

ONTARIO FOOD COLLABORATIVE

# SUSTAINABLE SOLUTIONS FOR FOOD WASTE



A COMMUNICATIONS HANDBOOK FOR  
ONTARIO MUNICIPALITIES AND PUBLIC  
HEALTH LEADERS

# INTRODUCTION



This communications handbook serves as a resource for municipalities and public health units to help develop and implement food waste prevention education for residents, clients, and staff.

## Objectives of the Handbook

This **Sustainable Solutions For Food Waste** guide has been developed to:

- Provide an adaptable resource for municipalities and public health units to create program-specific communications for reducing avoidable food waste.
- Promote awareness and encourage community participation in waste reduction efforts.
- Support municipalities in their organics diversion and recovery programs.

## Target Audiences

Municipalities and Public Health Units have two core audiences: internal and external. This guidance document focuses on two specific target groups:

- Internal staff of municipalities and public health units; and
- Residents and community partners.

# WHY FOOD WASTE?

Each year in Canada, a significant portion of the food we produce is never consumed. **This is beyond simply discarding food; it represents a loss of energy, resources, water, soil, and nutrients while contributing to greenhouse gas emissions** (OFC, 2019).

Research indicates 51% of discarded food in Canada is generated in households, with the average Canadian household wasting up to \$1,500 worth of food annually (Provision Coalition, 2014). Most of this waste consists of nutritious items, such as fruits and vegetables.

Reducing food waste offers numerous benefits. Economically, it saves households money by encouraging them to purchase less or consume what they already have rather than discarding it. Environmentally, it helps create a sustainable environment by diverting materials from landfills. Since landfill space is limited, minimizing disposed organics maximizes its use and benefits. Additionally, diverting organics from landfills reduces methane emissions from anaerobic decomposition, which is beneficial for the climate.



**REDUCE FOOD WASTE IN LANDFILLS BY USING YOUR GREEN BIN OR BACKYARD COMPOSTER.  
BUT THE BEST STRATEGY?**

**STOP WASTE BEFORE IT STARTS!**

In Ontario, the Provincial Government introduced its **Food and Organic Waste Policy Statement** (2018), which directs municipalities and other stakeholders to prevent and reduce food and organic waste at each stage of the food supply chain, including the production, distribution, consumption, and organic waste management. This policy sets reduction targets that took into effect in 2023 for large municipalities and will begin in 2025 for smaller municipalities and the industrial, commercial, and institutional sectors (i.e., schools, restaurants, hotels, hospitals). This regulatory requirement has encouraged municipalities and other stakeholders to plan for food waste prevention messaging as part of implementing organics recovery programs to meet the province's targets.



## Food Waste Reduction Communication Goals and Objectives

### Goals

- Raise awareness about food waste and the benefits of reducing it.
- Increase participation in municipal green bin/organics program.

### Objectives

- Introduce and explain the benefits of meal planning to residents.
- Communicate the advantages of organics waste reduction to municipal and public health staff.
- Encourage residents to participate in their municipality's green bin/organics collection program.
- Support municipalities in meeting their waste diversion targets through residential diversion and organics disposal.

### Foundational Messaging

Below are recommended foundational messages on food waste reduction that municipalities or public health units can use as-is or customize based on their audience demographics:

- Creating and following a grocery list can help reduce excess food brought home and save money.
- Buying in bulk may lead to overbuying and increased food waste.
- Properly storing food in your fridge and freezer can extend the shelf life of groceries and reduce food waste.
- Organizing your cupboards and fridge can improve food visibility and prevent spoilage.
- Donating unused food items from your pantry that are still in good condition to local organizations can contribute to healthy communities. Look to see what your local organizations are asking for in food donations.
- Canning and preserving seasonal food help to extend its shelf life and increases your access to nutritional foods.
- Composting food scraps at home or using municipal green bin/organics programs reduces the amount of organic waste sent to the landfill.
- Buying food with third-party sustainability certifications contributes to sustainable purchasing. [See Section 5; Eco-labels link]
- Growing your own produce (in a garden, or on a balcony) can increase food security, and shopping locally and seasonally, when possible, can increase your positive impact on the environment.



# SAMPLE COMMUNICATIONS

What we want specific audiences  
and stakeholders to know and  
understand



## Benefits of Reducing Food Waste

**Reducing food waste offers several benefits, including environmental, economic, and social advantages.**

When food is wasted, so is the energy and water used to grow, harvest, transport, and package it. Reducing food waste decreases methane emissions from landfills and improves management of energy and resources, lowering greenhouse gas emissions at each stage of the supply chain (e.g., growing, manufacturing, transporting, selling, and purchasing food). It also helps to mitigate climate change by conserving resources such as land, water, labour, and energy.

Economically, reducing food waste can result in cost savings through more efficient handling, preparation, and storage of food. Consumers also save money by buying only the amount of food they need.

Socially, donating excess healthy food to organizations and communities can provide short-term relief. However, effectively addressing the complex challenge of food insecurity requires stronger and more equitable government policies to tackle its root causes.



## SUPPLEMENTARY RESOURCES

<https://nzwc.ca/Documents/NZWC-FoodLossWasteStrategy-EN.pdf>

<https://proof.utoronto.ca/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/Household-Food-Insecurity-in-Canada-2021-PROOF.pdf>

<https://www.epa.gov/recycle/preventing-wasted-food-home>

<https://www.hsph.harvard.edu/nutritionsource/sustainability/food-waste/>

<https://www.wri.org/insights/reducing-food-loss-and-food-waste>

<https://www.usda.gov/foodlossandwaste/why>

## Understanding Food Waste

### Avoidable vs Unavoidable Food Waste

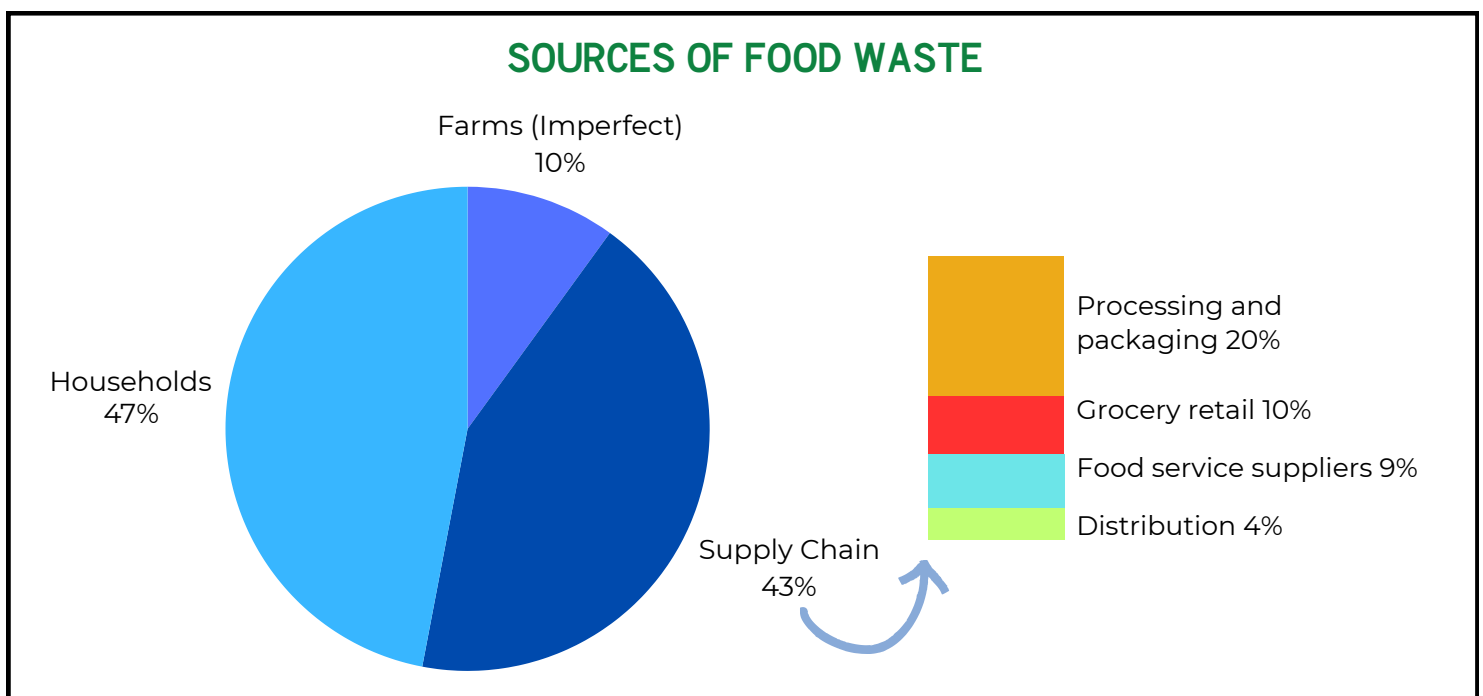
**Avoidable** (Edible) refers to food that could have been consumed but was thrown out, such as fruits and vegetables (spoiled or in perfect condition) or half-eaten meals and leftovers.

**Unavoidable** (Inedible) refers to food parts that cannot be eaten or are typically not consumed, such as peels, apple cores, eggshells, and meat or fish bones.



### Understanding Food Waste and Its Environmental Impacts

In Canada, 396 kilograms (equivalent size of a full-grown horse) of discarded food is generated per person each year, and 31 per cent consisting of fruits and vegetables. On average, households account for 47 per cent of food waste in the supply chain, but the issue persists throughout the entire food system, from farm to fork. Studies show that 10 per cent occurs on farms due to cosmetic imperfections and low market demand. The remaining 43 per cent is generated across the food chain, including processing and packaging (20 per cent), grocery retail (10 per cent), food service suppliers, such as restaurants (9 per cent), and distribution (4 per cent).



## Understanding Food Waste continued



Organic waste placed in the garbage stream goes into landfill, where it can cause several environmental problems. As food waste decomposes without oxygen (anaerobically), it emits methane, a greenhouse gas that is 25 times more potent than carbon dioxide in contributing to climate change. It also contributes to leachate (liquid pollution from the landfill) which is harmful to the ecosystem. Wasting food also means the natural and human resources invested in its production, including water, soil, fossil fuels, and the labour of farmers, is not utilized to its full potential.

This highlights the importance of reducing food waste whenever possible. Since a significant portion of organic waste originates from households, municipalities should focus on awareness campaigns and promote the use of green bins and backyard composters. Routinely composting or placing organic waste in green bins ensures this valuable material is kept out of the landfill, and can be turned into compost at a processing facility. In mere weeks, your food scraps can become nutrient-rich compost to be applied back to the land to grow the food we eat.



## SUPPLEMENTARY RESOURCES

<https://lovefoodhatewaste.ca/about/food-waste/>

[https://www.torontomu.ca/content/dam/social-innovation/Tools-Resources/FromFarmtoFork\\_ReportandBibliography\\_RU.pdf](https://www.torontomu.ca/content/dam/social-innovation/Tools-Resources/FromFarmtoFork_ReportandBibliography_RU.pdf)





## Assessing Food Waste

### Why Conduct a Food Waste Audit?

Audits are often the first step in implementing a reduction program. They provide valuable insights and establish a baseline for measuring how much divertible material is captured in curbside programs, food waste diversion rates, and common sorting mistakes. Trends and seasonal variations in the audit results help to identify opportunities for improvement. The Ontario Food Collaborative has developed a comprehensive Audit Guide for municipalities to use at their facilities, which is available on our website [here](#). However, for residents, a shorter and more user-friendly guide is recommended. See the Resources section below for suggestions.

Insights from these audits can help create a “food waste profile”, which summarizes a household’s diversion performance. This profile tracks changes in the quantity and composition of discarded food over time, helping to identify specific actions for waste reduction. For example, targeted communications about grocery shopping tips or food storage practices can assist families in minimizing waste.

Additionally, these audits can quantify the monetary value of wasted food or estimate its impact on regional greenhouse gas emissions. These metrics are valuable for highlighting the importance of waste prevention to residents, eliciting an emotional response, and promoting behavioural change.

### Planning a Home Food Waste Audit

Planning and conducting a food waste audit at home can be broken down into five steps:

- Prepare for the Audit: pen & paper or smartphone, dedicated bin, decide on a timeframe.
- Collect Food Waste: separate food waste from other materials.
- Track and Record: record the type and amount and why it was discarded.
- Analyze the Results: identify the patterns, ask questions.
- Plan for Improvement: based on findings, what adjustments will your household make.

# COMMUNICATIONS

## Assessing Food Waste continued

Helpful online resources are available to guide residents through each step of planning and conducting audits. These resources provide guidance on key parameters and metrics for assessing food waste, such as estimating, categorizing, and capturing data. The specific metrics used may vary depending on the goals of the household audit.

Online guides also offer sample data sheets and calculations to support the analysis of household audit results and important considerations when interpreting findings. Some useful resources include:

- [The Crooked Carrot: How to Conduct a Food Waste Audit](#)
- [We Don't Waste: At-Home Food Waste Audit](#)
- [World Wildlife Fund: Be a Food Waste Warrior](#)
- [Second Harvest \(2021\) Guide to Food Waste Audits \(YouTube\)](#)

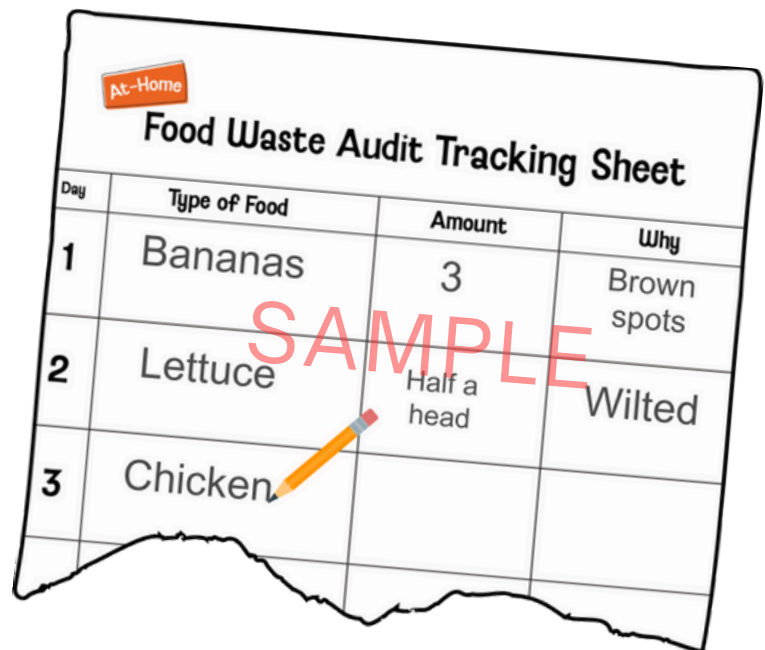
1 Prepare for the Audit

2 Collect Food Waste

3 Track and Record

4 Analyze the Results

5 Plan for Improvement



At-Home  
Food Waste Audit Tracking Sheet

| Day | Type of Food | Amount      | Why         |
|-----|--------------|-------------|-------------|
| 1   | Bananas      | 3           | Brown spots |
| 2   | Lettuce      | Half a head | Wilted      |
| 3   | Chicken      |             |             |
|     |              |             |             |
|     |              |             |             |

## Meal Planning

Meal planning involves creating a weekly meal plan and shopping list, which helps households reduce the purchase of excess food. By planning meals in advance, households can avoid overbuying, preparing too much, or letting items spoil. Overbuying and cooking in excess often lead to waste when food is not fully used up.



For highly perishable items, buying only what is needed can prevent spoilage (e.g., purchasing a bunch of spinach without a plan may result in waste). For less perishable items, such as root vegetables, dry staples, or bread, proper storage to extend shelf life can also minimize waste. Additionally, making more frequent grocery trips to buy only a few items at a time, when feasible, can prevent overbuying and overspending on perishable items like fruits and vegetables.

### Meal Planning Resources:

- [Printable meal planner from York Region](#)
- [Tips for meal planning](#)
- [Visit OFC's website for additional food planning resources](#)
- [Canada's Food Guide](#)





## Smart Shopping

Reducing food waste and making healthy food choices begins before you even enter the grocery store. Smart shopping includes purchasing food that is certified as sustainable, shopping locally and seasonally when possible, and using food apps like Too Good To Go, and Flashfood. Choosing imperfect produce or foods to be eaten right away (i.e., bananas just starting to brown), sometimes available at a discount, can also help reduce surplus food from being thrown away.

### Sustainable Food Certifications

When buying canned or fresh goods, look for items with sustainability certifications to help reduce the environmental impact of your grocery shopping. Not all third-party certifications use the same criteria for rating products, so it's important to research and identify which aspects of sustainability matter most to you.

Consider these certifications:

- [Fair Trade](#)
- [Rainforest Alliance](#)
- [Ocean Wise Seafood](#)
- [Foodland Ontario](#)
- [100KM Foods](#)



### Shopping Locally and Seasonally

You don't need to live near a farm or a farmers' market to shop locally and in-season. Many grocery stores offer produce from local farmers, and finding out what is in season is as easy as visiting websites like [Canadian Food Focus](#) and [Foodland Ontario](#).

Shopping locally and seasonally supports the key pillars of sustainability—society, environment and economy. By purchasing locally sourced goods, consumers can support their community's economy, agricultural workers, and a sustainable development.



## Smart Shopping continued

### Food Shopping Apps

Ever wonder what happens to grocery store produce that isn't good enough to sell or bakery goods left at the end of the day? Or what about surplus items from restaurants? There's an app for that!

Apps like [Too Good To Go](#) and [Flashfood](#) allow users to purchase imperfect produce and day-old items at a discount. Incorporating these apps into your meal planning and grocery shopping can help save money and reduce unnecessary food waste.

NEW APPS ARE CONTINUALLY  
BEING DEVELOPED, SO CHECK  
WHICH ONES ARE POPULAR IN  
YOUR COMMUNITY



## Storage and Prevention

Proper food storage and preservation are effective but often overlooked strategies for reducing food waste. Correctly organizing food in fridges and cupboards, along with using preservation techniques like canning, can greatly cut back on waste. One helpful approach is to follow the FIFO (First In, First Out) principle, which involves placing newly purchased items at the back of the cupboard to ensure that older items are used first.



### HOW TO STORE FOOD IN YOUR FRIDGE

#### Temperature

- Keep the fridge at 4 degrees Celsius or below to slow bacteria growth.
- Upper shelves maintain a cool temperature.
- Lower shelves are the coldest part of the fridge.
- The fridge door is the warmest part.
- Avoid overstocking the fridge; proper airflow is needed for efficient operation.
- Keep the freezer at minus 18 degrees Celsius.

#### Freezer

- Prevent ice build-up.
- Avoid overstocking.
- Freeze leftovers instead of discarding them.

#### Fridge Door

- The door is the warmest part of the fridge. Store the least perishable items, like condiments here.
- While some fridge doors have a section for eggs, it's best to keep them on the upper shelves for optimal freshness.



#### Upper Shelves

- Store leftovers, beverages, prepared foods, and other low-risk items on the higher shelves, where the temperature is slightly warmer.

#### Lower Shelves

- Place high-risk foods like meat, poultry, and fish on the bottom shelf, as it's the coldest part of the fridge.

#### Crisper Drawers

- Set one drawer to high humidity for vegetables that wilt, like leafy greens, broccoli, and celery.
- Set the other drawer to low humidity for most fruits and vegetables that tend to rot, like mushrooms.



## Cooking and Preparation

A significant amount of food is wasted due to cooking too much or not using all ingredients during preparation. Leftovers are often forgotten or discarded when they can be consumed before purchasing new groceries. To minimize food waste, households can plan for zero-waste recipes and take inventory of leftovers before grocery shopping and cooking. Search leftover recipes and tips below:



### Best Before vs. Expiry Dates

A “**best before**” date indicates the period during which an unopened food product, when stored under appropriate conditions, is expected to retain its **freshness, taste, and nutritional value**. It does not guarantee product safety but provides information on the product’s potential shelf life. Foods may still be safe to eat after the “best before” date if there are no signs of spoilage, such as an off smell or visible decay. Use your judgement to assess freshness and safety.

**Expiry dates** are only required for specific products, including infant formulas, meal replacements, formulated liquid diets (used for oral or tube feeding), and nutritional supplements. After the expiry date, these products may no longer provide the nutrient content stated on the label and should not be consumed, bought, or sold. Such products should be discarded if their expiration date has passed.

### SUPPLEMENTARY RESOURCES

<https://inspection.canada.ca/en/food-labels/labelling/consumers/understanding-date-labels-your-food>

## Recovery and Composting

### Understanding Food Recovery

Have you ever heard of the term “food recovery”? Also known as food rescue, food recovery involves saving and redistributing edible food that would otherwise go to waste. This practice helps prevent unnecessary waste and addresses food insecurity by providing food to those in need.

Extra food and organic waste can be hard to avoid, especially at events. When planning events and parties, consider what can be done with surplus food. Food recovery organizations like [Second Harvest](#) offer resources and training to help integrate food recovery into event planning. You can also ask guests to bring empty containers to take home any leftover food.





## Recovery and Composting continued

### Composting

When food is no longer edible, it can be composted through backyard composting or the municipal organics program. Composting organic waste keeps it out of the landfill and helps to recover the value.



### Backyard and In Home Composting

Composting doesn't require much space—just the right technique! While not difficult, successful composting does require some basic knowledge to produce high-quality compost. Backyard composting is a great way to recycle food waste into nutrient-rich soil for gardening. For those with limited space, in-home composting techniques such as countertop composting and vermicomposting are ideal. Countertop composting suits small spaces, though it requires purchasing a small appliance, with several options available on the market. Vermicomposting involves using earthworms in small to medium-sized containers to break down organic waste into compost.

There are many organizations that provide easy-to-follow resources to help you start composting at home.

- [Compost Council of Canada](#)
- [US EPA Composting at Home](#)
- [Backyard Composting Basics: A Cheat Sheet](#)

### Municipal Organics Programs

Participating in a municipal organics program is as simple as obtaining the correct container and getting started! Many municipalities offer Green Bin programs for residents, and some extend these services to businesses. Visit your municipality's website to learn more about their organic recycling programs.



## Additional Resources

To learn more about strategies for reducing and diverting food waste in your municipality, business, or household, please refer to the following resources:

### For Municipalities

- [Food Waste Audit Guide](#) by the Ontario Food Collaborative (2019)
- [Why and How to Measure Food Loss and Waste](#) by the Ontario Food Collaborative (2019)
- [Reducing Household Food Waste: A Municipal-Regional Toolkit](#) by Sustain Ontario (2016)
- [A Food Loss and Waste Strategy for Canada](#) by the National Zero Waste Council (2018)
- C40 Knowledge Hub: [How Cities Can Reduce Municipal Food Waste](#) (2021)
- Government of Ontario [Food and Organic Waste Policy Statement](#) (2018)

### For Businesses

- [A Toolkit for Communicating Food Waste to Guests](#) by World Wildlife Fund (2016)

### For Student and Educators

- [Food Matters Action Kit](#) by the Commission for Environmental Cooperation (2019)
- [Food Matters Action Kit – Activity Guide](#) by the Commission for Environmental Cooperation (2019)
- [Zero Waste Education Toolkit: A Resource for B.C. First Nations Elementary School Teachers](#) by the Indigenous Zero Waste Technical Advisory Group (2018)

# COMMUNICATION TACTICS & APPENDICIES



# COMMUNICATION TACTICS

## Proposed tactics

*\*See Appendix for sample content of the following:*

- External newsletters to residents
- Promotional materials (e.g., door hangers, mailers)
- Posters for events
- Kid-friendly activity page



Additional Tactics to Consider for Municipal Communication Plans:

- Social media
- Newspaper and radio ads
- Editorials
- Presentation slides
- Videos
- Transit station/stop ads
- School-based activities
- Swag items (e.g., magnets, totes), with consideration of potential waste



# APPENDIX I

## Sample Content for Communication Tactics

### NEWSLETTERS

**Topic:** [Understanding Food Waste](#) (Section 2)

**Intended Audience:** Municipal Residents

Content:

What is Avoidable and Unavoidable Food Waste?

Avoidable food waste refers to any food that could have been consumed but was discarded instead. This typically includes edible foods such as fruits and vegetables.

Unavoidable food waste includes food scraps that are generally not eaten, such as fruit and vegetable peels, bones, eggshells, apple cores, coffee grounds.

Food waste is a significant issue throughout the supply chain, from production to disposal, and has negative environmental impacts at every stage. Learn more about it here [[https://www.torontomu.ca/content/dam/social-innovation/Tools-Resources/FromFarmtoFork\\_ReportandBibliography\\_RU.pdf](https://www.torontomu.ca/content/dam/social-innovation/Tools-Resources/FromFarmtoFork_ReportandBibliography_RU.pdf)].

**Topic:** [Storage and Preservation](#) (Section 6)

**Intended Audience:** Municipal Residents

Content:

Follow these tips to keep your groceries fresh by properly organizing your fridge:

- Keep the fridge at 4 degrees Celsius or below to slow bacteria growth.
- Prevent ice build-up in the freezer.
- Store leftovers, beverages, prepared foods, and other low-risk items on higher shelves, where the temperature is slightly warmer.
- Place high-risk foods like meat, poultry, and fish on the bottom shelf, as it's the coldest part of the fridge.
- Set one drawer to high humidity for vegetables that wilt, like leafy greens and celery.
- Set one drawer to low humidity for most vegetables that tend to rot, like mushrooms.
- Store condiments and less perishable items on the fridge door, and keep eggs on an upper shelf for optimal freshness.

# APPENDIX I

## Sample Content for Communication Tactics

### NEWSLETTERS CONTINUED

**Topic:** [Cooking and Preparation](#) (Section 7)

**Intended Audience:** Municipal Residents

Content:

Option 1

Significant amounts of food go to waste due to overcooking or not using all ingredients during meal preparation. Leftovers are often forgotten or discarded when they can be used before buying new groceries. Households can plan for zero-waste recipes and take inventory of leftovers before grocery shopping and cooking.

Check out the resources below to help you create zero-waste recipes!

- [‘Love Food Hate Waste’](#)
- [Creative Use of Leftovers](#)
- [Ontario Food Collaborative](#)

Option 2

What’s the Difference Between “Best Before” and “Expiry Dates”?

A “best-before” date indicates how long an unopened food product, when stored correctly, is expected to retain its freshness, taste, and nutritional value.

Expiry dates are only required on four types of food:

- Infant formulas
- Meal replacement
- Formulated liquid diets (used for oral or tube feeding)
- Nutritional supplements

After the expiration date, the food may no longer have the nutritional content claimed on the label. Food should not be bought, sold, or consumed if the expiration date has passed—it should be discarded.

# APPENDIX I

## Sample Content for Communication Tactics

### PROMOTIONAL MATERIALS – DOOR HANGERS

**Topic:** Meal Planning (Section 4)

**Intended Audience:** Municipal Residents

Content:

[Heading] Reduce Food Waste with Smart Food Planning!

Are you tired of food going to waste and overspending on groceries? Here are some simple tips to help you plan better and waste less.

[Subheading] Do Your Part!

1. Create a Weekly Meal Plan: Plan your meals for the week ahead to buy only what you need.
2. Make a Shopping List: Write down the ingredients you need for your planned meals. Stick to this list to avoid impulse purchases.
3. Cook Just Enough: Prepare only the amount needed for your meals to prevent leftovers from going uneaten. Love your leftovers! For example, cooking rice for two meals makes it easy to use leftovers for a stir fry the next night.
4. Shop Smart: Make more frequent trips to the store for fresh items to minimize spoilage and enjoy foods while they're freshest.

Let's work together to save money, reduce waste, and enjoy delicious meals!

For more information or assistance, visit Take Action on Food Waste – Ontario Food Collaborative [Provide website address or create a QR Code] or contact your local municipality or public health unit [Insert Municipal/Public Health Contact Information].

Thank you for being a part of our community and contributing to a sustainable future through mindful food planning!

# APPENDIX I

## Sample Content for Communication Tactics

### PROMOTIONAL MATERIALS – MAILERS

**Topic:** Smart Shopping (Section 5)

**Intended Audience:** Municipal Residents

Content:

[Heading] Smart Shopping Tips for Sustainable Food Choices

Making informed and sustainable food choices is crucial to reducing food waste and promoting a healthier lifestyle. Here are some effective tips to help you shop smarter and support a more sustainable food system:

**Sustainable Food Certifications** — When choosing canned or fresh goods, look for items with sustainability certifications like Fair Trade, Rainforest Alliance, Ocean Wise Seafood, Foodland Ontario, or 100KM Foods. These certifications indicate that the products meet specific sustainability standards, helping to reduce the environmental impact of your purchases.

**Shopping Local and In Season** — Supporting local farmers and choosing in-season produce can significantly benefit both the environment and your community. Even if you don't live near a farm or farmers' market, many grocery stores carry locally sourced products. Visit websites like Canadian Food Focus to learn what's in season and make choices that support sustainability—considering society, the environment, and the economy.

**Food Shopping Apps** — Try apps like Too Good To Go and Flashfood to rescue imperfect produce, day-old bakery items, or surplus goods from local businesses. These apps help you save money and reduce food waste by giving these items a second chance before they end up in the trash.

By incorporating these tips into your shopping routine, you can help create a more sustainable food system while making healthier choices for yourself and the planet. Let's shop smart and make a positive impact together!

For more information or assistance, visit Take Action on Food Waste – Ontario Food Collaborative [Provide website address or create a QR Code] or contact your local municipality or public health unit [Insert Municipal/Public Health Contact Information].



# APPENDIX I

## Sample Content for Communication Tactics

### POSTER FOR EVENTS

**Topic:** *Assessing Food Waste* (Section 3)

**Intended Audience:** Municipal Residents

[Heading] At-Home Food Waste Audit Guide: Simple Steps and Tips

An at-home food waste audit is a great way to understand how much food your household is wasting and find ways to reduce it. By following these simple steps, you can make a positive impact on your wallet, your household, and the environment.

[Subheading] Why Conduct a Food Waste Audit?

By conducting a food waste audit and making small changes in your family's daily habits, you can significantly reduce your household's food waste and contribute to a more sustainable community.

Steps for Conducting a Food Waste Audit:

- Prepare for the Audit: pen & paper or smartphone, dedicated bin, decide on a timeframe.
- Collect Food Waste: separate food scraps from other trash.
- Track and Record: record the type and amount and why it was discarded.
- Analyze the Results: identify the patterns, ask questions.
- Plan for Improvement: based on findings, what adjustments will your household make.

Benefits of a Food Waste Audit:

- Save Money
- Reduce Environmental Impact
- Improve Household Habits

# APPENDIX I

## Sample Content for Communication Tactics

### KID-FRIENDLY ACTIVITY PAGE

**Topics:** Understanding Food Waste (Section 2)

**Intended Audience:** Municipal Residents – Kids Aged 7 to 12

Content:

Did you know that when we waste food, we're also wasting all the energy and water used to grow it, and transport it? [Suggested images: Sun and rain]

What is Food Waste?

Food waste is when we throw away food that could still be eaten or used. There are two types: avoidable and unavoidable.

Avoidable means the food that we could have eaten but didn't, like fruits and vegetables that go bad before we eat them. [Suggested images: Overripe banana and wilted lettuce]

Unavoidable means things like peels, apple cores, and eggshells that we don't usually eat. [Suggested images: Eggshells and apple cores]

Fun Fact: Did you know that in Canada, each person creates about 396 kilograms of food waste every year? That's the size of a llama! [Suggested image: Llama]

Food waste doesn't just happen at home; it also happens at grocery stores and farms. When avoidable and unavoidable waste ends up in landfills, it produces harmful gases like methane, which can hurt the environment.

How Can I Help?

By using food wisely, and reducing waste, we can help protect our environment and make sure there's enough food for everyone. It's like being a superhero for the planet!

# APPENDIX I

## Sample Content for Communication Tactics

### KID-FRIENDLY ACTIVITY PAGE CONTINUED

Word Search Activity - Find these words:

Climate  
Local  
Fruit  
Food

Compost  
Edible  
Landfill  
Reduce

Sustainable  
Vegetable  
Waste

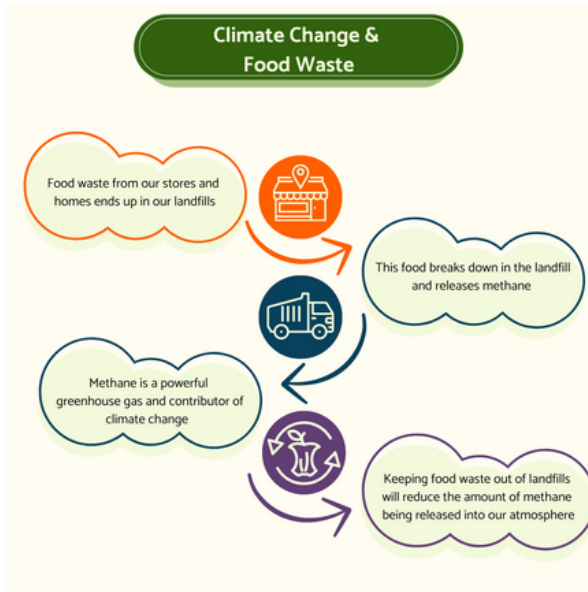
W C R N W J G N U N U L K K D  
W H F E T A M I L C O O E D Y  
C T N C Z J M U F E Z C G I W  
F D F R G J J U G A B A N I S  
D L O D L W F R U I T L S U C  
C E O V A L O R B T D T S F N  
T X D S E B I P F E R T I S S  
S Z T F W G T F C Y A J Q C D  
O E L B I D E U D I N F J P A  
P X P F J X D T N N V E L N P  
M A G L K E U A A J A R I J G  
O J H J R F B A V B Q L T F W  
C H I E L L W D W O L K V F R  
P B M D E W P X L F R E L F K  
W Z W T X R I F D W F Q D K T

# APPENDIX II

## Library of Images and Graphics

A selection of generic/non-branded images based on the topics and themes from the handbook.

### SECTION 2 – UNDERSTANDING FOOD WASTE



[DOWNLOAD FILE](#)

[DOWNLOAD FILE – WHITE BACKGROUND](#)

[DOWNLOAD FILE – TRANSPARENT BACKGROUND](#)



[DOWNLOAD FILE](#)

[DOWNLOAD FILE – WHITE BACKGROUND](#)

[DOWNLOAD FILE – TRANSPARENT BACKGROUND](#)

# APPENDIX II

## Library of Images and Graphics

A selection of generic/non-branded images based on the topics and themes from the handbook.

### SECTION 4 – MEAL PLANNING

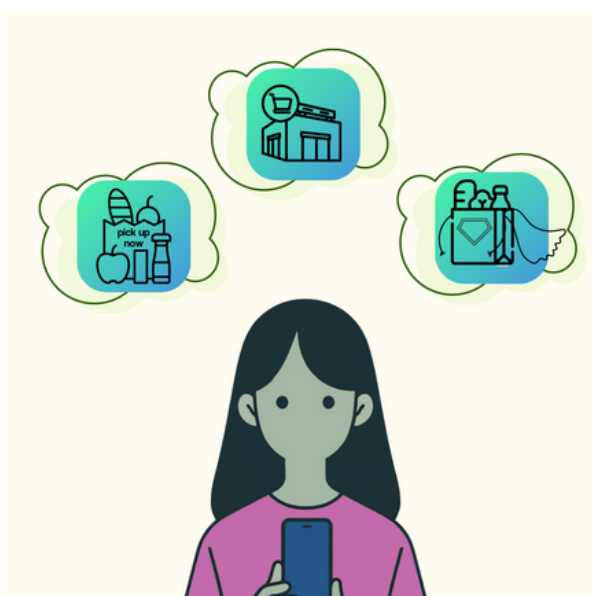


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### SECTION 5 – SMART SHOPPING



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# APPENDIX II

## Library of Images and Graphics

A selection of generic/non-branded images based on the topics and themes from the handbook.

### SECTION 7 – COOKING AND PREPARATION



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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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We'd love to hear your thoughts! If you found this guide helpful or have any feedback, feel free to email us at [ofc@ontariofoodcollaborative.ca](mailto:ofc@ontariofoodcollaborative.ca)

