

Go Further with Food This National Nutrition Month

March is recognized as National Nutrition Month, so that means nutrition is top of mind for many of us, especially those of us lucky enough to have studied and practice nutrition on a daily basis. "Go Further with Food" is the theme for 2018, and its importance is timely for many reasons. Whether it's starting the day off right with a healthy breakfast or fueling up before an athletic event, the foods you choose can make a difference. Preparing foods to go further at home and within the community can have a positive impact, as well. As nutrition experts, Academy members can help people adopt healthier eating styles while reducing food loss and waste.

Going further with food choices starts in-store, as your shoppers are looking to make the healthiest choices possible not only for their bodies but their wallets too. Here are a few tips to help your shoppers prevent food waste, especially at home.

Keep a Well-Stocked Fridge, Freezer, and Pantry. Before heading out to the store, take stock of your pantry, refrigerator, and cabinets to see what you've run out of and what still needs to be used. If you still have a half bag of carrots hanging out in the fridge from the previous week, leave these carotene-rich veggies off your list for next time. Giving yourself this direction can steer you past the aisles you have no need to be in.

Plan Meals Based on the Foods You Already Have on Hand. Look in the refrigerator, freezer and pantry for foods that need to be used up. Write a list of the ingredients you still need and buy only the amount that can be eaten or frozen within a few days. This is especially important for perishable foods, like fresh fruits, vegetables, meats, dairy products and seafood.

Master the Shelf Life of Foods. Many foods and drinks purchased at the grocery store include a date, which indicates when it should be used or sold by. Because these dates refer to the product's quality, it doesn't necessarily mean they should be thrown out. "Use by", "Best by" and "Best Before" dates are found on foods, such as mustard, salad dressing and ketchup. These products usually don't need to be refrigerated until opened. In many cases, they are safe to eat beyond the date as long as they have been stored properly. "Sell by" dates are displayed on perishable foods, such as meats and dairy products. It's possible these foods may be used a few days after that date, as long as they were stored at a safe temperature.

Check-Out with Reusable Bags. Plastic bag waste is one of the easiest things to eliminate when grocery shopping. Bring a few reusable bags into the store so you're ready when it comes time to check out.



Katie Serbinski
Registered Dietitian

Katie Serbinski, the official RD for Produce for Kids, is mom of three children under the age of four and a Registered Dietitian from Detroit, Michigan. She's the founder of Mom to Mom Nutrition, a healthy food and lifestyle blog where she share her "me time" with other health-minded parents. On her blog you'll find simple, family-friendly recipes, tips for new moms, and realistic nutrition advice. Through Mom to Mom Nutrition, Katie shows her readers that raising a healthy family is achievable, even when you have a toddler throwing food across your kitchen table and a baby wanting to nurse around the clock.



produceforkids.com

