

Cheshire West & Chester Council

Going crackers for Christmas food



It's time to eat, drink and be merry

With Christmas food bills averaging at £169 per household, and over a third of us admitting to throwing away more food at Christmas than at any other time of the year, why not help reduce food waste in west Cheshire this festive period?

Every Christmas, UK households throw away an estimated two million turkeys, 74 million mince pies and five million Christmas puddings. This is not just a waste of money but a huge waste of resources with significant environmental impacts.

recycle



Cheshire West
and Chester

Christmas is a time of plenty, and we often end up buying, cooking and then throwing too much away.

With some simple steps, we can collectively reduce festive food waste.

Plan your portions, streamline your spending, reuse your leftovers, and freeze what's left. Everything else can be recycled in your food waste bin.



Know your waste

To reduce your food waste first consider what and how much you throw out...

Think back to last year, can you remember what ended up in the bin?

17.2 million brussels sprouts are thrown away every Christmas, this is no great surprise as half of people claim to not like them.

Too full by the time the Christmas pudding was served?

Go against tradition. If there is something on the menu that nobody really likes or has room for, why not leave it out this year?





Planning

Before the season starts it's worth doing some pre-Christmas planning to **prevent waste and save a bit of money.**

- **The main reason for food waste is overbuying.** If you are having a Christmas gathering, plan how much food you will need for the number of people attending and resist the temptation to buy those 'just in case' items.
- **Throwing a party?** Limit the fresh foods you serve to the favourites you know will be eaten. Have some non-perishable snacks in stock which can remain unopened until they are needed.
- **Plan your menu** and write your shopping list based on what your menu requires to prevent you picking up extra things when you are shopping.
- **Remember** to check what you already have in your cupboards, fridge and freezer when making your shopping list.
- **Don't overstock on basics** like bread and milk, shops reopen very quickly after Christmas.

A Christmas festive feast

Portion sizes for a family of 4
(2 adults and 2 children)

320g of carrots =

(approximately 12 tablespoons
of sliced carrots)

Cranberry sauce =

half cup per person (homemade
cranberry sauce can be frozen in
small amounts)

320g of broccoli =

(approximately 8 broccoli florets)

Roast Potatoes =

16 small potatoes

480g of turkey =

(approximately 10 slices)

320g of sprouts =

(approximately 32 sprouts)

Chipolata sausages =

6 (2 per adult, 1 per child)

Shopping

Christmas food shopping is often a battle. We tend to overfill the fridge and overspend on goodies that just do not get eaten. Lets all have a different approach this year.



- Once you have made your list, stick to it.
- When buying meat, dairy and other fresh products be conscious of 'use by' dates. Make sure the food you buy will still be good when you plan to eat it.
- Try shopping online, this can reduce the temptation to buy extras.
- Don't go shopping when you are hungry, you will always buy more than you need.
- Try to buy loose fruit and veg; by only buying what you need you can cut down on packaging waste too.

Supermarket sneak

Only need a few things?

Just get a basket, the bigger the trolley, the more you will buy.

1

Set a budget and try to keep a running tally –

using hand held scanners can help you keep track.

2

Avoid checkout buys –

this is the most profitable area of the shop. Don't turn waiting time into buying time.

3

Look out for layout changes –

these are designed to keep you in the shop longer.



Look up and down for bargains – the most expensive ranges are usually placed at eye level. Watch out for products located at kid's eye level too, they're designed to attract children.

4

Beware of the back-of-the-shop-trap: Bread and milk are kept here to entice you through the whole shop. Avoid overspending, don't stop along the way.

5

Beware of special offers at the end of the aisles – they don't always offer great savings and buying more than you planned leads to more waste.

6





Storage

Storing food properly is one of the most important steps to reducing your food waste. **Did you know correct storage also plays a vital role in maintaining the nutritional value of food too?**



- Most fruit, vegetables and cooked meats will last longer if stored in their packaging and in the fridge.
- Leftovers should be kept covered in the fridge and used within two to three days.
- Try not to overload your fridge, air needs to be able to circulate inside to keep everything cold and fresh.
- Know your dates, put new items to the back when you unpack your shopping and move the older things forward so they are eaten first.

Freezer

- Lots of your Christmas food shop can be frozen, before or after cooking. From mince pies and roast potatoes to fruit, vegetables and even wine, there's no need to throw anything away.
- Get ahead with food prep for the big day, parboil your potatoes and parsnips, cover them in fat and freeze them (once they have cooled down). Take them out on the day to go straight in to the oven.





Cooking

Leftovers are all part of the joy of Christmas but beware of extreme over-catering. **The average Brit consumes a whopping 5,000 calories on Christmas Day**, but we still throw away the equivalent of four million Christmas dinners every year.

Many people end up leaving food on the plate. Think about the right amount for a nice meal so your guests aren't encouraged to over-consume and struggle with indigestion. **After all Christmas food is to be enjoyed, not endured.**

Get creative with leftovers

See our recipes for delicious festive meals and visit: **lovefoodhatewaste.com** for a creative selection of family-friendly leftover meal ideas.



Freezing Christmas dinners

Instead of getting fed up with turkey meals in the week after Christmas, why not freeze individual dinners? You'll be glad of them in January.

Reuse a plastic takeaway box, layer some meat, stuffing, potatoes and veg. Pour gravy or stock over and finish it off with some cranberry sauce.

To cook - remove from the freezer and place in an ovenproof dish, cooking for 30-45 minutes until thawed and heated through completely. Or, to microwave, defrost first and heat through according to your machine's instructions.





Lovely leftovers

Recipe

Broccoli and stilton soup

Stilton or any strong flavoured cheese can often hang around for a bit too long in the fridge so try making this lovely thick soup.

Ingredients (serves 4)

- 1 onion peeled and chopped
- 1 tablespoon of olive oil
- 1 large potato peeled and chopped
- 1 litre of stock
- 300g of broccoli, roughly chopped
- 100g of stilton, roquefort or other strong cheese
- Ground black pepper
- Pinch of nutmeg
- Chopped chives

Method

1. Cook the onion in olive oil until soft. Add the potato and stock then simmer until the potato is tender. Add the broccoli and cook for 3-4 minutes until tender but still bright green.
2. Add half the cheese with the seasoning and nutmeg then whiz to a smooth soup in a blender. Crumble the remaining cheese over the top, sprinkle with chives and serve with warm crusty bread.

Recipe

Turkey or vegetable risotto

This is a great way to use up Christmas dinner leftovers. It will be delicious with or without meat.

Ingredients (serves 4)

- 400-550ml of turkey or vegetable stock
- 1 onion
- A drizzle of olive oil
- One clove of garlic
- 175g of risotto rice
- 200g of left over vegetables, cubed
- 200g of cooked turkey or ham, cubed
- 2-3 sprigs of fresh sage / 1 tsp dried sage
- 50g of mascarpone
- 100g of parmesan

Method

1. Cook the onions in olive oil until soft.
2. Stir in the rice and cook until very hot. Add a ladle full or two of stock and cook until almost absorbed before adding more. Keep repeating this process until the rice is creamy but slightly **al dente* for approx 18 mins.
3. Add the chopped vegetables and meat, continue to cook for another 2 mins.
4. Finish the dish by stirring in the chopped sage, mascarpone and parmesan. Garnish with parmesan shavings and cracked pepper. A drizzle of good olive oil will also enhance the flavour.

* cooked so that the rice is still firm when eaten.





Recipe

Cranberry brownies

This is a great quick recipe to finish off the cranberry sauce. You can add other festive leftovers such as nuts or dried fruit.

Ingredients

- 100g of butter
- 50g of plain chocolate
- 150g of caster sugar
- 2 eggs
- 4 tablespoons cranberry sauce
- ½ teaspoon of vanilla extract
- 40g of flour
- A pinch of salt

Method

1. Preheat the oven to 180c, Gas mark 4.
2. Melt the butter and chocolate over a low heat, stirring frequently until melted and smooth.
3. Beat the sugar with the eggs and cranberry sauce in a bowl. Pour in the chocolate mixture, adding in the vanilla extract, flour and salt.
4. Pour in to 21cm square tin and bake for 15 – 20 minutes.

What can I recycle in my food waste bin?

Your food bin and kitchen caddy



Food waste bin



Kitchen caddy



Lining your caddy

You may wish to line your caddy or food bin to keep cleaning to a minimum.

You can do this with:

- A plastic bag such as a carrier bag, bread bag or plastic vegetable bag.
- A couple of sheets of newspaper or thick paper bags
- Compostable caddy liners.



What goes into your food waste bin

Yes please

- ✓ Meat and fish - raw and cooked including bones and turkey carcasses
- ✓ Fruit and vegetables - raw and cooked
- ✓ All dairy products (e.g. cheese and butter) and eggs (and their shells)
- ✓ Bread, cakes and pastries
- ✓ Rice, pasta and beans
- ✓ Uneaten food from your plates and dishes
- ✓ Tea bags and coffee grounds



No thanks

- ✗ Packaging of any sort
- ✗ Plastic film and lids
- ✗ Vegware™ products and bioplastics.