



# Waste Warriors



WE CAN

STOP FOOD WASTE

ONE DECISION AT A TIME

## A FAMILY FOOD WASTE CHALLENGE



**GOAL:** As a family, choose one daily meal that you usually eat together. For five days, you'll measure how much food goes uneaten and unsaved at that meal. Then, set a goal together to reduce your waste at the same meal next week!

### What is food waste?

Food waste is any food that we could have eaten, but we didn't. Maybe we threw it away because we didn't like the taste, or maybe it spoiled before we could eat it. Liquids also count as food waste, so drink your cereal milk!

Food waste *doesn't* include parts of food we don't usually eat, like bones and peels. But we can use some of these kitchen scraps to make new foods, like broth for a soup!

### Why does food waste matter?

When we waste food, we also waste everything used to make it, like water, sunlight, land, time, energy, and money. Wasted food also releases harmful gasses and liquids when it rots in landfills. Every time we save food from being wasted, we protect our earth and our neighbors!

## YOUR WASTE WARRIOR MISSION

### GETTING READY

- **TIME:** 20 minutes daily for 10 days
- **MATERIALS**
  - Your normal meals
  - A kitchen scale (or other way to measure food waste)
  - A collection bowl for unfinished food
  - A collection cup for unfinished liquids

A kitchen scale is convenient, but if you don't have one, you can easily use measuring cups or another container. Just be consistent!

### WEEK ONE

#### AT THE END OF EACH CHOSEN MEAL

- **COLLECT:** After a meal, move any food waste to a designated collection bowl. Remember: Food waste is anything we could have eaten but chose not to. If there is still something on your plate that you want to finish later, save it instead of adding it to the collection bowl—but don't forget to eat it later! Pour any unfinished drinks into your collection cup.
- **RECORD:** Measure the entire group's amount of wasted meal food and record on the provided chart, then do the same thing with wasted drinks (this makes cleanup easier). On the chart write down the amounts of meal and drink waste and add them together to find out your total food waste. Dispose of your waste like you normally would in the compost, trash can, or sink (liquids only).

### DID YOU KNOW?

The average American household wastes 32% of their food

**DO YOU COMPOST AT HOME?** Composting is the art of turning kitchen and yard scraps into a soil-like material that all plants need to grow. If you can add anything from your food waste container to your compost, don't count it as waste. You're still using it!



## WEEK ONE CONTINUED



### AT THE END OF THE WEEK

- **FINAL MEASUREMENT:** Take a moment to check on any leftovers you've saved from the meals you've been recording. If they have gone bad, add to your food waste total!
- **REFLECT:** Add up your food waste numbers from each day. How much total food waste did you end up with for the whole week?
  - What do you notice about the totals for each day? Did some days have more waste than others? Why do you think this happened?
  - How could you make the amount of food waste smaller next time? Come up with three ideas to help you have less food waste.
- **SET A GOAL:** Next week, you will measure your food waste at this same meal again. This time, though, use what you learned to set a goal to reduce our food waste. This goal can be whatever you want! There are some ideas on the right to get you started.



### GOAL IDEAS

- We will produce less food waste than last week.
- We will cut last week's amount of food waste in half.
- We will produce no liquid waste all week.
- We will have at least one meal with zero food waste.

## WEEK TWO

### AT THE END OF EACH MEAL

- **MEASURE & RECORD:** Track your food waste just like you did last week. This time, though, use the ideas you came up with for reducing food waste to help you reach your goal for this week!

### AT THE END OF THE WEEK

- **REFLECT:** Did you reach your goal? What was it like to try to make less food waste? Did you think it was easy or hard? Why?
- **THINK AHEAD:** Is there anything you started doing to reduce food waste that you'll continue to keep doing after this challenge?

### RESOURCES

#### Book:

*Plant, Cook, Eat!: A Children's Cookbook*

#### Online:

[actionforhealthykids.org/activity/kitchen-scrap-gardening/](https://actionforhealthykids.org/activity/kitchen-scrap-gardening/)  
[parents-together.org/6-things-parents-can-do-at-home-to-reduce-food-waste/](https://parents-together.org/6-things-parents-can-do-at-home-to-reduce-food-waste/)

## BEYOND THE CHALLENGE

**SHARE** your food waste adventures with us! Post a photo of your completed food waste data tracker on Facebook or Instagram and tell us one thing you're going to keep doing at home to reduce food waste. **Tag PRC in your post** (Facebook: @PennsylvaniaResourcesCouncil or Instagram: @paresourcouncil) for a chance to win a gift certificate for a Backyard Composting class and an 82-gallon compost bin! Posts must be made by September 22, 2023, to be entered to win. Winners will be notified by September 29, 2023.

**Are you hungry for more ways to reduce food waste?**

Visit [prc.org/foodwaste](https://prc.org/foodwaste) to learn tips for storing and preserving food, donating meals, cooking with kitchen scraps, using up leftovers, and more!



**LEARN MORE:** [prc.org/foodwaste](https://prc.org/foodwaste)



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