



Be Food Wise

Celebrated every year on 5 June, the theme of this year's World Environment Day is 'think, eat, save', which highlights anti-food waste and food loss; an important issue considering that 1.3 billion tonnes of food is wasted every year, while one in seven people in the world go hungry.

Food is the one thing that unifies us. We love it. We eat it. It brings us together and it sustains us. The sights and smells of food encourage us to eat more, but as we do, we also throw more of it away.

Latest Gov figures indicate that Australians are throwing out 4 million tonnes of food waste every year. Australians are spending \$8 billion on food that we buy but don't eat. When you consider how many people worldwide are starving, it's almost criminal that Australians are wasting so much food.

Some people find it hard to believe that Australians throw away so much food. But garbage bin analysis in NSW, Victoria and South Australia shows that 38-41% of the contents of our household garbage bins is food.

In Australia, it is believed that we're throwing away at least 20% of the food that we buy. That's the equivalent of buying 5 bags of groceries and throwing one away. It's estimated that each Australian household is wasting \$1,036 of food that they buy but throw away. Given the cost of today's food, that's clearly not sustainable for the family budget.

Neither is it sustainable for the environment. When food waste rots in landfill it produces methane, a greenhouse gas that's 25 times more potent than the CO₂ from your car's exhaust.

If we can switch to green bags and shorter showers, then surely we can learn to save food? And that is why the FoodWise campaign was launched. Wasted food is a waste of money. Eradicating the waste and being wiser with food means you'll end up saving the planet and your wallet at the same time.

From an environmental standpoint, we're currently eating ourselves out of house and home. If we don't mend our wasteful ways, we'll be eating ourselves out of an environment that can sustainably support future generations of Australians. That's not an outcome any of us want. It's not just caring about food and saving money. It's about creating a safer future for Australia's kids. That's a responsibility we must all live up to."

For further information head to foodwise.com.au or visit Council's Sustainable Living Guide <http://sustainableliving.southgippsland.vic.gov.au>