



Association pour la santé environnementale du Québec
Environmental Health Association of Québec

ECO-JOURNAL

September 2021

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Eliminate waste and preserve your food!

'Tis the Season

One of the bright spots that came out of the global COVID-19 lockdown was that there was a marked uptick in families dedicating more time to cooking, baking and engaging their children in its chemistry. While the art of cookery is a wonderful inheritance, what is less optimal for our future generations – and our planet itself - is our current output of household food waste.

The published results of the National Zero Waste Council's 2017 Benchmark Study on Household Food Waste (lovefoodhatewaste.ca/about/food-waste) are truly lamentable.

- 63% of discarded food could have been consumed
- for the average Canadian household this tallies up to 140 kilograms of wasted food per year or around \$1,100 in monetary loss
- for all of Canada, it is a staggering 2.2 million tonnes of edible food wasted and a price tag of \$17 billion

Environmental toll of food waste in Canada

With inflation currently on the rise and our weekly grocery bill spiking, we may feel that the cost of food waste is purely economic.

It is graver than that! We are in fact wasting the resources used to grow, produce and distribute that food to consumers. Getting the food from the farm to the table, and then managing landfill and compost has a significant carbon footprint and ballooning effect on greenhouse gasses.

Preventing food from being wasted in the first place is the best sustainable approach and here is how you can help at a grassroots level:



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The shrewd Foodie:

- Be an inventory manager – regularly check what you have in your fridge and cupboards and know your expiration dates
- Shop purposefully: with meals and recipes already planned prior to passing the grocery store threshold
- Learn how produce is best stored to maximize its freshness
- Have a plan while shopping to repurpose perishables into tasty leftovers
- Donate unwanted food to a local food bank that accepts food donations – prior to it spoiling

Share The Warmth

625 Fortune St · (514) 933-5599

Centre Communautaire Restauration Vertical (Banque Alimentaire/Food Bank)

3767 Rue Berri · (514) 750-3946

Mada Community Center

6875 Decarie Blvd · (514) 342-4969

Use your summer and autumn harvest for the winter months:

The art of food preservation for winter has been employed for centuries and every culture has a technique as unique as their cuisine. I, myself relish the memory of my mother tending an enormous cast-iron cauldron on a Coleman stove in our back-yard, as she contrived batches of Brinjal pickle for the next calendar year.

Nowadays preserving food is both a great way to save and savour summer's bounty and purchase sustainably.

Author: Patty Javier Gomez. <https://www.vancouverisawesome.com/courier-archive/living/simple-tips-for-preserving-food-for-winter-2986215>

Freezing

Buy berries and other summer fruits and veggies to freeze for use in the winter. Or make a big batch with seasonal ingredients: soup, chili, curries, poke bowls, etc. and freeze for future consumption. Ensure that you add the date to the container to prioritize usage or prevent freezer burn.



Drying

To make delicious dried foods like tofu, kale and chickpeas just turn your oven on to the lowest temperature and dry out the natural moisture of the produce for future use.

Fermenting

Fermentation raises the levels of “good” bacteria and eliminates the “bad” bacteria. Think sauerkraut from your cabbage, yogurt from your milk, and cured sausage out of meats. Fermenting is easy, and most people already have the equipment to do it, but it’s important to get the process exact to prevent spoilage.

Pickling

Pickling involves immersing foods into a solution of salt, acid such as vinegar, alcohol, or a combination of these agents. You can save spoiling cucumbers for pickles as easily as you can pickle eggs, meats, and other fruits and vegetables.

Bon appetit !