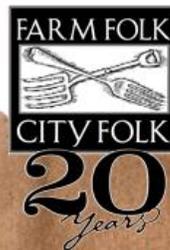


Reduce your

Foodprint

Help the planet, save money, and have fun doing it.



Buy What You Eat

Shopping Tips To Reduce Your Foodprint

How we shop has just as much of an effect of reducing food waste as what we do in our kitchens. Understanding Best Before dates, deciding on the quantity and selection of what we buy, and the frequency that we buy it, all contribute to reducing the amount of food we waste.

Best Before Dates and Expiry Dates: What's The Difference?

Best Before dates (or Use By dates) are listed on many foods. Packaged foods that have a shelf life of more than 90 days do not require Best Before dates but manufacturers often include them anyway. After the Best Before date products may lose some of their taste, freshness, texture, and nutritional quality, but it isn't an indication of when the food is unsafe to eat.

Expiry dates are required on baby formula, nutritional supplements, meal replacements, and formulated liquid diets. If it's past the expiry then it is best not to eat it, as the nutritional content may be different than what is shown on the label.

The [Eat in Time Chart](#) was researched from a number of government and university sources and suggests storage times for freezing, refrigeration, and dry storage of a variety of foods. When it comes to food safety, use your best judgement. For tips on food storage see the document [Make it Last](#).

Quantities

Most of us don't have big families to feed anymore. In fact, people living alone in Canada now outnumber couples with children. This means a week's supply of groceries likely looks different than what we grew up with. Our ideal of home however may still include an abundance of food in the cupboards and refrigerator. Sales can also spur us on to buy more than what we need. Buying food in large quantities may not save us money and can contribute to food waste. When you go shopping, ask yourself three questions before buying a 20 kg bag of flour or two cases of canned goods,

1. What do I already have at home?
2. How long can I store the food I'm about to buy?
3. When will I use this up?

Smart bulk buying where food isn't thrown away can be a real budget helper. Take a look at the food in your cupboards. How long has it been there? Just like stores it's best to "rotate our stock" so older products get used first.

Selection

Buy a variety of foods, some that need to be used immediately and others that have more staying power before they lose their quality. Buy yellow and green bananas if you don't like them with brown spots so the green ones have time to reach your desired ripeness. [The Eat in Time Chart](#) will help make selection of foods easier.

You may find fruits and vegetables at the grocery store that are oddly shaped or with small blemishes. Don't let that deter you from buying them! Our standards for perfection contribute significantly to the amount of food that is wasted

before it gets to our grocery stores. Small blemishes can be cut away with little loss. At farmers' markets you'll often see two legged carrots, an aesthetic difference that does not in any way indicate a loss in quality.

Frequency

Our changing modern schedules require flexibility. Buying smaller amounts of fruit and vegetables 1-3 times a week makes it possible to align the amount of food we have with our available time to cook and prepare it. A few in-and-out shopping trips will mean fresher, tastier food so that at the end of the week your fridge won't be full of items you didn't have time to prepare and eat.

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