

FOOD
WASTE  FREE

Become A **Food Waste-Free** Household!



TABLE OF CONTENTS

- 04** WHY REDUCE FOOD WASTE?
- 05** REDUCE FOOD WASTE AT HOME
- 06** DON'T WASTE THOSE FRESH BERRIES!
- 09** HOMEMADE BLUEBERRY LARABARS
- 10** HOMEMADE, ALL NATURAL, BERRY GUMMIES

FOOD WASTE FREE

It's the most expensive food in the world - the food you buy but never use. Research suggests as much as 40% of fresh produce we purchase winds up, not in our stomachs, but in the trash. We believe that proper food USE is the most effective way to cut down on food waste. To get more bang for your berry buck, follow these helpful tips and join in our mission to have a food waste-free household!



Blueberries 'bout to say bye-bye? Oven dry them for use in trail mix or these homemade treats inspired by **LARABAR!**

Recipe on page 9.



WHY REDUCE FOOD WASTE?

Before we get into how you can reduce food waste in your home, let's talk about **why it's so important.**

It's costing us all money.

- » If you're wasting food, you're wasting money. It is estimated that Americans throw away approximately \$165 billion worth of food each year! That's an average of \$500 for every man, woman and child in the US.

It negatively impacts the environment.

- » An estimated 133 billion pounds of food is wasted each year, increasing 50% since the 1970s. That's enough to fill Chicago's Sears Tower (Now called the Willis Tower) 44 times! But where does it all go? A shocking 96% of it ends up in landfills. Once in landfills, the food breaks down and produces methane, a potent (21 times more potent than CO₂, to be exact) greenhouse gas that contributes to climate change.



Here are some ways we can **reduce food waste at home**

The ways in which you plan for, prep, and store food can all contribute to more taste and less waste!

Plan

- » Keep a list of meals and their ingredients that your household already enjoys. This allows you to easily choose and shop for meals.
- » Make your shopping list based on how many meals you'll eat at home that week. If you find yourself eating out during the week and throwing away excess food, reduce the amount of food you purchase.
- » Plan your meals for the week before you go shopping and buy only the things needed for those meals.
- » Include quantities on your shopping list, noting how many meals you'll make with each item to avoid overbuying.
- » Look in your refrigerator and cupboards first to avoid buying food you already have.
- » Buy only what you need and will use. Buying in bulk only saves money if you are able to use the food before it spoils.



This is what we call **SMART** shopping!

Prep

- » Prepare perishable foods soon after grocery shopping. This will make cooking meals more efficient for later in the week.
- » If you have several foods that might go to waste at the same time, try adding them to adaptable recipes like soups, pasta, salads and casseroles.
- » Prepare snacks ahead of time and place them in baggies or containers that you can grab when you're on the go.



Softer, imperfect berries make the **best smoothies!**

Store

- » Make friends with your freezer and visit it often!
- » Freeze food and fresh produce that you know you won't be able to eat in time.
 - Prepare and cook perishable items, then freeze them for use throughout the month.
 - Learn the difference between ["sell-by," "use-by," "best-by," and expiration dates.](#)
- » Keep leftovers in a sealed container and plan on eating them within the week.
- » Berries
 - Store berries in a Tupperware-type sealed container lined with a paper towel to help preserve freshness while refrigerated.
 - Don't wash your berries until just before use.



As easy as **1, 2, Freeze!**

DON'T WASTE THOSE FRESH BERRIES!

Some say "past their prime". We say "just in time"! **Check out these delicious ways to enjoy fresh berries right up 'til the bitter sweeter end.**

SMOOTHIES

The possibilities are endless! You can mix leftover berries with a variety of flavor profiles, including other fresh very ripe fruit, [leafy greens for added nutrients](#) or [chocolate for a sweet treat](#).

SPRITZERS

Who doesn't love happy hour? Try muddling leftover berries and herbs to create a [refreshing cocktail](#)!

SAUCES

Full of natural sugars and acidity, berries are perfect for reductions, glazes, dressings, and sauces! Match them with your favorite foods and see your leftover berries perform in a whole new role.

SALSAS

We've all heard of mango salsa by now, but have you ever tried blueberries with cilantro or raspberries with lemongrass? There are so many delicious combinations that will add a unique twist to your next taco night, so get creative with your food processor and enhance your [homemade salsas](#)!



Blackberry Butter

CREAM CHEESE AND BUTTER

For a new twist on your morning toast or bagel, add berries to room-temperature cream cheese or butter, then mix, chill, and enjoy!

HOMEMADE FRUIT ROLL-UPS OR GUMMY FRUIT SNACKS

Your kids will LOVE these! Use leftover berries to create your own, natural fruit snacks at home.

HOMEMADE GRANOLA BARS

Make your own berry granola bars, or these [homemade blueberry Larabars](#)! Made with minimal ingredients, these make a wholesome snack or easy, on-the-go breakfast.

DRY THEM

There's no need for a fancy dehydrator, [just your oven](#) and some simple prep! Once dried, berries will last for a couple months and are a great addition to cereals both hot and cold, trail mixes, or reconstituted later for use in sauces, smoothies, etc.

FREEZE THEM

Sure fresh is best, but frozen berries are better than no berries (or berries that wind up in the trash). Save them for later to use in sauces and smoothies!



HOMEMADE BLUEBERRY LARABARS

You can buy dried blueberries, but I prefer to dehydrate my own blueberries so I know there are no preservatives in them. To do this, bake your fresh blueberries at 175 degrees for 4-6 hours (depending on your oven). The end result should be chewy.

Combine all of your ingredients in a food processor until a paste forms. Make sure not to over process. You still want to see the individual nuts and berries.

Line a 9x5" pan with wax paper. Press mixture into pan (I used another piece of wax paper on top to help flatten evenly). Refrigerate for a few hours.

Cut into rectangles or squares and store in the refrigerator. These bars are very dense, so a little square goes a long way!

SERVES 6

1 cup pecans
 ½ cup cashews
 1 ½ cups Medjool dates
 2 cups California Giant blueberries
 1 tsp vanilla



HOMEMADE, ALL NATURAL, BERRY GUMMIES

SERVES 4

½ cup California Giant strawberries

½ cup California Giant blueberries

¼ cup water

½ cup sugar free applesauce

½ apple juice or orange juice

2 envelopes gelatin

In a saucepan over medium heat, sauté berries in ¼ cup water until the berries have broken down. Use an immersion blender to puree berries until smooth. Add applesauce and bring to a boil. Remove from heat and cover.

Pour apple juice into a medium bowl. Sprinkle gelatin over apple juice and let stand one minute. Add hot berry mixture to the apple juice and stir until gelatin dissolves.

