



HALVING HOUSEHOLD FOOD WASTE

WHICH BEHAVIOURS MATTER?

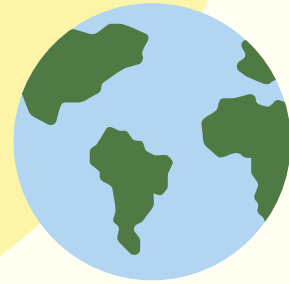
AT A GLANCE



FOOD WASTE IS OFTEN OVERLOOKED IN THE CLIMATE CHANGE DEBATE BUT IS IN FACT

A MAJOR CONTRIBUTOR TO GLOBAL GREENHOUSE GASES.

With the majority of food waste coming from our homes, OzHarvest, together with BehaviourWorks Australia, conducted pioneering research to understand which consumer behaviours matter most in the fight against household food waste.



“
Citizen action is vital if we are to meet the national target of halving food waste by 2030, in line with United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 12.3.
”

Ronni Kahn AO,
OzHarvest Founder & CEO

An illustration of four hands of different skin tones (pink, brown, light pink, and orange) holding a black trash bag that is overflowing with various food items like watermelon slices, grapes, and vegetables. The bag is positioned in the lower right area of the infographic.

ADDRESSING FOOD WASTE AT HOME IS THE SINGLE MOST POWERFUL THING AN INDIVIDUAL CAN DO TO TAKE CLIMATE ACTION

- Project Drawdown¹

1 Hawken, P. (2017) Project Drawdown
- The Most Comprehensive Plan Ever
Proposed to Roll Back Global Warming

THE FOOD WASTE PROBLEM

GLOBALLY,

1/3

OF ALL FOOD IS WASTED²



8-10%

OF GLOBAL GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS ARE CAUSED BY WASTED FOOD³



IN AUSTRALIA WE WASTE



² FAO Save Food Global Food Waste and Loss Initiative.

³ United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) (2021). Food Waste Index Report 2021

⁴ FIAL (2021). National Food Waste Strategy Feasibility Study.

RESEARCH GOALS



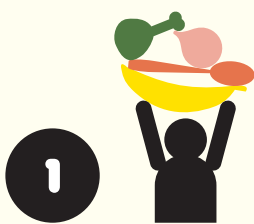
IDENTIFY THE MOST IMPACTFUL BEHAVIOURS TO REDUCE HOUSEHOLD WASTE



EXPLORE THE INFLUENCING FACTORS AND BARRIERS TO BEHAVIOURAL CHANGE

THE PROCESS

Evidence-based research was conducted across four stages to investigate household behaviours, motivations and barriers to reducing food waste. The behaviours were analysed based on impact, acknowledging the key influences required for uptake.



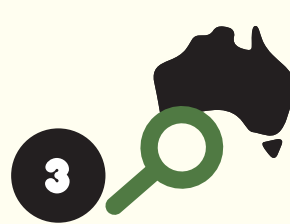
FOOD WASTE EXPERTS

identified the list of household food waste behaviours.



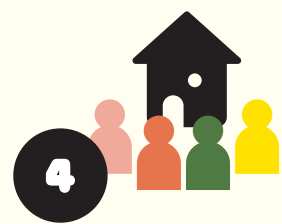
IMPACT - LIKELIHOOD MATRIX

Expert survey (n=30) and household surveys (n=1600) provided robust data to inform the Impact - Likelihood matrix, which prioritised target behaviours based on impact, current levels of adoption and likelihood/opportunity for uptake.



NATIONAL FOOD WASTE BEHAVIOUR SURVEY

identified key influencing factors of the target behaviours.



HOUSEHOLD FOCUS GROUPS

gained detailed insights to inspire behavioural change.

WHICH BEHAVIOURS MATTER?

The Impact – Likelihood matrix ordered each behaviour into quadrants based on high or low impact and likelihood of uptake. High impact / high likelihood behaviours were prioritised for further research.

HIGH IMPACT & LOW LIKELIHOOD

- Shop from a list
- Measure household food waste (audit)
- Make a shopping list
- Make a meal plan
- Involve kids
- Subscribe to a meal kit or recipe box service
- Buy pre-portioned food
- Batch cook
- Follow the storage instructions on food
- Online food shop
- Only bulk buy non-perishable foods

HIGH IMPACT & HIGH LIKELIHOOD

- Once a week, make a meal with food that needs using up
- Have a 'use it up' shelf in the fridge and/or pantry for any food that needs to be eaten
- Freeze excess food
- Before cooking a meal, check how many household members will be eating
- Check stock before shopping
- Store leftovers correctly
- Plan for using close-to-date food
- Once a week cook a meal from food in the freezer
- Buy frozen vegetables

- Check food date labels weekly
- Read packet before buying
- Store food in well-sealed, clearly labelled containers
- Rotate food in fridge
- Preserve perishable foods by pickling, saucing or stewing for later use
- Allow more time to eat during meals
- Shop at local speciality food stores
- Make a stock and freeze for future use

- Buy perishables as needed
- Inspect food close to date
- Serve yourself at meal times
- Store bread in airtight container
- Use small plates and bowls
- Check fridge is at the correct temperature
- Share excess food with extended family and friends
- Before going shopping, eat a meal or snack

LOW IMPACT & LOW LIKELIHOOD

LOW IMPACT & HIGH LIKELIHOOD

Each quadrant orders the behaviours from high to low impact. Please refer to the Impact Likelihood Matrix diagram in the full report to view the opportunities for uptake.

TARGET BEHAVIOURS

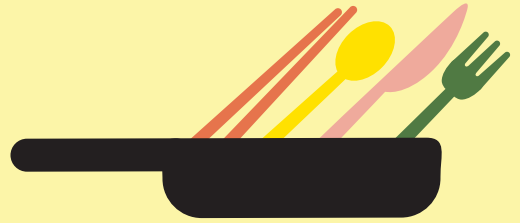
Based on their relative impact, likelihood of uptake and current adoption scores, the following behaviours were prioritised for further research to identify and explore key influencing factors:

1



Once a week, make a meal that combines food that needs using up

2



Before cooking, check how many household members will be eating

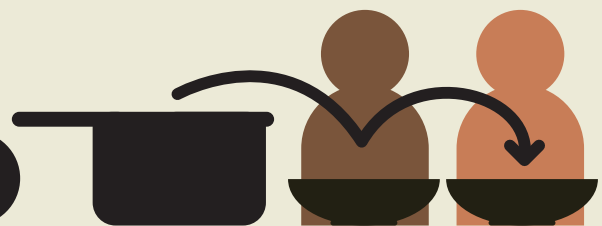
KEY INFLUENCING FACTORS

1



Attitudes of household members towards the behaviour – a positive attitude will increase the likelihood of uptake

2



Perceived control over the behaviour – the more appropriate skills and knowledge someone has the more likely they will engage in the behaviour.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CAMPAIGNS



TO INCREASE POSITIVE ATTITUDES

- + Show how quick and easy it is.
- + Play on the positive emotional outcomes, reduce guilt around food waste and show creative opportunities.
- + Challenge impressions that leftovers are second-rate food.
- + Target the whole family or household, not just the person responsible for cooking and shopping.
- + Show benefits of checking in and scheduling 'a night off' if no-one is home for dinner.
- + Change perceptions that cooking too much shows love, to cooking the right amount is better!



TO INCREASE PERCEIVED BEHAVIOURAL CONTROL

- ^ Make it easy to identify food that needs using up.
- ^ Use 'ingredient-led' websites, cookbooks or apps for recipe ideas.
- ^ Promote a specific day to reduce food waste and make it a weekly routine.
- ^ Create reminders to cook use it up meals.
- ^ Ask extended families for ideas on using ingredients in cooking.
- ^ Engage children through school-based challenges that promote using up food.
- ^ Use apps or shared calendars for 'who's home for dinner' to keep track of schedules and send prompts.



THIS REPORT HAS PROVIDED THE FOUNDATIONS FOR A NEW NATIONAL CAMPAIGN BY OZHARVEST TO INSPIRE CITIZEN ACTION BY MAKING IT EASY FOR AUSSIES TO WASTE LESS AT HOME!

OzHarvest hopes this report will be used by other practitioners, partners and organisations united in achieving the national target and UN SDG 12.3 of halving food waste in Australia by 2030.



MONASH
University

MONASH
SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT
INSTITUTE

BehaviourWorks
AUSTRALIA



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Australian Government
Department of Agriculture,
Water and the Environment

TO VIEW THE FULL REPORT