

THRILL TO THE CHILL

Did you know that 40% of the food in the United States does not get eaten? That's almost half of the food! The average family throws away about 300 pounds of food each year, which adds up to about \$2,000 wasted. That's a lot of waste.*

How can we prevent this? One way to reduce food waste is to use frozen and refrigerated foods. Frozen foods are *flash frozen* to lock in flavor and nutrients. This quick-chill method uses extremely cold air to keep ice crystals small, which prevents the food from losing moisture and drying out when it thaws. So when you're ready to use it, the food is as fresh as the day it was picked or prepared. And because we can take only the amount of food we need, there is much less waste.

Refrigerated food also helps reduce food waste because cold temperatures slow the growth of potentially harmful bacteria—which means your food won't "go bad," forcing you to throw it away. Just remember to always refrigerate perishable and leftover food within two hours of purchase or use.

Part 1

Now, use your problem-solving skills to complete this puzzle. You'll learn tips to include more refrigerated and frozen foods in your meals. Starla, Mark, Chase, and Aria are making fruit snacks! They all want different snacks, and fortunately they have a well-stocked refrigerator and freezer full of nutrient-rich, delicious, flash-frozen fruits to choose from. Use the clues to determine which dessert each person makes.

- Mark is allergic to blueberries.
- Starla's dessert does not contain any berries.
- Chase likes berries but only if they don't stain his fingers red.
- Aria pulls some bananas out of the refrigerator.

Dessert	Starla	Mark	Chase	Aria
Strawberries and cream				
Blueberries and granola				
Peaches and yogurt				
Banana smoothie				

Part 2

Here are some other ways to prevent food waste:

- Follow the recommended portion size on the Nutrition Facts label so you don't prepare more food than you can eat.
- Only thaw the amount of frozen food that you are going to eat.
- Keep an eye on the "use by" dates on refrigerated foods so they don't go to waste.

Now think about what's in your refrigerator and freezer at home. What could you change to reduce food waste? For example, you might stock up pre-grilled chicken strips or get bags of frozen fruits and vegetables, then take only what you need from each bag. Or maybe there's a way to rearrange your refrigerator so that you don't end up throwing any food away. Write your ideas here!

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

* easymomemeals.com/tips/food-waste-infographic/



FAMILIES: VISIT **EASYHOMEMEALS.COM** TO FIND DELICIOUS AND NUTRITIOUS RECIPES USING FROZEN AND REFRIGERATED INGREDIENTS.