

10 GOLDEN RULES TO PREVENT FOOD WASTE

DO YOU ONLY
GO FOR YOUNG
VEGETABLES?



Federal Ministry
of Food
and Agriculture

GERMAN
STRATEGY

TOO
GOOD
FOR THE
BIN
!



Dear reader,

We live in an affluent society: Nothing that's free is worth anything, and everything that's always readily available is not really appreciated. Unfortunately, this also applies to food. But edible food should not be thrown away. It contains precious resources: water, energy – and plenty of heart and soul. We need food to live. Most food waste is avoidable. This brochure contains tips for everyday life and shows us that we can all play our part. Because food is *Too good for the bin!*

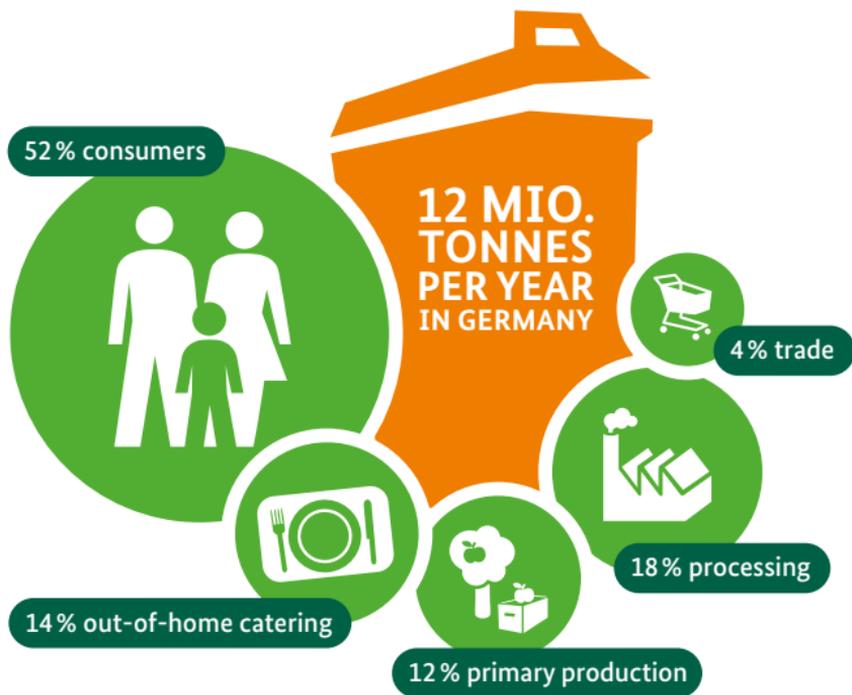
Sincerely yours

Julia Klöckner

Federal Minister of Food and Agriculture

WHO THROWS AWAY HOW MUCH?

Food is wasted everywhere: in agriculture, in food processing, in trade and in out-of-home catering. And, last but not least, in each and every household. In Germany, around twelve million tonnes of food end up in the bin every year, according to a 2015 report by the Thünen Institute. On average, private households throw away around 75 kg of food per head per year.



Food waste in Germany – 2015 baseline.

Braunschweig: Johann Heinrich von Thünen Institute, Thünen Rep 71 (2019)

WHAT DO WE THROW AWAY?

Almost everyone thinks avoiding food waste is important.

Yet everyone, and in particular younger people, continues to throw away valuable food. Households with older people tend to produce less food waste. This was the result of a 2017 consumer survey conducted by the German Association for Consumer Research (GfK) in German households.

Ironically, it is fresh products, which are so important for a healthy diet, that we throw away most often: fruit and vegetables account for about one third of our avoidable food waste. Followed by cooked/prepared foods, bread and other baked goods, drinks, dairy products, ready-made foods as well as fish and meat.



Rounded proportions (%) of types of avoidable food waste. Source: Systematic recording of food waste in private households in Germany (2017), on behalf of the BMEL



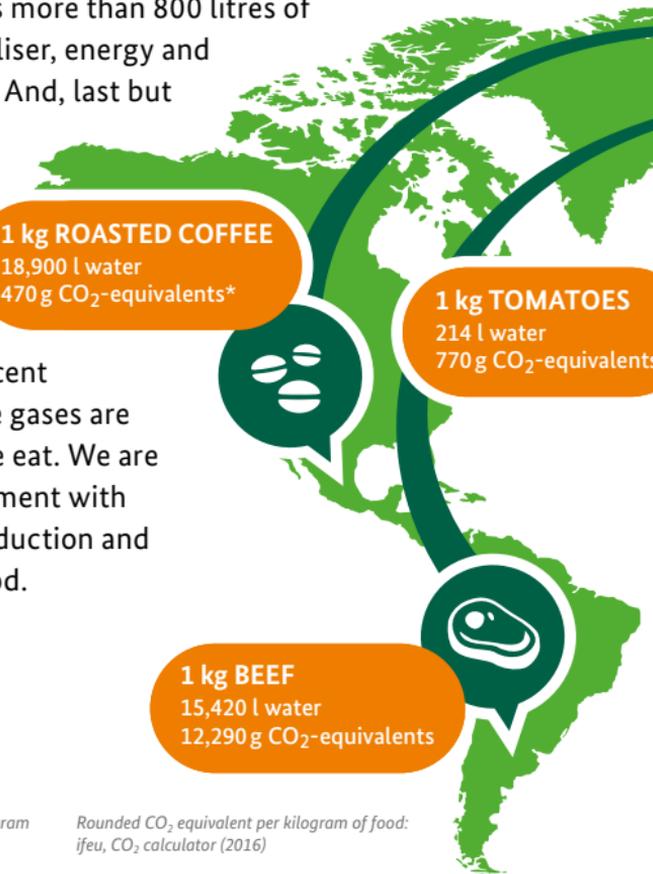
WHAT IMPACT DOES THIS WASTE HAVE?

The food market is global. We eat beef from Argentina, strawberries from Morocco and fish from South-East Asia. Food waste in Germany therefore has a global impact.

We are wasting resources. Growing one kilo of apples, for instance, requires more than 800 litres of water as well as fertiliser, energy and valuable arable land. And, last but not least, the labour of many people.

We are placing great strain on the environment.

An estimated 30 percent of global greenhouse gases are linked to the food we eat. We are harming the environment with our unnecessary production and transportation of food.



1 kg ROASTED COFFEE
18,900 l water
470 g CO₂-equivalents*

1 kg TOMATOES
214 l water
770 g CO₂-equivalents

1 kg BEEF
15,420 l water
12,290 g CO₂-equivalents

Rounded water consumption per kilogram of food: <http://waterfootprint.org/>

Rounded CO₂ equivalent per kilogram of food: ifeu, CO₂ calculator (2016)

815 million people across the globe are starving. Throwing away less food will not feed any of them immediately. But the more we waste, the higher the demand on the global market and the higher the prices, too. This hits people in developing countries, who have to spend most of their income on food, the hardest.

⁺ explanation: In addition to carbon dioxide (CO₂) there are other gases that damage the climate including methane and nitrous oxide. In order to be able to compare their different climate impacts, all greenhouse gases are converted into CO₂ equivalents and combined.



* Product carbon footprinting – the way towards climate-friendly products and their consumption? 2009

WHAT CAN I DO TO HELP? THE 10 GOLDEN RULES:



1. Prepare a shopping list

The best form of prevention: plan well and regularly check what food you have in your fridge and cupboards. Are you eating out? Is anyone coming to visit? Are you missing any ingredients? Put everything you need on the shopping list.



2. Take your time

The choice of food on offer is tempting. Promotional offers, tasting stands and tightly packed display shelves encourage us to buy more than we intended, especially if we are hungry or in a rush. Instead: take your time and compare prices and quality.



3. Pay attention to packet sizes

XXL offers lure us with low prices, but cost us and the environment dearly if half the packet ends up in the bin. Single households in particular should opt to buy smaller packets.

4. Make well-informed choices

We can also help reduce the amount of waste that occurs in trade. Dairy products that we consume within a few days do not need a long use-by date. Apples with minor flaws taste just as nice as their flawless cousins. Yesterday's bread can still taste delicious the day after tomorrow. Following this advice can also save money. Some supermarkets offer goods that will soon be removed from the shelves at lower prices.

5. Refrigerate properly

Proper storage in the fridge is important: put fruit and vegetables in the bottom drawer, fish and meat on the lowest shelf, dairy products on a middle shelf and cheese and leftover food on the top shelf. Eggs, butter and drinks should be stored in the door. Everything should be properly packaged except for fruit and vegetables. This will prevent food from drying out and from developing the typical fridge taste. The cold chain should never be broken for easily perishable foods such as meat. Cooler bags for your shopping are a good idea in warm weather.



6. Store properly



Bread, oils, potatoes, aubergines, avocados, tomatoes and most tropical fruit do not belong in the fridge.

Potatoes and onions need to be stored in a dry, dark place. **Bread** stays fresh longer in a breadbox or stoneware pot, especially if it is an unsliced loaf. Buy blocks of **cheese** rather than slices, and wrap it in coated paper. **Apples and tomatoes** emit ethylene gas that causes other fruits and vegetables to ripen more quickly. They should therefore be stored separately. Transfer the content of **open packets** – flour, rice or nuts – into airtight containers to protect the food against pests. Transfer the content of **open tins** into other containers and use it up quickly.



7. Pay attention to shelf life

Many products have a **best-before date**. This date does not tell you when you should throw the food out. It merely indicates the minimum amount of time that a product will retain its typical characteristics, such as colour and consistency. The product can be good to eat or drink for a long time afterwards. So if a product tastes good, smells good and looks good, it is generally good to eat. The **use-by date**, which is given on easily perishable products such as raw fish, minced meat or fresh poultry, is different. Once the use-by date has expired, the product is no longer safe to consume – and should always be thrown away.

8. Check food regularly

Even if everything is stored perfectly, food should be regularly checked. Because pests such as food moths can destroy your food supplies. If food is infested, all you can do is throw it away. Carefully check anything else stored in the same cupboard or drawer or on the same shelf. Exercise caution if mould has formed on the food: mouldy bread, yoghurt and nuts should be thrown away.

9. Use leftovers

Cooking the right amount of food is a matter of experience. Recipes are helpful. Even then leftovers cannot always be avoided. If you're left with half a potful of soup, freeze or reheat it the next day. Leftover noodles from dinner can be properly packaged and put in the fridge. With a bit of imagination and two or three new ingredients, you will turn today's leftovers into a tasty new treat tomorrow.

10. Order food in moderation

Studies have shown that much less waste is generated during events and in restaurants if you forgo the buffet and order from the menu instead. If anything is left over, ask for a doggy bag.



FIND SUGGESTIONS FOR CREATIVE LEFTOVER COOKING BY AWARD-WINNING CHEFS, CELEBRITIES AND HOBBY CHEFS AT: zugutfuerdietonne.de

**Recipes and tips:
Download the free app
zugutfuerdietonne.de**



PUBLISHED BY

Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture (BMEL)
Division 216: Sustainable Nutrition and Reduction of Food Waste
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LAST UPDATED

January 2020

CONCEPT, TEXT, DESIGN

MediaCompany – Agentur für Kommunikation GmbH

REVISION

Federal Agency for Agriculture and Food (BLE)
neues handeln AG

PRINTED BY

MKL Druck GmbH & Co. KG, 48346 Ostbevern

PHOTOGRAPHS

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