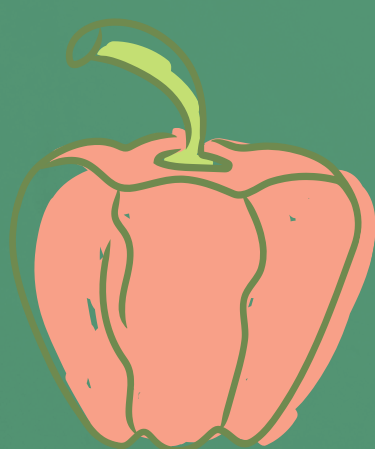


REDUCING FOOD WASTE TIPS FROM ERA



Earth Day

April 22, 2020



- Put veggies and fruits that have potential to go bad easily in the freezer. They are just as nutritious and usually as delicious as fresh veggies!
- Use past prime veggies for making vegetable broth or stew. Put past prime fruits or veggies in the freezer for smoothies. (Disclaimer: Don't use moldy food!)
- Be aware of “best by” and “sell by” dates on food. Most of those are for aesthetics or for grocery store restocking. You can often use food past those dates. **Use the smell and appearance test to judge if food is safe or not.**
- Make a meal plan for the entire week so you know exactly how much of each food item to purchase. This will help you from overbuying and losing food to spoilage, or under buying and having to make another trip to the store.
- **Stick to your shopping list** while buying groceries. Impulse buying can often lead to extra food around the house that may expire.
- Buy food in bulk, but only for non-perishable foods. Try to **avoid bulk buying on perishable items, unless you know you will use it.** It's not always the cheaper option if some of it needs to go into the trash!
- **Use “first-in, first-out” system in your fridge or pantry.** That means new food gets put in the back of the fridge or on a lower shelf, and old food stays in front or higher up.
- If you throw food away, write down what it is and keep a running list. Then you can reference that after a couple of weeks of recording to figure out what foods you can scale back on or watch more regularly.
- Keep the skins on your fruit and veggies instead of peeling (but don't forget to wash them). That will reduce the amount that needs to go into the trash. **Plus, the skins have a lot of nutrients!**
- Compost your scraps. Your community may have a compost pick up program (like Denver!) or you can usually find a non-profit running a pickup service (like in the City of Chicago!). **Or, set up a compost bin in your backyard.** You can keep an airtight, carbon-filtered small bin in your kitchen so that you don't have to go outside to your bin every time you have scraps.
- A lot of people are ordering takeout these days – make sure you request no silverware, no napkins, and no condiments (if you have them at home). Recycle the paper or plastic bags that it comes in and look at the containers for opportunities to recycle or compost them.
- **Use reusable cloth towels instead of paper towels,** which can be easily washed and reused. Or, if paper towels are necessary, try to buy brown (unbleached) paper towels. They are more sustainable to produce and can go in your compost bin!
- Grow your own herbs in your kitchen. Fresh herbs from the kitchen are delicious and more environmentally friendly. And plants can help improve your mood! **Pro tip: Reuse plastic containers from the store or takeout as your herb container.**