



Here is an article from the Lent reminders from Climate Stewards about our use of food:

What do a slice of bread, a potato, and a bunch of vegetables have in common?

They are among the most wasted foods in homes today.

In the UK every day, we throw away 24 million slices of bread and 4.4 million potatoes. Weighing in the heaviest are fresh vegetables, with 1.3 million tonnes thrown in the bin every year. The biggest driver of food waste is from us at home! Not big businesses or far-flung places abroad – food waste is a problem brewing on our doorstep.

Beyond our own kitchens, globally, we throw away one-third of all food produced every year. Yet 800 million people go to bed hungry each night.

Food waste is both a hunger and a climate issue. It contributes more to climate change than flying! 6% of global emissions come from food that is never eaten – three times higher than the aviation industry.

Why does this matter for us?

The average UK household throws away £620 worth of food every year. That's money wasted – and carbon in the atmosphere. When food rots in landfill, it releases methane, a greenhouse gas over 80 times more potent than CO₂ in the short term.

Climate change is already affecting our food. Extreme weather disrupted harvests across Europe in 2024 and 2025, pushing up prices on everyday staples. When we waste less, we ease pressure on a food system already under strain. Back in 2017, a group of scientists got together to list the top 100 most significant climate solutions and christened it [Project Drawdown](#). Project Drawdown ranks **reduced food waste as the #1 or #4 climate solution globally** (depending on the climate change scenario) – **higher impact than solar panels on your roof.**

The good news – if we pay attention to our food habits we can live more lightly on the land.

Why reduce meat and dairy?

The climate impact of industrial meat is enormous. Industrial meat production drives deforestation (notably in the Amazon) and requires vast amounts of land and water. When forests are destroyed to produce industrial meat, billions of tonnes of carbon dioxide are released into the atmosphere.

Eating less or no meat, and buying locally produced, organic or low-input meat and dairy products will all reduce our carbon footprint.

How do your food choices impact on the environment? Use [the BBC's Climate Change Food Calculator](#) to find out.

(Note: If you have health conditions or concerns, please talk with your GP before changing your diet.)

Top tips for a lighter footprint

1. Plan ahead: Plan your meals before you go shopping. This is the single biggest thing you can do to cut food waste.
2. Shop your kitchen: Use a recipe finder like [Love Food Hate Waste](#) to use up what you already have.
3. Check dates: Know your use-by from your best-before, and use your freezer.
4. Get creative: Repurpose leftovers into smoothies, soups and stocks.
5. Meat as a treat! According to your budget: local, seasonal and organic.
6. Compost: Avoid putting any vegetable peelings in the bin – prevent scraps going to landfill. Set up a compost bin at home, or ask your church about starting one in the churchyard or garden.
7. Use local council food waste collection services where available - line your caddy with newspaper or starch liners (avoid biodegradable bags which can cause problems).
8. Peel sparingly: Give vegetables a good wash instead and save the water for plants.
9. Be generous: Use the [Olio app](#) to share spare food or donate to food banks after big events.



REFLECTION

After the generous miracle of feeding over 5,000 people, Christ instructed his disciples to gather the fragments leftover. He was both generous and frugal. There is enough food on the planet for none of us to go hungry if we share and are not wasteful.

“Jesus then took the loaves, gave thanks, and distributed to those who were seated as much as they wanted. He did the same with the fish. When they had all had enough to eat, he said to his disciples, ‘Gather the pieces that are left over. Let nothing be wasted.’ So they gathered them and filled twelve baskets with the pieces of the five barley loaves left over by those who had eaten.”

John 6:11–13 (NIV)

FOOD CHALLENGES

Have a go at one of the challenges below:

START SIMPLE

- Fast from meat one day this week.
- Freeze leftovers and repurpose scraps into soups and smoothies.
- Plan meals before shopping.

GO DEEPER

- Go vegetarian for the week.
- [Set up a compost bin in your churchyard or garden.](#)
- Share excess food via the [Olio app](#) or donate to food banks.

BIG LEAP

- Try a plant-based diet for a month.

- Join the food and climate conversation: [Sign up for consultations on the UK Food Strategy](#).
- Volunteer at a food bank or help setup a church food-sharing initiative or pantry.

RESOURCES WE ARE FEEDING ON

- [Too Good To Go](#): An app for buying food from local restaurants that would otherwise be thrown away, at a discounted price.
- [Community Fridges](#): Find your nearest Community Fridge.
- [Local Food Directory & Farm Shops | Food Finders Hub](#)
- [Love Food Hate Waste](#): A recipe finder tool – type in the ingredients you want to use and browse suggestions.
- [Veg Boxes](#): Find your local veg box scheme.
- [Project Drawdown: Food Solutions](#): Explore the world's leading climate solutions for food, agriculture and land use.
- [BBC Climate Change Food Calculator](#): See the carbon footprint of what you eat.