or maybe you didn’t finish your dinner and tossed it in the garbage? This is wasted food - food that was perfectly good to eat, but was thrown away. When we throw away food, it’s not just the food we waste, but also the resources that went into getting that food to us. For example, the water used to grow it, the work to harvest or cook it, and the money used to purchase it.

Families in the United States throw away approximately 25% of the food and beverages they buy. Imagine your family going to the grocery store, buying 4 bags of food and leaving one behind! Become a wasted food warrior and save food!

Wasted Food

Wasted food is food that is still good to eat, but is not eaten and is then thrown away. **Examples:** An apple with a bruise, refrigerated leftovers from last night’s dinner, or food you simply didn’t want to eat.

Food Scraps

Food scraps are inedible food items or food that cannot be eaten. **Examples:** Banana peels, egg shells, or moldy bread.

What can I do to fight wasted food?

(See how many you can do. Check them off as you go!)

- Don’t take food I know I won’t eat
- Eat all of the food on my plate
- Eat the leftovers in my refrigerator
- Help my parent(s)/guardian(s) plan my lunches and dinners
- Help my parent(s)/guardian(s) make a grocery list
- Volunteer with a school club, scout troop or my family at a local food pantry or soup kitchen

Not all of the food that you usually throw away can be eaten, so what do you do with this food? You can compost it! Composting your food scraps at home in your yard or in an indoor worm bin makes a nutrient rich soil we call compost. Add compost to the soil in your garden to help it grow.