



Chapter 19

Save Food Share Food

Answer a simple question: When is the food best? Only answer to this is, it is best when it's on our plate, ready to be eaten. Of course it's good in your pantry too, ready to be used. And it is at its worst when it is thrown in the bin, or in other words WASTED.

Let's not kid ourselves. Food is being wasted at an alarming rate. Along with the grocery stores and restaurants, we - consumers - are the largest source contributing to the wastage. By wastage we mean the last few bites from your plate that you couldn't / or didn't want to finish, or your bread crusts, all the stuff that could have been transformed into food.

On a personal level food wastage costs labor, resources, time and at the end of day a lot of money too, besides impacting the planet in a negative way. Yes, saving food does just save you money, but affects the bigger picture, too. How? Well, reducing food waste is good for the planet, as it helps slow down global warming. That is because organic materials, like food scraps are broken down by bacteria to produce methane.

Methane is a potent greenhouse gas and it has a warming potential of 21 times that of carbon dioxide. That is why it will be a huge help if we can reduce methane emissions - and saving food (and not wasting it) will play an important part in helping reduce methane emissions and combating global climate change.

Wasted food equates with wasted resources. All the water, energy, seeds etc. used to grow, and ensure that the food reaches us are wasted when we waste food.

Save and Share Food

Live by the mantra - my food's not rubbish. There are endless ways you can reduce, reuse and recycle your food waste - just follow this simple rule of JUST not waste even a scrap of food. Some simple ways:

Shop Smart:

Only buy as much as you need. Chuck the greed. Make a point to use up all the food you purchased during the last trip to the market before buying more groceries.

Store Right:

Wrong storage leads to a massive amount of food waste. When you store food correctly, it lasts longer.

Learn to Preserve:

Pickling, drying, canning, fermenting, freezing and curing are all methods you can use to make food last longer, thus reducing waste.

Use Leftovers:

Store leftovers in a clear glass container, rather than in an opaque container, to make sure you don't forget the food and use it soon enough. Also learn new recipes to use all the ingredients smartly.

Check your Serving Sizes:

By keeping your portion sizes within a healthy range will not just help keep your weight down, but also help reduce food waste.

Read about

Expiry dates; use food within the expiry date to avoid wastage.

Learn about composting:

Composting leftover food is a beneficial way to reuse food scraps, turning food waste into energy for plants.

Grow Some Food:

If possible, grow some of your own fruits, vegetables and herbs.

Pack your Lunch:

A helpful way to save money while reducing your carbon footprint is to bring your lunch to work with you.

Eat out right:

when you eat at a restaurant get the leftovers packed and eat at home the next day or give them to a needy person.

Recycle:

use up food scraps and unused food by setting up a compost bin or worm farm, feed the food scraps to your pets and donate unopened non-perishable food you don't need to a local charity before they spoil.

Spread the Word:

word of mouth is a powerful tool. Spreading the word is something everyone can do. Share your top tips, handy hints and favourite leftover recipes with friends and family and social media.



ZERO
WASTE



The Good Work!

FSSAI is working diligently for preventing surplus food waste. Excess food production, changing trends, minor imperfections in quality (shape, size, colour and freshness) and labelling errors leads to wastage of food in industry. Such food could be salvaged by timely withdrawing it from the distribution network, collecting it and then redirecting it to the people in need. That is why FSSAI is running campaigns to end waste at every level of the food system by catalysing reduction of food wastage movements around the country.

Food Safety and Standards (Recovery and Distribution of Surplus Food) Regulations, 2018 specifies that it is the responsibility of the food donor and surplus food distribution organisations to ensure food safety and hygiene while distribution of surplus food. Through the 'Save Food Share Food' initiative, FSSAI is promoting donation of surplus food via a PAN India network of food recovery agencies called IFSA (Indian Food Sharing Alliance). This initiative is also working at bridging the gap between food business operators, surplus food distribution organisation and in ensuring that such food reaches timely to those in need. Simultaneously, the initiative also lays focus on reducing and curbing food waste. For this:

- ★ A PAN India network of 82 Surplus Food Distribution Organisations has been identified.
- ★ A dedicated website to sensitize people on the importance of reducing surplus food waste and hunger in the country has been put in place. The website acts as a repository of information on this initiative. (www.sharefood.fssai.gov.in)
- ★ A 24-hour helpline to help food donors connect with Surplus Food Distribution Organisations is available. Common helpline number and a mobile application for easy Pan India food donation (is in pipeline)
- ★ Guidelines for prevention of food waste at home, school, restaurants and retail have been issued.
- ★ Regulation and trainings for safe recovery of surplus food distribution agencies to ensure safe food handling during collection, transport, storage and distribution of surplus food.
- ★ Campaigns to encourage food businesses and citizens to donate food.