



STEPS ON YOUR JOURNEY TOWARDS MORE SUSTAINABLE FOOD CONSUMPTION

Developed by SUSCOF



Did you know...

Globally one third of all food produced gets lost or is wasted. With that amount of food we could feed all hungry people four times.

Food waste occurs before, during and after meals.



This booklet offers tips on how to make more sustainable choices and on how to reduce food waste before, during and after consumption with focus on:

Waste ♻️ - **health** ♥️ - **environment** 🌍 - **economy** 💰



**Start your sustainable
food journey here
today! →**

The first steps on your sustainable food journey:

Meal planning

This is an easy trail with a great view: just by spending a few minutes on the planning, you can help improve health, reduce waste, and contribute to reduced energy use.

Check your inventory

Before you go shopping, make sure that you know how much food you have at home, and what is missing.

Are there leftovers you can use today? If you have one or more whole portions in store, maybe you can cook less - or not at all! Think (also) about the possibility of offering side dishes (maybe leftover vegetables to accompany whatever else you are planning), starters, soup... 🔄

If you include meat, try reducing portion size. Usually this can be done without any loss of nutrition, since the diet of many Europeans is heavy on protein. 🔄❤️🌍💰

Think about plant-based alternatives some days of the week. They are often cheaper than meat or fish, and can be just as nutritious and satisfying. As well as fresh vegetables, explore the world of peas, beans, and lentils. 🌍💰

Make a shopping list

It's easy to buy too much food when you're trying to remember what's missing and just want to get out of the store.

Making a shopping list in advance is a great way to reduce the stress, and buy less. 🔄💰

Assemble your ingredients

- Quantity: Does it all look reasonable for the number of people? 💰
- How many colours does your food have? Food of the same colour tends to contain the same nutrients. So by including different colours, you will generally get a better balance of nutrients. ❤️
- Do you include any salad or raw vegetables? No need for cooking, good for your digestion, and more nutrients are preserved. ❤️
- Can you eliminate sugar as an ingredient? Or, keep it for special occasions! ❤️



Shopping

Shop responsibly

- Don't go shopping for food when you are hungry. You tend to buy way more food when you are hungry while shopping. ♻️💰
- Think twice before you buy oversized packaging. Be aware that promotions like “buy one, get two”, often lead to food waste. ♻️
- Buy regional, seasonal, Fair Trade, animal friendly and/or organic food. 🌍

Know the difference between “best before” and “expiry”

The best before date is the optimal date to consume the food product by. Often you can still eat food products after the best before date. Use your senses: ***Look, smell, taste.*** ♻️💰

The expiry date is a safety date. Afterwards you should not eat the food product anymore. ❤️

If you are going to consume a product anytime soon choose the one closest to the best-before or expiry date – otherwise the store may throw it away. Less waste, and good for your wallet: stores often give discounts for products close to the best-before date.

♻️💰

Next steps on the journey:

Cooking and serving

This trail invites you to enjoy new perspectives on things you usually do. As well as to find new ways to save waste, time, and money.

Choose cooking methods

- In general, steaming and boiling are more healthy than frying or baking. And raw food is a great alternative, especially in hot weather. ♥
- A pressure cooker can save both time and energy. 🌍 💰



Serving

- If each person serves themselves, waste can be reduced. You can also experiment with smaller plates and see whether you and your household choose to eat less. ♻️
- **Think about what else is on the table:** If possible, no 'disposables'! They place a heavy burden on the environment. At least, eliminate plastic disposables (yes including drinking straws...). 🌍 💰
- Minimize use of chinaware to minimize dishwashing - nice! 🌍

The final steps on your sustainable food journey:

Dealing with leftover food



By limiting or avoiding unnecessary leftovers we can avoid a lot of food waste – and also save a lot of money! It can be hard to completely avoid having unplanned leftovers, but when you do there are several ways to deal with the them:

Eat it!

- You can save and eat your leftovers as they are – perhaps bring them for lunch the next day. ♻️🌍💰
- You can also turn your leftovers into something else. If you need inspiration, you can look up recipes for leftover dishes online. **Be creative!** ♻️🌍💰

For example, you can turn your leftover vegetables into a soup - you can include all kinds of veggies. If you have leftover rice/pasta/potato, you can fry it together with vegetables and/or meat to create a delicious stir-fry.

Share it

- Do you have products that you are never going to eat? Share them with your neighbours so that they can enjoy your delicious dishes as well, or donate them to food banks/kitchen before they expire. ♻️🌍
- Look up local options for food sharing in your neighbourhood (e.g. food sharing apps, food banks, soup kitchens...) ♻️🌍



Storing leftovers

- If you expect to eat cooked food within 3-4 days, refrigerate. ♻️
- Store raw foods separately in the refrigerator, and use them as soon as possible. ♻️
- Glass containers are good! (Don't use plastic containers for hot food.) ♥
- If you don't know when you might eat cooked food, freeze it. ♻️
- If you have fruit that is approaching best-by date, think about preserving it ♻️

Dispose of the leftovers responsibly

If you are not going to eat it, dispose of the food in a responsible manner:

- Sort your food waste (if your city permits) or compost the leftover food at home ... Did you know that you can even start a compost on a small balcony? 🌍
- Feed suitable leftovers to your animals. 🌍

Make sure to use all your leftovers before starting a new journey – or include them in your next journey.



Keep exploring

Find more inspiration and tips on how to make your food journey more sustainable with the MySuscofApp.



In the app you can set personal goals, measure your current level of sustainable consumption, compare your food journey with other people's journeys and much more.



Good luck on your sustainable food journey!

This booklet is created in 2021 as part of the SUSCOF project (Sustainable Consumption of Food), an Erasmus+ project.

Partners of the project are:

- Dokuz Eylul University, Turkey
- MAPP Center, Aarhus University, Denmark
- Legacy17, Sweden
- Mugla Sitki Kocman University, Turkey
- Slovak University of Agriculture in Nitra, Slovakia
- University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences, Austria



Learn more about the project at suscof.com.

Funded by the Erasmus+ Program of the European Union. However, the European Commission and the Turkish National Agency cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.



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Did you know that most food waste (40-50%) comes from households? No-one wants to risk running out of food, so it's tempting to buy and cook more than you need – but unfortunately this often leads to more food waste.

Join us on the journey towards more sustainable food consumption and learn more about how you can build new habits for less waste and better health, environment, and economy.

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