

# FOOD WASTE

## Get your money's worth



**F**irst, know that I am talking about food waste as someone who recently threw out half a bag of grapes (they were too soft!). I am not zero waste, but I can still make an effort to reduce my food waste. Food waste is an issue we should all talk about and do something about because it is a big issue, literally.

**D**ue to food waste, landfills are the 3<sup>rd</sup> largest producer of methane gas in the U.S. Although methane doesn't last as long as carbon, it's actually doing more damage. Also, consider that somewhere around 30% of the U.S. food supply goes to waste. Not to fear though; there is a lot you and I can do! Remember, pick what you can do realistically. Set achievable goals. Make a small change instead of a lifestyle overhaul, unless you're up for it! Here are a few ideas:

1. **Meal Prep:** I plan 2 meals a week, that's it. And sometimes I change my mind about the meals I want. But, meal prepping helps me focus my grocery shopping. I am more likely to avoid the *extras* that get in my cart when I am sure of what I want. Considering I am not a fan of grocery shopping; I appreciate that this helps me get out faster!
2. **Keep Track:** This is a new tip I recently found that makes sense. I want to get a small magnetic wipe off board to put on my fridge. So after I put away the grocery's, I can put a date at the top and list the produce I bought. After two or three weeks, I might look at that list and decide it's time get creative with a "kitchen sink" recipe so that food doesn't go to waste.
3. **Love your leftovers:** Think of left overs as your money saving friend. I meal prep two meals a week, but I cook like there are 4-6 people, not just me and my Fiancé, in the house. The leftovers are lunch or dinner for the next few days!
4. **Temperature is key:** Check your fridge, check food safety rules, check food containers and packaging for leaks. This may be the simplest thing anyone can do to reduce food waste. Make sure your fridge is cold enough without freezing your food. Make sure your storing food properly, especially meat. And make sure when you store leftovers, the container doesn't leak. Leaks can allow contamination in, or it could make your other foods inedible, or much less appealing.



- Morgan DeWeese