



# Reducing Food Waste

Are you worried about wasting food? Not sure where to start or how food waste can be prevented? A good place to start is right in your own kitchen. Here are a few tips that will help.

## Plan Meals Based on the Foods You Already Have on Hand

- Look in the refrigerator, freezer, and pantry for foods that need to be used up.
- Write a list of ingredients that you still need.
- Buy only the amount of perishable foods that can be eaten or frozen within a few days.

## Master the Shelf Life of Foods

Check the date on food and drink purchases. Did you know that these dates can refer to the products quality and doesn't mean it should be thrown out?

- **"Use by", "Best by", and "Best Before"**
  - Often found on condiments or products that do not need to be refrigerated until opened. Often safe to eat beyond the date listed as long as they were stored properly.
- **"Sell by"**
  - Often on perishable items, such as meat and dairy products. If these foods were stored at safe temperatures, they may be used a week after the date listed.

## Get Creative with Leftovers

Transform leftover veggies and cooked meats into soups, salads, or sandwiches.

- Use as a topping for salads or cooked grains like rice or pasta.
- Wrap in a tortilla or stuff into pita bread.
- Combine to make soup, then enjoy or freeze for future use.
- Eat as a leftover meal later in the week.

## Additional Tips:

- Eat leftovers within 3 to 4 days (or freeze for up to 3 to 4 months.)
- Store foods in the pantry so that products with closer expiration dates are up front.
- Place foods that spoil quickly within sight.
- Wait to wash produce until right before serving.

**Dane County Senior Nutrition Program  
has a food waste rate of less than 1%**



## Medication Use and Nutrition in Older Adults

### Why medications matter for your nutrition

- As we get older, our bodies handle medicine differently.
- Having several health conditions and not eating well can make side effects more likely.

### How medicines can affect your eating and nutrients

- Some drugs can reduce your appetite or change how your body absorbs vitamins and minerals.
- Others can speed up or slow down how your body uses nutrients.

### Mixing multiple medicines (polypharmacy)

- Many older adults take five or more pills each day.
- The more medicines you take, the higher the chance they'll interact with each other—or with the foods you eat.

### Don't forget about supplements

- Herbal or “natural” products can also clash with prescription or over-the-counter drugs.
- Always tell your healthcare team about every vitamin, herb, or supplement you use.

### Watch for dehydration

- Some medications can make you lose more fluids, raising your risk of dehydration.

### Work as a team

- Doctors, pharmacists, and dietitians should all check your medicines and eating plan together.
- Regular reviews help catch problems early and keep you healthy.

**Remember:** Always talk with your healthcare providers about all the medicines and supplements you take, and ask how they might affect your nutrition.

## Why visit the farmers Market?

- Support Local Growers
- Seasonal Variety
- Community Connection
- Healthy Outing

## Farmers Market Tips

### Shop Early

Arrive when stalls first open to find the freshest produce and have first choice of seasonal items.

### Come Prepared

Bring a list of what you'd like to get. Remember cash or your Farmers' Market voucher if you have one.

### Talk to Farmers

Ask how items were grown or raised, how to pick the ripest produce, and for simple recipe ideas.

### Compare Prices

Some vendors sell by weight, others by the basket. Do a quick walk through to see which stand offers the best deal for you.

### Stay Comfortable and Safe

Wear sturdy, supportive shoes and bring a hat, apply sunscreen, or bring an umbrella for sun protection.

Carry a reuseable tote or small cart to avoid overloading your arms.

### Keep Hydrated and Bring a Snack

Bring a water bottle to sip as you walk, and pack a small snack, like nuts or fruit to keep your energy up.

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<https://www.dcdhs.com/Disability-and-Aging/Senior-Services/Senior-Nutrition-Program>