

April is Food Waste Awareness Month

In the U.S., more than one-third of all available food goes uneaten through loss or waste, and food is the single largest type of waste we discard as trash or garbage. April has been designated as “Winning on Reducing Food Waste Month.”

On average, Americans toss and waste 23 pounds of potentially edible food per person each month. At this rate, food waste is costing the average family of four approximately \$190 per month.

Studies show that better meal planning and careful food storage can help prevent food waste at home.

Buy what you need. Keep a running list of meals you enjoy and their ingredients. Inventory your refrigerator, freezer, and cupboards to avoid buying food you already have.

Plan meals before you go shopping, make a list, and buy only the quantities you need.

Buy in bulk only if you are able to use the food before it spoils.

Check cooled storage temperatures — your refrigerator should be at 34° to 40° F and your

freezer at 0° F or colder. For cupboard storage, choose a cool, dry, dark location away from heat and chemicals.

Freeze food such as bread, sliced fruit, or meat that you know you won't be able to eat in time.

Prepare and freeze meals ahead of time so you spend less time in the kitchen. Prepare and cook perishable items before they spoil, then freeze for later. Example: Cook and freeze chicken breast or taco meat.