

Using all parts of your food



April houses Earth Day and Food Waste Prevention week; two topics the Food Bank of Western Massachusetts is passionate about.

Food Waste Prevention Week takes place April 1st-7th, but the highlighted practices can be used all year long! Some of the key messages Food Waste Prevention Week notes is using foods you already have on hand to make meals. Here are some of their food waste prevention “challenges”:

- One night a week, have a “Leftover Night.”
- Designate an “Eat This Now” area of the fridge for food that needs to be eaten soon.
- Use your senses to decide if food is still good to eat, rather than just the date on the label. Dates on food labels typically indicate peak quality, not safety.
- Make the right amount of food for your family and for events. Share any excess food with friends, neighbors, and coworkers.
- Learn how to store food correctly. [SaveTheFood.com/storage](https://www.savethefood.com/storage) is a great resource.
- Reorganize your fridge to [store items for maximum freshness](#).
- Look up ways to eat parts of fruits and veggies that you have traditionally thrown out. Did you know that carrot greens and cooked potato peels are edible?



For more information on food waste prevention, visit <https://www.foodwastepreventionweek.com/learn> to see tips on how to store food properly, save money and time at the grocery store, and protect the environment!

Earth Day takes place on April 22nd! When thinking of the environment and food, we can also think about what we store our food in! A lot of food containers can be recycled or re-used in order to reduce waste.

- Wash and re-use glass jars from pasta sauce, salsa, and other foods to use as food storage containers. **TIP:** storing cut carrots and celery in water can help keep them crisp and prevent them from drying out. You can store them in a glass jar.
- Recycle pizza boxes, milk gallons, soda cans, cardboard food containers, or any container that has the recycle sign on the back or bottom of it! **TIP:** [saving cans and bottles](#) that have the “MA Deposit” on them and then redeeming them at a can and bottle redemption center is a good way to make some extra \$. You usually get 5-10 cents back per can/ bottle that you redeem. If you think about it, a 12 pack of soda cans will get you 60 cents back!
- Consider bringing a reusable bag to store fresh produce in at the super market. Using less plastic bags can help reduce plastic waste. We need to wash our produce anyways when we are about to use it because of potential contaminants during processing and transporting, so the plastic bags at the supermarket are not really protecting the produce from outside contaminants.

