

Co cook-up competition (July-September 2020)

Food waste

Each year, UK households throw away 4.5 million tonnes of edible food, estimated to be worth £14 billion. For families, that's £700 per year spent on food that ends up in the bin. ([Too Good To Go](#))

The Too Good To Go movement website has resources for teachers and children <https://toogoodtogo.org/en/movement/education>

WRAP's Love Food, Hate Waste Campaign - recorded a 17% reduction ([WRAP, 2015](#)) in avoidable household waste in 2015 compared to 2007.

<https://www.lovefoodhatewaste.com/>

'Wonky' fruit & veg

Supermarket shelves are overflowing with choice, and yet much of the produce from farms never make it onto display due to product specifications. Rigorous quality standards imposed by retailers mean that farmers need to selectively out-grade certain produce in terms of shape, size, colour and time of ripeness. This means that almost 1 in 3 of all fruits and vegetables are thrown away based on beauty standards. ([Grewal et al., 2019](#))

Next time you go shopping, try to buy the most wonky, wierdest produce you find - treat it like a treasure hunt!

Expiry dates

Expiry dates are responsible for 10% of the 88 million tons of food lost or wasted across the value chain in Europe (equivalent to 3 to 6 billion euros)

720 million eggs are wasted every year in the UK alone ([Guardian article](#))

Product life expiry is a key reason for food waste. It is not possible for retailers to sell products after their 'use by' date and products that approach these dates are usually marked down in price for sale. If this is not effective, then products will enter the waste stream.

If shopping for things you are going to cook today - have a look in the reduced section of the supermarket for things with

**Camden
Climate Change
Alliance**



*a short date that you can rescue and use before they are
wasted!*

Storage

About two-thirds of household waste is due to food spoilage from not being used in time ([NRDC, 2012](#)).

- *Bread should be stored in a dark, dry place. Ideally sealed in an airtight bag or box*
- *Keep your eggs in an airtight container on a refrigerator shelf, not in the door*
- *Potatoes are best kept in a dry, dark place*
- *Tropical and subtropical food such as tomatoes, melons, eggplants, bananas, peppers should be kept at room temperature*

The most wasted ingredients in the UK

- BREAD - 20 million slices are wasted daily
- POTATOES - 4.4 million potatoes are wasted daily
- MILK - 3.1 million glasses of milk wasted daily
- EGGS - 2 million eggs are wasted daily
- BANANAS - 0.9 million bananas are wasted daily

When we waste a meal or ingredients, we not only waste the food in front of us. We waste all the water, energy, fertiliser, labour, land and fuel that went into growing, packaging and transporting the food to your plate as well.

Food miles

Food miles are a way of attempting to measure how far food has travelled before it reaches the consumer. It is a good way of looking at the environmental impact of foods and their ingredients. It includes getting foods to you, but also getting waste foods away from you, and to the landfill! (<https://www.foodmiles.com/>)

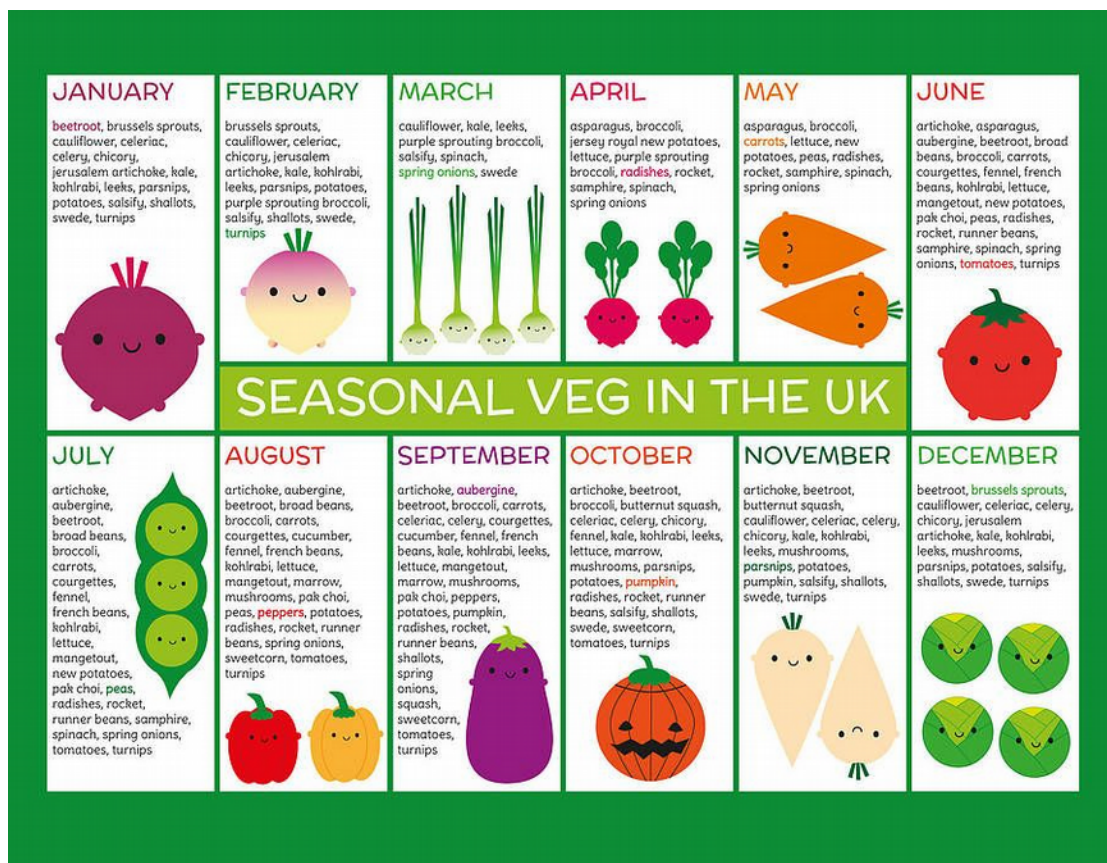
DEFRA estimates that moving food is responsible for 25% of all miles covered by heavy goods traffic in the UK. Transporting food within, to and around the UK produces 19 million tonnes of CO₂ annually – equivalent to around 5.5 million typical cars. (<http://www.i-sis.org.uk/FMAS.php>)

Think about eating more local fruit and veg - this might reduce the number of options available because seasonality needs to be taken into consideration.

Check out these links to find what's in season right now in the UK
<https://www.bbcgoodfood.com/seasonal-calendar/all>
<https://vegsoc.org/cookery-school/blog/seasonal-uk-grown-produce/>

Food Mile Facts

- 95% of our fruit comes from abroad.
- Half of our vegetables are imported.
- Food imports increased from 13.5m tonnes in 1992 to just over 16m tonnes by 2002.
- Whilst only 1% of food is transported by air, it accounts for 11% of carbon emissions.
- Rainforest the size of ten football pitches is felled every second, some of which to make room for exported food crops.
- Since 1992, the amount of food flown by 'plane has risen by 140%.



Questions to ask ourselves

Where does food come from?

Every day in the supermarket we see an amazing array of food, but where has it all come from? The origin of our food, and how far it has travelled to get to us are things we don't often think about when doing our grocery shop. Look at your lunch and think about where each ingredient was produced and how it got here.

Who is wasting so much food?

How much food is wasted globally and why do we waste so much food, both at home and in the supply chain?

How we can help promote the fight against food waste in your area?

What can we as residents do to stop wasting food and how can we influence businesses to do the same?

Working with food waste

Use by dates are important to follow, while best before dates need assessment - what's the difference and why is there so much confusion around these dates?

How does wasting food impact us?

Think about how food waste affects the environment, society and the economy.