

# Keeping food out of the bin



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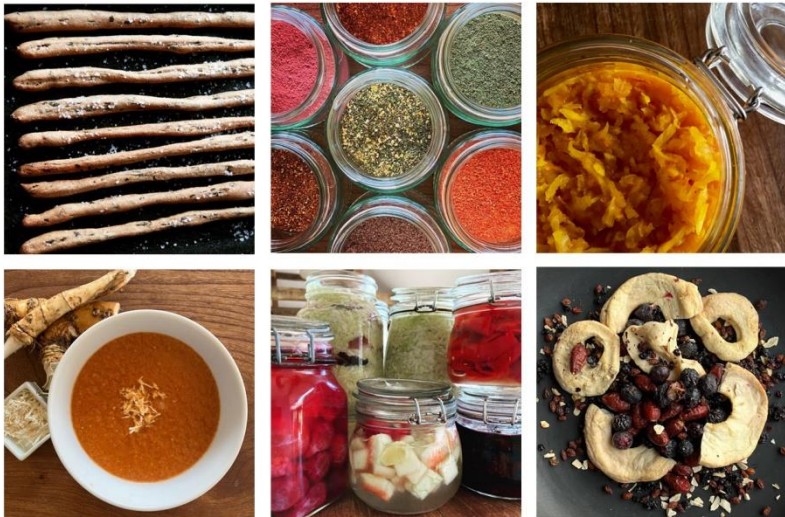
# Food waste

**The UK creates 9.52 million tonnes of food waste per year. 1  
UK households cause 70% of the UK's food waste, throwing away  
6.6 million tonnes of food, of which 4.5 million tonnes is edible. 2**

This is a staggering amount of food at a time when the cost of living crisis is exposing the severity of food poverty in the UK. A total of 9.7million adults experienced food insecurity in September 2022. In the same month one in four households with children (25.8%) experienced food insecurity- an estimated 4 million children. 2

It is a fundamental injustice and not acceptable that so much food is thrown away while there are so many people that can't afford to eat.

Food waste shows indifference to the planet that supports us. Binning food is a huge waste of the precious resources it took to bring that food into your kitchen. It wastes soil, water, and nutrients as well as all the resources used to produce, package, store and transport it.



## **25 tips to prevent food waste in the home**

It helps if you are organised and meal plan. You don't have to be obsessive about this but it does help minimise leftovers.

Check what you need before you go shopping & write a shopping list. Don't fall into the trap of saving money by bulk buying if you are going to struggle to use it.

Store your food properly. Use glass containers so you can see what is in them.

Keep your fridge organised. Rotate your food so that last-in is at the back, first-in at the front.

Get creative with your scraps & trimmings. Turn them into chutney, muffins, juices, stock.

Whiz up a soup with vegetables past their best. Serve with a dollop of pesto to make it extra tasty; nettle pesto in the spring, basil in the summer, kale in the winter.

Bananas are the most wasted fruit. Turn into banana bread or alternatively peel, chunk & freeze bananas that are on their way to becoming over ripe. Use in smoothies.

Learn to be flexible about recipe ingredients. Substitute with what's at hand rather than buying more ingredients.

Eat the skin; potato skins contain more nutrients than the actual potato; cucumber skin contains vitamin K which is essential for bone health and blood clotting.

Use up ripe fruit in smoothies or make a fruit leather.

Turn stale rye bread into kvass - a fizzy lacto - bacteria drink your gut will love.

Turn stale wheat bread into breadcrumbs. Dry in the oven on a low heat and store in an airtight container.

Turn citrus peel into a seasoning. Cut into thick strips, remove any flesh, trim off excess pith & dry in a dehydrator or oven. Grind and store in an airtight jar.

Use leftover herbs to flavour oils & vinegar or make a salsa verde.

Bottle, dry, pickle, ferment. Learn to preserve and keep a well-stocked larder of homemade delights.

Be creative with leftovers. Turn them into another dish - don't start a new recipe every day!

Turn any hot supper leftovers into a salad for lunch the next day - pasta salad? rice salad?

Use your senses, does it look good? Does it smell ok? – Is a food really past its ‘use by’ date & is food only good by the ‘best before’ date?

Keep your fridge below 5C to keep food fresher for longer.

If you don't think you are going to eat your leftovers within two days, freeze them!

Master a couple of flexible go to recipes to help you transform your leftovers into a new meal, see frittata & bruschetta.

If you have a garden - coffee grounds make can be used as a plant fertiliser - high in nitrogen, phosphorous and potassium just sprinkle thinly on soil.

Crush washed egg shells and place around plants to deter slugs.

Start composting - there's a method & size to suit every household.

## **Bruschetta**

*An easy way to use up left over roast vegetables and bread*

*serves 4*

4 slices of bread (*baguette cut on the diagonal 1/2" thick, ciabatta or sourdough bread slices*)

roast vegetables (*onion, squash, peppers, beetroot, whatever you have*)

2 tablespoons olive oil

2 cloves garlic crushed

salt & pepper

kale pesto

Preheat oven to 400 F 200 C

Mix olive oil, garlic, salt & pepper together.

Brush bread slices with the olive oil mix. Place the slices on a tray and bake for 5 to 6 minutes until lightly browned around the edges.

Spoon the roasted vegetables evenly over each piece of bread.

Top with pesto and serve.

## **Kale pesto**

*Don't let kale languish in the fridge, turn into pesto which will keep well in the fridge for a couple of weeks.*

150g kale (stalks removed) roughly chopped

25g nuts (walnuts, hazelnuts, pine-nuts)

1 clove garlic chopped

1 tablespoon yeast flakes

squeeze of lemon juice

200ml olive oil

salt & black pepper

Put the kale, nuts and garlic into a food processor. Process together for 30 seconds.

Add the yeast flakes and lemon juice and then slowly trickle in enough oil to make a loose paste.

Season with salt and pepper to taste.

## **Frittata**

*You can add almost anything to a frittata - it's a great way to use up leftovers*

*serves 4*

6 eggs

couple of handfuls of cooked vegetables, cut into cubes

2 cloves garlic crushed

salt and pepper

tablespoon butter

left over cheese grated

fresh herbs - chopped or chilli sauce or both

Beat the eggs and stir in the vegetables, garlic and herbs. Melt the butter in a sauté pan and pour in the egg mixture. Cook over a low heat for a couple of minutes or until the sides begin to set. Scatter over the cheese. Transfer to the oven and cook for 10 – 12 minutes or until set and golden. Serve topped with fresh herbs &/or a splash of chilli sauce.

## **Waste not kimchi**

*A simple technique to ensure all your vegetables are used up and never wasted. A spoonful goes well with almost anything savoury!*

Beets, sweet potatoes, turnip, carrots, turnips, kohlrabi, swede, pumpkin, parsnip whatever needs using up!

Spices & herbs for each 500g of vegetables: 2 tablespoons grated ginger, 4 cloves garlic chopped, 1 tablespoon chilli flakes, 2 tablespoons chopped chives, 2 tablespoons chopped parsley

Grate the vegetables. Add a level tablespoon of salt for every 500g of vegetables

Massage well together to pull the juices out of the vegetables.

Mix in the spices & herbs. Pack into a wide neck jar like a kilner.

Press down well to ensure the vegetables are covered with liquid adding a little water if necessary.

Weigh down to keep the vegetables submerged, cover with a cloth.

Ferment in a warm place for 7 days.

Fasten lid & store in a cool dry place or refrigerate.

## **Potato gratin with kimchi**

*According to UK Harvest, we waste an enormous 4.4 million potatoes a day in the UK.*

*This gratin is a great way to use up potatoes and the end of the jar of kimchi.*

1k potatoes

1 onion

300ml vegetable stock

olive oil

4 tablespoons kimchi (or more) freshly ground black pepper

*oven 190C 375F*

Well oil a large shallow ovenproof dish.

Scrub and very finely slice the potatoes. Do not rinse

Finely slice the onion.

Arrange potato slices over the base of the dish. Cover with onion & half the kimchi.

Add another layer of potato and the remaining kimchi. Sprinkle generously with black pepper and a little salt finish with a neat layer of potatoes that slightly overlap.

Heat the stock and pour over the potatoes.

Brush the potato slices with olive oil. Pop in the oven for about an hour or until tender; turn the oven up if necessary to make the top layer crisp and golden brown.

## **Lentil flatbread**

250g leftover lentil dahl

250g spelt flour

1/2 tsp chilli flakes

handful of chopped herbs -coriander, parsley or chives.

olive oil, pinch of salt & twist of black pepper

Place the lentils in a bowl. Add the flour, chilli, herbs, 1 tablespoon olive oil, salt & pepper and mix with enough water to make a dough that holds together. Knead for a minute to create a smooth dough then leave to rest, covered, for 15 minutes.

Divide dough into 6 and shape each into a ball. Dust your table and the balls with flour. Roll each ball into a 6" circle.

Brush a frying pan lightly with oil. Gently heat, then place a flat bread in the pan pressing down well. Cook for 1 minute, then flip over. Brush the surface of the flatbread with oil. Flip again and brush the upper side with oil. Slide onto a plate and repeat with the remaining flatbreads.

## **Rye bread kvass**

*You can prepare the roasted rye bread , over a couple of weeks, whenever you have leftovers and whenever you are using the oven. Store in an airtight container until ready to use.*

1 kilo dark rye bread  
4 litres of chlorine free water  
300 g organic sugar  
3 tablespoons of malted barley syrup  
handful of raisins  
teaspoon coriander seeds  
teaspoon caraway seeds  
A few sprigs of mint (optional)

Cut the rye bread into cubes. If you have a sliced loaf cut each slice in 4. Spread out on a baking sheet and leave for a day to dry. Roast at 180°C until dry and almost burning at the edges.

Pour some of the water into your fermenting container. Add the sugar and malted barley. Stir well to dissolve. Add the toasted bread, raisins, spices and mint and the rest of the water. Cover with a cloth and leave in a warm place away from direct sunlight to ferment for 1 week. Stir daily and make sure that the bread remains under the liquid.

After a week taste for flavour and sparkle. You are looking for a slightly sour taste but with a depth of flavour plus effervescence. You can leave for another week if you feel it needs to develop longer.

When it is ready, strain the solids out, through a strainer lined with cheesecloth. Bottle the kvass into either swing top glass jars or plastic bottles which are potentially safer.

The kvass will continue to ferment and will build up pressure, so use bottles that can handle the carbonation. Pop the lid every few days to release pressure. Store in the fridge. Drink between 3 - 7 days. Serve chilled.



## **Sour dough grissini**

*Sourdough methods often include discarding leaven which is a terrible waste and something to avoid.*

*Unwanted leaven can be used to make crackers, biscuits and these tasty grissini.*

150g discard sourdough starter

250g wholemeal spelt flour

30g olive oil

5 g fine sea salt

teaspoon maple syrup or caster sugar

1 teaspoon dried thyme or 2 teaspoons fresh thyme leaves

salt flakes

1 or 2 oiled baking tray/s

Place all the ingredients except the salt flakes into a bowl.

Add enough water to mix to a dough.

Once the dough is formed, knead a bit just to make it come together with a soft texture.

Form the dough into a ball and place in an oiled bowl.

Cover with a plate and leave in cool place for 30 minutes.

Preheat oven to 350F/180C.

Divide the dough into equally weighted pieces. 30g makes a perfect bread stick.

Roll each piece of dough into a long, thin stick.

Place the grissini onto the prepared trays.

Brush them with olive oil and sprinkle with salt flakes.

Bake in the oven for around 25 minutes or until the grissini are golden and crisp.

Once baked, turn the oven off. Leave the grissini in the oven with the door ajar to dry thoroughly.

Store in air tight container.

## **Ratatouille chutney**

*The taste of summer!*

1k tomatoes, skinned, and roughly chopped

500g onions, peeled and roughly chopped

4 cloves garlic, finely diced

2 chilli, seeded and finely diced

1 tablespoon crushed coriander seeds

1.5k mixture of the following, whatever needs using up:

aubergine cut into 1/2" dice,

any summer squash sliced or diced

peppers (green, yellow or red) cut into 1/2" squares

a handful of any herb you have to hand- thyme, oregano, parsley, chopped

1 dessertspoon salt

16 fl oz apple cider vinegar

500g rapadura sugar

Place everything except the sugar in a stainless steel pan. Gently bring to the boil.

Add the sugar and stir until dissolved.

Reduce the heat and cook for an hour until the chutney is quite thick.

Ladle into sterilised jars and securely fasten.

Store in a cool place for at least a month before using.

Optimal human health comes from eating nutrient dense foods produced and processed in ways that maximise both the quality and quantity of nutrition.

Ecological health is integral to human health. Food grown using nature based, regenerative farming practices, manage sustainably the complex interactions between water, energy and food, thus protecting and enhancing the environment whilst producing nutritious food.

- buy organic food whenever you can
- eat seasonally
- source your food as locally as possible
- join a box scheme
- grow your own (garden, allotment or community garden)
- support food & farming campaigning organisations

## Resources

1 <https://wrap.org.uk/taking-action/food-drink/actions/action-on-food-waste>

2 <https://www.foodfoundation.org.uk/publication/new-data-show-4-million-children-households-affected-food-insecurity>

Daphne Lambert is an eco-nutritionist focusing on the interactions between agriculture, ecology and human nutrition.

Greencuisine Trust works to bring about a transformation in the way we eat. Through practical food experiences the Trust highlights the connections between our well-being, natural resources, the environment, and our planet.



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