DIVE INTO RECYCLING

Reducing Wasted Food

Apple Valley, Burnsville, Eagan and Lakeville

DVR DakotaValley RECYCLING

DakotaValley
RECYCLING

WHAT IS
DAKOTA VALLEY RECYCLING?

Dakota Valley Recycling (DVR) is the shared municipal recycling department for the cities of Apple Valley, Burnsville, Eagan and Lakeville.

The DVR cities are dedicated to preserving their natural resources for current and future residents. Clean air, clean water and sustainable land resources are all necessary for maintaining a healthy community.

DVR helps its cities achieve these goals by administering recycling programs and providing education to residents and businesses.

FOOD TOO GOOD TO WASTE

Food waste, which refers to edible food that is not consumed, is a growing problem with significant financial and environmental impacts. In America right now, we are wasting as much as 40 percent of all food. The good news is that by making small shifts in the way we shop, store, and prepare food, we can reverse the costly food waste trend.

WHY WORRY ABOUT IT?

- The average family of four spends $1,500 per year on food that never gets eaten.
- The processing and production of food that is wasted accounts for 25 percent of all freshwater usage in the United States.
- Food discarded this year could have nourished over 190 million adults.
- 50 percent of land is used to grow food that ultimately gets wasted.
- Food is the number one thing in America's landfills.

RESOURCES

SAVETHEFOOD.COM

1) Save the Food

Savethefood.com is brought to you by the National Resources Defense Council and offers tips on how to reduce wasted food, recipes to use up leftovers, and tips on how to store food in your home.

2) Make Dirt Not Waste

Makedirtnotwaste.org is brought to you by Eureka! Recycling and offers tips on how to prevent wasted food, how to meal plan, and how to compost in your backyard.

Do you have questions about wasted food that this guide did not answer?
Call the Dakota Valley Recycling Hotline at 952-895-4559.

FOOD STORAGE KITCHEN GUIDE

FRUITS

Food	Counter/Room Temp.	Refrigeration
Apples & Pears	Ripen pears on counter, then move to fridge.	Yes: best when stored in fridge away from other produce.
Berries & Grapes	Lasts longer in the fridge.	Yes: best when stored unwashed in an airtight container. Wash when ready to eat.
Tropical Fruits (bananas, avocados...)	Ripen on the counter. Keep bananas on counter away from other produce.	Store ripe pit fruits in the fridge away from other produce. Keep pit in avocado to reduce browning.

MEATS

Food	Counter/Room Temp.	Refrigeration
Meat, Poultry, Fish	Never store these items on counter.	Yes: keep on bottom shelf of fridge where it is coolest.

VEGGIES

Food	Counter/Room Temp.	Refrigeration
Greens (salad and cooking)	Can be stored on counter with stems in cup of cold water.	Yes: best when stored in refrigerator with a damp cloth in an airtight container. Do not wash until ready to use.
Root Vegetables (potatoes, onions)	Best when stored unwashed in cool dark place. Do not store potatoes with onions.	No: unless cut, do not store onions in refrigerator. Fridge is not recommended for potatoes.
Stalk Vegetables (celery, asparagus)	Last longer in the fridge.	Yes: store upright in vase or bowl of water or store in breathable bag in high humidity drawer.
Tomatoes	Best when stored on counter, refrigerate once cut.	No: unless cut, do not store in the refrigerator.
Herbs	Basil should be stored with stems in a vase of water on the counter. Extend freshness by replacing the water daily.	Yes: all herbs, except basil, are best when stored in a breathable bag in the high-humidity drawer of the refrigerator.

FREEZE IT UP

FRUITS

Food	Freeze It	Use It or Revive It
Apples & Pears	Apples can be frozen raw or cooked. Uncooked pears do not freeze well unless placed in sugar syrup.	To prevent apple slices from browning, toss them with one part citrus juice and three parts water.
Berries & Grapes	Rinse, dry, and freeze in single layer on cookie sheet. After freezing, place in airtight bag or container.	Remove any berries showing mold ASAP to prevent others from going bad.
Tropical Fruits (bananas, avocados...)	Bananas freeze best with peel removed in an airtight container.	Browned fruits are great for baking breads, muffins, or cakes.

MEATS

Food	Freeze It	Use It or Revive It
Meat, Poultry, Fish	All meats can be frozen; fresh meat and fish should be tightly double wrapped in plastic wrap.	Freezer burned meats are still safe to eat. Use bones for soup stock. Never eat meat/fish with a sour smell or mold.

USE IT UP

VEGGIES

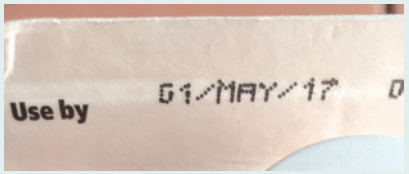
Food	Freeze It	Use It or Revive It
Greens (salad and cooking)	Not recommended. If freezing, blanch first and store in airtight container.	Soak wilted greens in a bowl of ice water for 10 minutes to revive crispness.
Root Vegetables (potatoes, onions)	Can freeze onions but first remove skins and root then chop and freeze raw. Potatoes not recommended.	Sprouted potatoes and onions are still usually good to eat; just cut sprouts off then cook. Scraps can be used to create soup stock.
Stalk Vegetables (celery, asparagus)	Both asparagus and celery should be blanched, placed in ice water, dried, then transferred to an airtight container before freezing.	A quick soak (10-15 min.) can revive crispiness in wilting celery and asparagus.
Tomatoes	Freeze raw or cooked in zip-top freezer bags. You can also freeze tomato products such as salsa and tomato paste.	To ripen green tomatoes quickly, place them in a brown paper bag with a piece of ripe fruit like a banana.
Herbs	Can be frozen in ice cube trays with olive oil or water.	Use fresh herbs to infuse flavor into a bottle of olive or other culinary oil.

DECIPHERING DATES

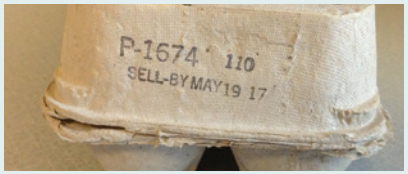
Sell-by, best-by, and use-by date labels are confusing and can lead to needlessly throwing away perfectly good food. With the exception of infant formula, product dating is set by manufacturers to indicate the latest date for peak quality, and are not a measure of food safety. Many foods will still be good to eat days, weeks, or even months after those dates. If it smells, looks, or tastes funny, don't use it.

WHAT THE LABELS ACTUALLY MEAN

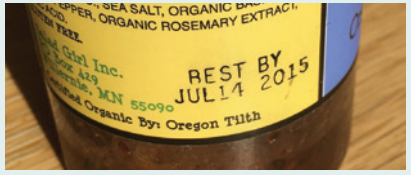
USE BY: Last date that manufacturer guarantees peak quality



SELL BY: Manufacturer date to tell store how long to display the item



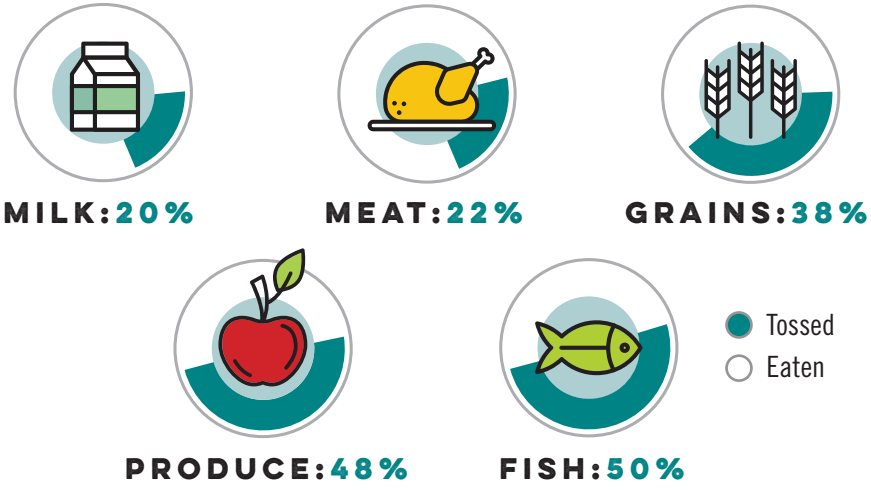
BEST BY: Manufacturer recommendation for optimal flavor



CODED DATE: Packing numbers used by manufacturers to track product for liability reasons

WASTED FOODS

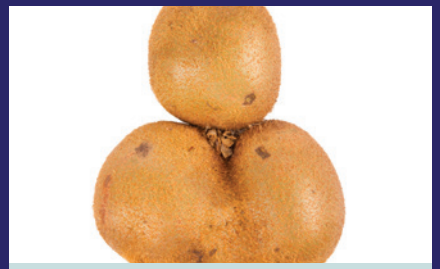
40% OF ALL FOOD IN AMERICA IS WASTED!



WHAT ABOUT COMPOSTING?

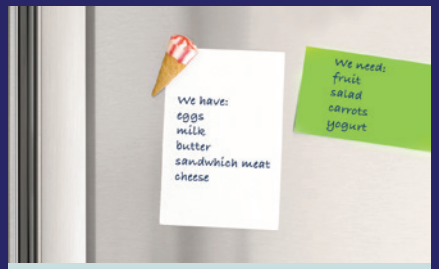
Composting, whether it be in your backyard or at a commercial facility, is a great solution to preventing food scraps such as fruit peels, egg shells, and coffee grounds from going to a landfill. However, **it is not the best solution to the food waste problem**. Instead, it is better to not waste perfectly edible foods in the first place by buying only what you need and storing food correctly. If you have leftovers, try using them up in new recipes or donate whenever possible. Of course, if food has gone bad for any reason, placing it in the compost bin is a better alternative to trash.

FOOD WASTE
PREVENTION TIPS



BUY UGLY

Many stores toss produce for not being the proper shape, color, or size. Buying these perfectly edible foods utilizes food that might otherwise be thrown away.



SHOP SMART

Before shopping, think about what you have first by putting a list of all your current groceries on your fridge. When unpacking groceries, move the older food to the front.

USE IT UP

Store leftovers in clear, microwave-safe containers and put them in the "Eat Me First" area of your fridge.

FREEZE FREELY

Frozen foods remain safe indefinitely and virtually all foods can be frozen. Freezing in portions makes for an easy meal when you don't feel like cooking.

For more tips visit www.SaveTheFood.com.

CHECK OUT OUR OTHER...

DIVE INTO RECYCLING

...BROCHURES TO LEARN MORE ABOUT:

→ **DECLUTTERING**

→ **RECYCLING**

Visit www.DakotaValleyRecycling.org
for more resources such as:

- → Upcoming Collection Events
- → Upcoming Fix-It Clinics
- → Classroom activities and field trip ideas (K-8)
- → Green living and environmental purchasing
- → Recycling at your business

THANK YOU FOR RECYCLING

APPLE VALLEY · BURNSVILLE · EAGAN · LAKEVILLE

DVR

DakotaValley RECYCLING

PARTIALLY FUNDED BY THE
MN POLLUTION CONTROL AGENCY
AND DAKOTA COUNTY.

952.895.4559
DakotaValleyRecycling.org
Twitter.com/DVRecycling

Visit the DVR website for more information about recycling, where to dispose of items, and frequent updates on collection events.

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