



## Controlling Food Waste

As you transition to using more fresh produce, you may be concerned about food waste. Here are 10 strategies to minimize food waste and help you maximize your food budget.

1) **Ugly?**

Don't let 'ugly' produce scare you. The more fresh produce you use, the more likely you will come across some interesting specimens.

Take a funny picture and share for a laugh, but keep in mind that 26% of food waste starts with finding produce not attractive enough to sell/use.

2) **FIFO**

Practice FIFO- First In, First Out- rotate your food.

3) **Monitor waste.**

For one week, track everything being thrown out. Then evaluate how it could have been done differently. Is too much being ordered and not used? Are certain foods just not popular and how can you change that? Are you getting a large amount of something and need creative ideas to use it up? Is it food scraps that can be repurposed?

4) **Everything but the Kitchen Sink**

Use it up meals (or 'everything-but-the-kitchen-sink')- Casseroles, stir fries, soups/stews, pastas, smoothies, and salads are all great ways to throw a little bit of this and that together.

5) **Parts!**

Skins, stems, and greens are usually edible or can at least be useful- carrot tops, celery leaves, broccoli stems, beet greens are all edible. Don't worry about peeling carrots and potatoes- the peels are very nutritious! Onion and garlic skins, celery bottoms, carrot skins, etc. make great vegetable broth

6) **Soft is still good...**

Don't toss soft produce (do toss if moldy or slimy, though). Soft tomatoes make great sauce. Soft fruits makes great smoothies. Most produce will cook up just fine, esp. in a dish that typically calls for a longer cooking time.

7) **Compost** (or see if your farmer will compost)

8) **Freeze!**

Use your freezer if you have too much of a good thing; most foods and dishes can freeze well.

9) **Take Stock**

Know what you have to use- take stock and keep your fridge and pantry organized.

10) **Stale?**

Lightly toast/dry stale bread and make bread crumbs- good for breading, topping casseroles, or using in meatloaf.