

THINK COOL: EAT HEALTHY AND REDUCE FOOD WASTE

Dear Parents and Caregivers,

Did you know that 40% of food in the United States doesn't get eaten? Food waste is a huge problem in our country. In fact, the main component of landfills is food waste. Altogether, Americans throw away about 133 billion pounds of food each year.*

Fortunately, we can all do our part to reduce food waste—and make family mealtime easier—without sacrificing taste or nutrition. Look no further than your grocery's frozen food and dairy aisles.



Your child has been learning some tips in class to prevent food waste and promote food safety and nutrition with an educational program made possible by the National Frozen & Refrigerated Foods Association (NFRA). Ask your child to share what they've learned and explore these topics further at home. Try these tips to get started:

Frozen and Refrigerated Foods Reduce Food Waste

Choosing frozen and refrigerated foods, including ready-to-cook nutritious meals and pre-chopped frozen fruits and vegetables, enables you to take only what you need and store the rest for later, which reduces food waste and prevents throwing away money with your uneaten food. As a family, discuss how you can include more refrigerated and frozen foods in your meals to help reduce food waste.

Food Safety Helps Reduce Food Waste

The "Core Four"** food safety practices help ensure that the food you purchase is safe to eat and won't get thrown out. As a family, discuss how you can follow these rules in your kitchen.

- **Clean** – Always wash your hands and food prep materials before you start preparing food.
- **Separate** – Separate raw meat, poultry, seafood, and eggs from other foods in your grocery shopping cart, grocery bags, and in your refrigerator.
- **Cook** – Cook food to a safe internal temperature—use a cooking thermometer to check.
- **Chill** – Refrigerate or freeze food quickly after purchase or use, and keep your refrigerator's temperature at 40 degrees Fahrenheit, and the freezer at 0 degrees.

Plan Your Meals and Grocery List

Engage your child in planning meals to help reinforce the importance of choosing nutritionally-balanced meals. Ask about the meal plan your child created in class and try it out for a family meal. Then explore the frozen food and dairy sections of your local supermarket together to discover the range of available foods. With foods and beverages from these aisles, create a list of new foods and recipes you would like to try as a family.