

Go Greener 'Waste' Editorial

There can't be many Scottish households who couldn't save some money by paying closer attention to how much food they throw out. Whether it's binning half a plate of pasta after cooking too much, or coming home from the supermarket to find that we didn't need to buy those bananas after all because there's still a bunch left in the fruit bowl, we've all been responsible for wasting food.

Reducing food waste is currently a key focus for the Scottish Government's Go Greener campaign, which aims to encourage people to make small changes to their everyday behaviour to help contribute to a greener Scotland.

Food waste is a common problem, and although it might not seem like a big issue to throw away a still-wrapped package of vegetables or leftover dinner a few times a month, the cumulative effect can be bigger than you might expect.

In fact, the average Scottish household throws away enough food to fill a 50-litre bin every year, or to put it another way, food worth £410. Being smarter about reducing food waste can help you to stop wasting cash.

Less waste also benefits the environment as less energy is required to create and process wasted products and the need for landfill sites is therefore reduced. Less landfill also means that less methane (the powerful greenhouse gas release released by rotting food) will be introduced into the atmosphere.

If all Scottish households stopped wasting food, it would have an environmental impact equal to taking one in four cars off the road.



So what can be done to reduce food waste?

- Make sure you only buy what you need when you go shopping. Have a look around the kitchen and take note of what you have and what you need to buy to reduce the chance of buying food you already have at home.
- Be more careful about the portion size of the meals you prepare. Smaller portions reduce the chance that there will be anything left over at the end of dinner.
- Make sure you check the “best before” and “use by” dates on packaged food before you throw it out. If it’s still good to eat, could you make a soup, stew, curry or other tasty dish from these ingredients instead of throwing them out?

It can be much easier than you think to start cutting back on the amount of food you throw away, and you can start saving money today!

The Scottish Government's 10 steps to a Greener Scotland are:

- Recycle household waste using locally-provided facilities
- Turn the tap off when brushing your teeth
- Switch to using energy-saving light bulbs
- Leave the car at home and walk, cycle, use public transport or car share at least once a week instead.
- Use rechargeable instead of disposable batteries
- Re-use carrier bags when you shop
- Buy more seasonal and unpackaged food
- Hang your washing up to dry rather than using a tumble dryer
- Organise or volunteer in an environmental project in your local community
- Avoid flying when you can, and pay back the environmental impact of any flights you have to take

Visit the Go Greener website and you can benefit from fantastic offers and giveaways from a range of partners who are giving their support to the campaign.