



## Food Waste Prevention

Preventing food waste at home can reduce the need for grocery store visits and help families save money from buying less food.

### How much food is wasted in Hawai'i?

More than a quarter (26%) of the available food in Hawai'i is discarded each year.

Researchers estimate that one person in Hawai'i discards about 356 pounds of food each year at a cost of \$698 (Loke and Leung, 2015).

### Why should families prevent food waste?

Food waste prevention can save families money from buying less food while helping the environment. Food waste in landfills releases methane gas, which contributes to climate change. Food waste prevention also conserves the resources used to grow, process, and move food and food waste.

### Why do people waste food?

Families have limited time and may not plan or manage meal purchase, storage, and reuse to reduce waste (Aschemann-Witzel et al., 2015). Consumers may buy or cook too much food or misunderstand date labels.

### Commonly Wasted Foods in Hawai'i

For consumers, food waste is highest in:



- seafood protein (30.9%)
- grain rice (28.9%)
- fresh fruits (22.9%)
- fresh vegetables (22.7%)

Source: Loke and Leung, 2015

### How can families prevent food waste at home?

#### Smart Shopping

- Before going to the store, take inventory of your existing food, and make a meal plan and shopping list.
- Only buy what you need - avoid impulse purchases or hoarding.
- If you often waste fresh fruits or vegetables, try switching to frozen.

#### Smart Prep

- Prepare fresh food when you return from the store.

#### Smart Storage

- Learn to store different foods so they last longer.
- Use clear airtight containers for food storage.

#### Smart Saving

- Keep the fridge and freezer clean so food stays visible.
- Make an "eat first" fridge zone for food that will spoil.

### What can families do with food waste?

- Making a worm bin is an easy way to use food waste to create nutrient-rich compost in a small space.
- Pig farmers may accept food waste to use as feed.
- Leftovers can be shared with friends and neighbors by dropping off food at the doorstep, then texting or calling the person to let them know to bring it inside.

#### References

- Aschemann-Witzel et al. (2015). Consumer-Related Food Waste: Causes and Potential for Action. *Sustainability*. 7:6457-6477.
- Loke, M.K. and P.S. Leung. (2015). Quantifying food waste in Hawai'i's food supply chain. *Waste Management and Research*. 33(12):1076-1083.
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Food: Too Good To Waste. Available at <http://www.endfoodwaste.org/food-too-good-to-waste-by-the-epa.html>

