



North Runcton 'Low Carbon' Newsletter

February 2021 – Food Waste

WELCOME to the second North Runcton 'Low Carbon' newsletter.

North Runcton Parish Council have joined a Norfolk-wide initiative to promote climate action initiatives in every household. In coming months we will be promoting ideas that can help each and every one of us reduce our personal 'carbon footprint'.

This issue considers food waste – a particular problem that every household can help to address.

What we eat, how much we eat, and how much waste we produce from our eating (including wasted food) are key components that affect our personal or household carbon footprints.

NRPC are supporting the 'Cut a Tonne in 21' campaign and networking with other Councils and groups to share good ideas about how we can all achieve this.

We are also interested to hear the views and ideas of residents – so please get in touch and follow us on the Parish Council Website, our new Instagram site (find link at website), or through our meeting minutes.

FOOD WASTE CAUSES AS MUCH HARM TO OUR PLANET AS PLASTIC WASTE.

Think about all the energy and resources it takes to produce, process and transport food. When we throw food away, we're not only wasting the food, but all the energy that's gone into making it.

Consider the farm machines, 24-hour supermarkets – even the water used to wash and process food. The 'water footprint' (the amount of water used in production and supply) of an orange is 80 litres, for 1kg of lettuce it's 240 litres.

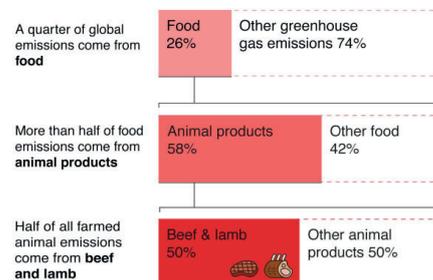
It is established that meat and dairy products are far more environmentally 'expensive' to produce than most vegetable products. To reduce our personal and household 'carbon footprints', we really need to eat less of these foods with a high environmental impact. This will be the subject of a future newsletter.



MOST FOOD WASTE COMES FROM OUR OWN HOMES...

The majority of food waste in the UK comes from households as opposed to restaurants, hotels and businesses, including supermarkets: of the 9.6 million tonnes of food wasted, 6.6 million tonnes is from domestic households. (2018 data)

For more see: <https://www.which.co.uk/news/2019/06/three-food-waste-facts-everyone-needs-to-know>



FIGURES THAT SHOULD HAVE BEEN EASY TO SWALLOW

Of the 6.6 million tonnes of food the UK throws away, 70% could have actually been eaten. This equates to 4.5 millions tonnes of edible food thrown away each year!

The top 10 most wasted food & drinks items by UK households that otherwise could have been eaten are:

- Potato (fresh)
- Bread
- Milk
- Whole meals (both home-made and pre-prepared)
- Fizzy drinks
- Fruit juice and smoothies
- Pork / ham / bacon
- Poultry (chicken, turkey, duck)
- Carrots (fresh)
- Potato (processed)

(compiled by WRAP – 2020)



The stupidest part of this is we are wasting our own hard-earned cash.

UK food waste equates to £15B of food waste each year – or £70/month and £840/year for an average family of four.



EASY TIPS TO REDUCE FOOD WASTE

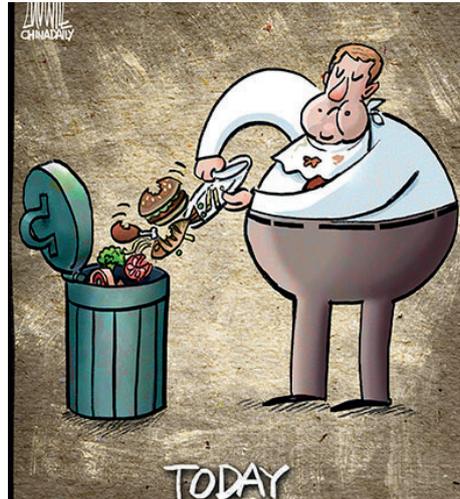
1. Write a meal plan for the week and only buy what you need.
2. Avoid food 'deals' if you are unlikely to eat the food. It's not cheap if you throw it away!
3. Understand the difference between 'use by' and 'best before' dates. 'Use by' is about safety, and food isn't safe to eat after this date. 'Best before' is about quality and foods are perfectly safe to eat after this date.
4. Do a smell test. Even if past the date, it may be fine.
5. Check your fridge is at the correct temperature: between 0 and 5°C.
6. Keep your fruit and veg in the fridge as it will last longer (apart from things like potatoes - which store well at room temp in a cool, dark place).
7. Wash and pat dry salad leaves before putting in the fridge – it will stop the leaves going slimy.
8. Be a creative cook! 'Tired' vegetables are fine in a stew or soup.
9. Use your leftovers for meals the following day or freeze them for future meals.
10. Freeze what you won't use in time. Food doesn't need to be frozen on the day of purchase and is fine to freeze up to the use by date. Most foods can be frozen – bread (slice it first), cheese and even eggs once they've been cracked and beaten.

Food composting

Of course some foodstuffs will end up in our waste, whether it's vegetable and fruit peelings or food that has spoilt. But don't throw it in your black bin where it will stink – make it into something useful you can use – compost!

We think this is such an important topic that it deserves its own newsletter, so that will be next time!

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Remember to **CALCULATE YOUR OWN CARBON FOOTPRINT !**

We are promoting the GIKI carbon footprint calculator – which we think is easy and quite fun to start using.

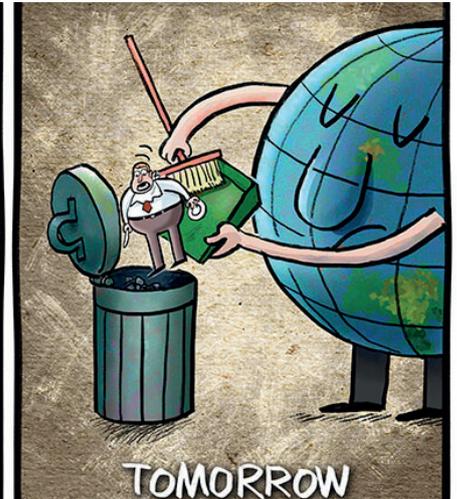
It is FREE and you can quickly learn what key aspects of your life you might be able to change in order to cut your CO² emissions. All you need is internet access. Go to <https://giki.earth/> and set up an account.

You can then go back any time and explore different ways in which you might reduce your carbon footprint.



NEXT NEWSLETTER

Our March newsletter will be more about composting and ideas about cutting other household waste. All these newsletters are also available on the Parish website: <https://northrunctonpc.norfolkparishes.gov.uk/>



Thought for the month...

"Imagine walking out of a grocery store with four bags of groceries, dropping one in the car park, and just not bothering to pick it up. That's essentially what we're doing with a lot of the food we buy.."

Dan Gunders
American food writer

