

A PRACTICAL GUIDE ON

REDUCING

FOOD

WASTE



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# About Project The

Our planet is facing an unprecedented food crisis. The way we produce, consume, and dispose of food is having a profound impact on our environment and future generations. According to the FAO, a staggering 17% of all food produced globally is wasted, equating to nearly 931 million tonnes. Turkey alone accounts for 8 million tonnes of household food waste, ranking first in Europe.



The consequences of food waste extend far beyond overflowing bins. Producing food requires vast amounts of land, water, and energy. When we waste food, we also waste these precious resources. Furthermore, food waste is a significant contributor to climate change, releasing methane—a potent greenhouse gas—into the atmosphere.

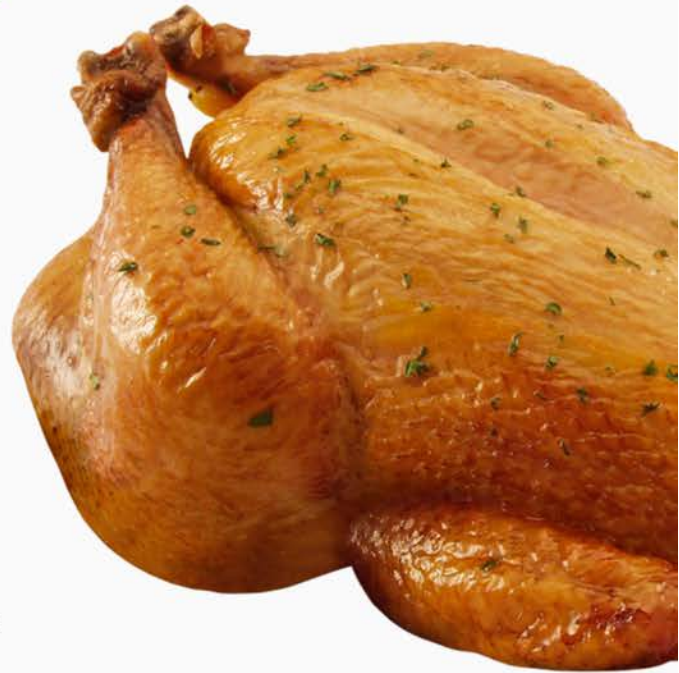
Beyond food waste, the excessive consumption of processed foods has led to a surge in packaging waste. Single-use plastics, such as bags, utensils, and packaging, often end up in our oceans and landfills, where they can persist for centuries.

## Our Project

To address these pressing issues, we organized the “Eat, Act, Think Sustainably” project in Ankara between June 21–30, 2024. Our aim was to empower participants from diverse backgrounds to adopt more sustainable food habits. Through our workshops and activities, we sought to:

- Raise awareness about food waste, sustainability, and climate change.
- Encourage individual action by demonstrating the power of small changes.
- Develop practical skills for reducing food waste and adopting a more sustainable lifestyle.
- Foster cultural exchange through the sharing of traditional recipes and food practices.

# Defini- tions



## Food Waste

Food waste refers to food that is produced, harvested, or purchased but is not consumed. It can occur at various stages of the food supply chain, including production, processing, distribution, retail, and consumption. This waste often results in the loss of valuable resources like water, land, and energy.

Here are some common causes of food waste:



## Food Loss vs. Food Waste

Food loss and food waste are both significant issues in the global food system, but they refer to different stages of the food supply chain.

Food loss typically occurs before the food reaches the consumer. It often happens during the production, processing, and distribution stages. Examples of food loss include:

- **Inefficient** harvesting methods, **damage** during transportation, and **improper** storage can lead to food loss.
- **Spoilage** during processing, such as freezing or canning, can result in loss.
- **Delays** in transportation, **inadequate** refrigeration, and **logistical challenges** can cause food to spoil.



**Fruits & Vegetables**



**Dairy Products**



**Bread**



**Meat & Seafood**

# Most Wasted Food



What



can



we

do

to reduce



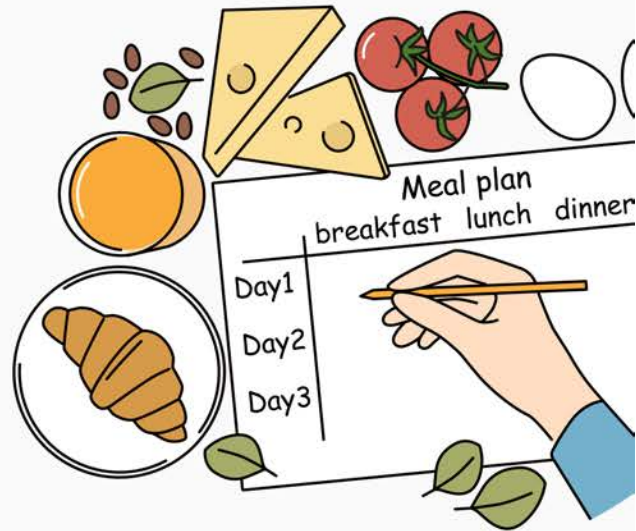
food waste?

# 1 Meal Planning

**Plan ahead:** Create a weekly meal plan to ensure you're purchasing only what you need.

**Consider leftovers:** Incorporate leftovers into your meal plan to avoid waste.

**Bulk cooking:** Cook larger quantities of meals and freeze portions for later.



# 2 Proper Storage

**Check labels:** Follow the storage instructions on food labels.

**Refrigerate and freeze:** Store perishable items at the correct temperatures.

**First in, first out:** Consume older items first to prevent spoilage.

# 3 Creative Leftover Usage

**Meal ideas:** Research recipes that use common leftovers.

**Leftover soups and stews:** Combine leftover vegetables and proteins into hearty soups or stews.

**Leftover sandwiches:** Create unique sandwiches using leftover bread, meat, and cheese.



# 4

## Understanding Expiration Dates

**“Best by“ vs. “use by“:** Understand the difference between these terms. “Best by“ suggests the product is at its peak quality, while “use by“ indicates the product is no longer safe to consume.

**Sensory evaluation:** Use your senses to determine if food is still safe to eat, even if it’s past the “best by“ date.

# 5

## Buying Only What You Need

**Make a list:** Create a shopping list before going to the grocery store.

**Avoid impulse purchases:** Stick to your list and avoid buying items you don’t need.

**Buy in smaller quantities:** For perishable items, buy smaller amounts to avoid waste.



# 6

## Donating Excess Food



**Local food banks:** Donate non-perishable food items to local food banks.

**Food pantries:** Support local food pantries that distribute food to those in need.

**Neighborly sharing:** Share excess food with friends, family, or neighbors.



# 7

## Composting Food Scraps

**Home composting:** Start a compost bin at home to turn food scraps into nutrient-rich soil.

**Community composting:** Participate in community composting programs.

**Avoid items that can't be composted:** Some items, like meat and dairy, may not be suitable for composting.

# 8

## Supporting Sustainable Practices

**Choose local and seasonal:** Opt for locally sourced and seasonal produce to reduce transportation and storage issues.

**Buy in bulk:** Purchase items in bulk when possible to reduce packaging waste.

**Support eco-friendly packaging:** Choose products with minimal packaging or recyclable materials.

# 9

## Educating Others

**Share knowledge:** Talk to friends and family about the importance of reducing food waste.

**Participate in events:** Attend food waste awareness events and workshops.

**Spread the word:** Use social media to share information about food waste prevention.



# Too Much To Waste



**1/3 of  
food produced  
for people is lost or  
wasted globally. But millions  
of people face hunger every day.**



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