

Lesson 4 – How do we waste food? What can we do?

Students learn the extent of food waste in Australia, investigate the ways that food is being wasted and suggest ways that food waste can be avoided.

Meets HASS ACHASSKI20 Types of resources (natural, human, capital) and the ways societies use them to satisfy the needs and wants of present and future generations

HASS ACHASSKI21 Influences on consumer choices and methods that can be used to help make informed personal consumer and financial choices

Meets Sustainability OI.5 OI.6 OI.7 OI.8 OI.9 The sustainability of ecological, social and economic systems is achieved through informed individual and community action that values local and global equity and fairness across generations into the future

Method

Explain to the children that in Australia, food waste arises from

1. On-farm losses
2. Losses in manufacture and processing
3. Households



Then Watch the ABC program War on Waste, about waste bananas.

<https://vimeo.com/223234033>

Discuss the show.

Also present the following facts:

According to the Food and Agriculture Organisation, "If global food waste was a country, it would be the third largest emitter of greenhouse gases in the world, behind the U.S. and China"¹. On average Australians throw out 20 per cent of the food they buy, which is 3.1 million tonnes of edible food². This generates 7.6 million tonnes of CO₂ just from our food waste, which is equivalent to 17,000 grounded jumbo jets². Food waste costs households between \$2,200 and \$3,800 per year².

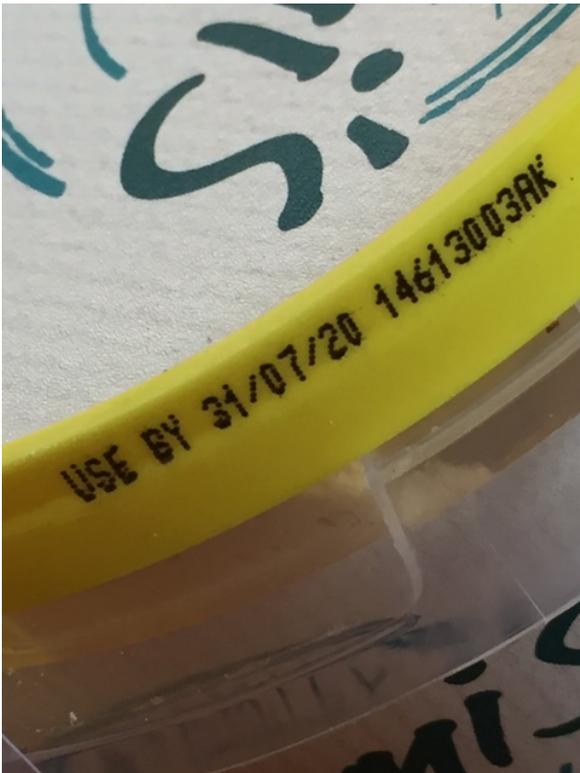
1. <https://www.insidewaste.com.au/index.php/2020/04/16/where-to-with-food-waste/>
2. Commonwealth of Australia (2017) National Food Waste Strategy, Halving Australia's Food Waste by 2030

According to the City of Hobart Waste Management Strategy 2015-2030, 60% of waste in household bins is organic material that could potentially be removed from the waste stream.

www.hobartcity.com.au/Council/Strategies-and-plans/City-of-Hobart-Waste-Management-Strategy-2015-2030

Ask the students what they, as individuals, can do about on-farm losses (e.g. they could buy mis-shapen or 'ugly' fruits and vegetables, which would otherwise be thrown out before they get to the supermarket). Can the students do anything about losses in manufacture and processing? (e.g. probably not). Can we, as individuals, do anything about household food waste? (yes). Let's focus on food waste generated from the home.

Can the children discern the difference between the terms 'use by' and 'best before' dates on food packaging? (e.g. the term 'Use By' means that the food cannot be eaten after the date on the pack. However, a 'Best Before' date is only an indication of when the food is at its best. If it's been stored correctly, then it's still safe to eat even after the date. The only exception is eggs, which should not be eaten after the 'Best Before' date. People often throw out food when it reaches the 'Best Before' date, even though it's still ok to eat. If people are doing that, it is a waste of food and money). You could watch Love Food Hate Waste date label tips at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SG_U5pywxs



Brainstorm the ways that people could reduce food and food-related waste in and by their household.

Write these ideas on the board. These could include:

1. Shopping wisely
2. Purchasing odd-shaped vegies and slightly blemished (but not damaged) fruit, encouraging the sale of food previously destined to be thrown out
3. Understanding the difference between 'use by' and 'best before'
4. Using the freezer, cleaning out food and using food at the back of the freezer occasionally
5. Cooking what you need, or make enough so there are leftovers for tomorrow's lunch
6. Eating what is prepared
7. Cooking and eating your favourite food, to ensure it gets eaten
8. Serving adequate proportions for everyone (not too much on each plate)
9. Finishing old packets before opening new ones
10. Creatively using leftovers

11. Looking in the fridge often, to ensure that the food near the 'use by' date is going to be used
12. Planning meals around what is in the fridge or garden
13. Composting or worm farming
14. Rearing chickens, to eat scraps
15. Growing food (so that it is valued)

Take a copy or a photo of these actions, for Lesson 5.

Imagine the children operate their kitchen at home – they must shop and cook. Divide the class into groups according to the number of ideas they have listed on the board. For example, if there are 15 ideas, make 15 groups. Each group is given one of the ideas developed.

Groups then have 3 minutes to devise a roleplay about how they will dramatically perform each of the topics. For example, for shopping wisely, the students in the group pretend they are at the supermarket, only buying what they need for the week, or what they can store or freeze. The children then, in turn, perform their roleplays for the class.

