The *Halve Our Waste* Residents’ Toolkit was developed to help HOW participants meet their waste reduction goals, however, much of its content is useful for all householders.

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Published in September 2013.  
Designed by Johanna Villani Design.


The *Halve Our Waste* Program is supported by the Victorian Government’s Metropolitan Local Government Waste and Resource Recovery Fund managed by the Metropolitan Waste Management Group.

**Metropolitan Local Government Waste & Resource Recovery Fund**

Frankston City Council would also like to acknowledge the support of Foodwise in supplying the majority of text for the food section of the toolkit.

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“Halve your waste and make a whole lot of difference!”
Section 1: Welcome
“Being on the program has made me think more about what I buy and throw away, and how to reduce this so that I can reduce the amount of rubbish going in my bin”.

Halve Garbage Waste participant
Congratulations on choosing to take the Halve Our Waste Challenge.

Reducing your waste can make a big difference to our environment and our future, and save you money at the same time. We really appreciate the effort you are making. Every little bit counts.

Why take the challenge?

• Around 25,577 tonnes of resources go to landfill each year from Frankston City
• This equals 470 kilograms per household per year (enough to fill 60 Olympic sized swimming pools)
• Sending waste to landfill costs money

What’s it all about?

The Halve Our Waste program aims to support you and your household to substantially reduce your waste. And you won’t be alone – there are around 1000 other households taking this challenge with you, as well as 1000 households who have been on the Halve Garbage Waste pilot program since 2006.

As part of the Halve Our Waste program you will receive:

• A free compost bin with a compost turner OR a subsidised worm farm
• A kitchen caddy to collect your food scraps in the kitchen
• Free workshops on topics including composting and wormfarming, sustainable shopping, food storage and cooking to reduce waste, recycling, growing your own food and more
• Access to online tools such as recipe databases, meal planners, automatic shopping lists, composting and worm farming tutorials and more
• Educational resources and practical tools to help you and your household reduce waste
• Posters and stickers
• A $20 reward to celebrate your achievements each year
• A regular email newsletter to help you on your lifelong journey to reduce waste
• Access to a supportive community to help out if you are having any problems or need a hand along the way.

To identify you as being on the program, your rubbish bin lid will be changed from dark green to red. If you see other red lidded bins around Frankston City, they are on the program too!
Because you will have substantially reduced your waste through composting or worm farming, smart shopping and storing and using your food more effectively, your rubbish bin will be collected **fortnightly**, on the same day as your yellow lidded recycling bin. This acts as a physical incentive to reduce waste. The more space we have, the more we tend to fill it. This is the same with bins. Having less bin capacity encourages us to think more carefully about what we buy and what we throw away.

While it might seem ‘impossible’ from the beginning, with a few simple changes, it really is possible! In fact, around 1000 households just like yours have been doing this since the original Halve Garbage Waste Pilot program was launched in 2006. You will find some of their stories throughout this Toolkit.

**During December and January you can put your bin out weekly if you need to, however for the rest of the year you will have a fortnightly collection. That is a big part of the challenge.**

**Where to Start?**

One step at a time is proven to be most successful, don’t try to change everything at once.

**STEP 1**

Start with the list of things you could do to reduce your household waste, see pages 7-9.

✓ Tick the ones you are already doing (and give yourself a pat on the back).

**STEP 2**

Choose **one thing** to change.

**STEP 3**

Put in place a system that works for you and make sure your household knows about it and is included.

**STEP 4**

Once you feel comfortable with this, choose **one more thing** to change and so on.

**STEP 5**

It can be challenging. Accept that sometimes you will have to buy something that is double wrapped, or you will forget ‘to take your reusable cup’ when you get a coffee. It’s okay. Habits can be hard to break, but persistence will be rewarded.

For more information on the HOW program, please see the FAQ section on page 73, or visit Council’s website www.frankston.vic.gov.au

Good luck!
Let’s talk rubbish

What’s in our bins?

Over half of the waste in our bins is food scraps or garden waste that can be composted, and 14 per cent is material that can be recycled.

This means around 65 per cent of our waste does not need to go to landfill. What a waste!

Reducing our reliance on non compostable and non recyclable items – like polystyrene and soft plastic – is also important in reducing our waste. Once we’ve done that, there will really be very little that needs to go to landfill!

Slim your waste

Reducing waste at home

There are many simple things that you can do at home to slim down your waste. Here are a few handy hints to help you on your way. We strongly recommend not trying to do everything at once… Take it one step at a time, and when you feel like you have that under control, take another step. We all know how fad diets can backfire… Well, it’s the same with slimming your waste! It does require patience and discipline, but don’t beat yourself up if you have to buy something that’s double wrapped!

Shop Smart

- Only buy things you really need
- Look for goods with minimal or no packaging
- Close the loop – buy products made from recycled materials to help support the market for recyclables
- Look for products that can be reused or recycled, and products that will last a long time. Quality may cost a little extra at the beginning, but it will pay off in the long run
- Don’t buy disposable products, such as plastic plates and plastic bags
- Buy refills rather than products in new packaging
- Take your own shopping bags to the supermarket

For more on smart shopping, see page 35.

...more over page >

“As a family of five on the Halve Garbage Waste program, we have had to think more about the rubbish we send to landfill. So our children automatically separate their rubbish into recyclable goods, food for the worms, compost and landfill. Our garden benefits from the worm waste and the compost, and we know we are significantly reducing our contribution to landfill and overall carbon emissions.”

Halve Garbage Waste participant
Compost or Worm Farm

If everyone composted, we could ALL cut our waste in half. To learn more about composting and worm farming, see page 43.

Refuse junk mail

It is amazing how junk mail adds up… Globally, it is estimated that, 100 million trees are harvested to produce junk mail each year. In Australia, 8.2 billion articles of junk mail are produced every year. Put a NO JUNK MAIL sticker on your letter box to stop that waste piling up! And subscribe online instead to your favourite retailers/sellers.

What’s mine is yours…

Instead of buying an item such as a lawn mower or power tools that you only use rarely, consider borrowing from a friend or neighbour or ‘hire’.

If you really need it can you buy an environmentally friendly alternative?

BYO

Always keep shopping bags with you so you have them whenever you go shopping. There are some great bags that wrap up small so you can keep them with you at all times.

Provide children with a reusable lunch box/sandwich pack so there is no waste left at school. Carry a good quality drink bottle with you to refill from the tap rather than buying bottled water. Buy your own reusable portable coffee mug.

Details: page 39.

Have a garage sale

Don’t throw it out, clear it out and make some extra money at the same time.

Do a good deed

Donate your quality goods to charity. This is a great source of income to help charities do their good work in our community, and keeps good stuff from going to waste. Some charities also offer a pick-up service. Details: page 68.

Go ‘vintage’

When hunting for furniture or a new outfit, start your search in second-hand stores. You don’t have to go for the ‘retro’ look – op-shops have a great mix of styles and fashion. You might need to search harder, but the rewards are GREAT! Details: page 69.

Be food wise

Store food correctly so it doesn’t go off unnecessarily. Know what you have in your fridge. Make soup and casseroles with ‘limp’ but still edible vegies instead of throwing them away.

Details: page 15.

Recharge

Buy rechargeable batteries and a charger and no longer waste money on disposable batteries.

Going potty

Make the change to modern cloth nappies – they have come a long way since the time of terry-towelling. Details: page 39.

Wipe out the nasties

Polystyrene and soft plastics cannot be recycled in your yellow lidded recycling bin, and take a VERY long-time to break down. Avoid them whenever possible. If you do have to use polystyrene, it needs to go in your rubbish bin. If you have a large quantity of polystyrene packaging, it can be recycled. Please see the Recycling Directory on Council’s website to find out where.

Grow your own

Put in a vegie or herb garden. Then you can harvest what you need as you need it. Details: page 20.

Reuse

Reuse items as many times as possible. Be creative!
Reducing Waste over the festive season

The festive period brings family and friends together, which is fantastic. Unfortunately it also is a time when a lot of waste is generated. Plan ahead to reduce unnecessary waste.

Here are a few tips:

- **Plan ahead** – make a shopping list and stick to it, and make sure you check your fridge and pantry before you go. Remember – less is more – it is better to buy more later if you need it, than to waste what you have too much of. Also, don’t shop when you are hungry, you tend to buy a lot more!

- **Remember** to take your reusable bags whenever you go to the shops and buy things with minimal packaging.

- **Look** for practical, quality items that will last well and can then be recycled or reused.

- **Consider** giving an ‘activity’ rather than a ‘thing’ e.g. movie tickets, voucher for gardening help, washing the dog or babysitting.

- **Find** alternatives to buying Christmas cards – make your own from recycled paper or old cards or go digital for far flung friends and family. If you receive cards – you could donate them to your locals school or kindergarten for arts activities.

- **Re-use** newspaper or material to wrap gifts (tea towels from an op-shop are a great alternative – and then they get a tea towel too!).

- **Choose** rechargeable batteries for toys and gadgets rather than disposable ones that go straight to landfill. They save money in the long run as well as being better for the environment.

- **Give** a gift that grows – a native tree – or something that helps the garden like a compost bin or worm farm.

- **Donate** to a charity on behalf of a loved one and provide aid for people in need.

- **Buy** your fruit and veg at a market to reduce the amount of packaging, and ensure everything is stored correctly so they don’t go off.

- **Make** dishes using things you already have in your fridge and pantry, so that you aren’t going out to buy more.

- **Reduce** the amount of food waste you send to landfill. Have lots of plastic containers on hand to save leftovers – freeze some, or send ‘doggy bags’ home with your guests. Invest in a compost bin or worm farm, and check out www.foodwise.com.au for great tips on storing and cooking food.

- **Recycle** everything that you can (corks, batteries, light globes, soft plastics and more can be recycled at the Recycling Hubs in the Frankston Civic Centre and Library), or see the Recycling Directory on Council’s website.

There are a zillion other ideas for a greener Christmas! Have a look at Planet Ark’s Guide at www.12dos.planetark.org
Section 2: Love Food Hate Waste
A recipe for taste, not waste!

Being Food Wise!

The problem
Food waste affects every household in Australia – economically and environmentally. 

Australians waste $7.8 billion a year on food, throwing away 4 million tonnes of food. This equals 178kg of food per person that’s bought and never eaten.

In Frankston City alone around 11,735 tonnes of food are going to landfill every year.

Some experts believe that we’re throwing away at least 20% of the food we buy. If you were to go to the supermarket and buy five bags of groceries, then come home and put one straight in the bin, people would think there was something wrong with you. But it’s not far short of what we’re already doing.

The environmental cost of food waste is also devastating.

Producing, transporting and storing food all have environmental consequences. When food waste rots in landfill it produces methane – a greenhouse gas that’s over 20 times more potent than the CO₂ emitted from your car’s exhaust.
Households spend an average of $1,036 per year on food that is wasted. Imagine the holiday you could have with that! This is also enough to feed the average household for over a month, and to pay for six months worth of your electricity bill!
According to CSIRO data, dumping a kilo of beef wastes the 50,000 litres of water it took to produce that meat. Throwing out a kilo of white rice will waste up to 2,385 litres of water and wasting a kilo of potatoes, up to 500 litres.

**Out of the $8 Billion What Do We Waste Every Year?**

- **$2.67 Billion of Fresh Food** - 33%
- **$2.18 Billion of Leftovers** - 27%
- **$1.17 Billion of Packaged and Long-Life Products** - 15%
- **$727 Million of Drinks** - 9%
- **$727 Million of Frozen Food** - 9%
- **$566 Million of Takeaways** - 7%
In 2009, Australian households threw out more than $5 billion worth of food each year – more than Australians spend on digital equipment.
The solution
From an environmental standpoint, we are currently eating ourselves out of house and home. It’s vital that we change our behaviour and become ‘food wise’. If we can switch to green bags and shorter showers, then surely we can save food and stop waste.

Here are a few handy hints on how you can become food wise.

Be Food Wise
- Write a shopping list
- Think twice about two for one offers
- Know what’s in your fridge and cupboards
- Storing your food in reusable plastic containers can make it last much longer
- Keep an eye on the ‘best before’ and ‘use by’ dates
- Never shop when you’re hungry
- Eat in season
- Cook two meals at once and freeze one of them
- Freeze leftovers in reusable plastic containers
- Shop at the local growers’ markets
- Use a worm farm or add scraps to your compost bin
- Put in a vegie or herb garden. Then you can harvest what you need as you need it.
- Organise a food exchange with locals/ neighbours for produce that you have an excess of

Hint: Soup
Soup is a great way to use up left-over vegetables... or why not make a casserole?

Who are the biggest wasters of food? Young consumers (aged 18-24), families with children, and households with an income of more than $100,000 per year.

Photo by Emma Lord
Buy in Season

Produce that is in season locally is cheaper, tastes better and has more nutrients. Fruits and vegetables start to lose nutrients immediately after they are harvested, so the best produce is that which is the freshest. Produce that has been transported over long distances overseas or cross-country can not compete with locally grown produce for freshness, taste and nutritional value.

Check out this handy list to find out what’s in season now:

**Summer**
Apricots, basil, beans, beetroot, berries, capsicum, carrots, cherries, chillies, corn, cucumber, eggplant, figs, grapefruit, grapes, leeks, lettuce, melons, onions, oranges (valencia), parsley, peaches, pears, peas, plums, potatoes, rhubarb, silverbeet, spring onion, squash, strawberries, tomatoes, zucchini.

**Autumn**
Apples, beans, beetroot, brussel sprouts, cabbage, capsicum, carrot, cauliflower, celery, chillies, corn, cucumber, eggplant, figs, grapefruit, grapes, leeks, lettuce, mandarins (imperial), melons, onions, oranges (valencia), parsley, parsnips, pears, peas, potatoes, rhubarb, silverbeet, spinach, spring onion, squash, strawberries, sweet potatoes, tomatoes, zucchini.

**Winter**
Apples, beetroot, broad beans, broccoli, brussel sprouts, cabbage, carrot, cauliflower, celery, grapefruit, jerusalem artichokes, kiwi fruit, leeks, lemons, lettuce, limes, mandarins (imperial), onions, oranges (navel), parsley, parsnips, pears, potatoes, rhubarb, silverbeet, snow peas, spinach, spring onion, turnips.

**Spring**
Artichoke (globe), asparagus, beans, beetroot, berries, broad beans, broccoli, capsicums, carrot, cauliflower, chillies, cucumbers, grapefruits, leeks, lemons, lettuce, limes, mandarins (imperial), onions, parsley, parsnips, peas, potatoes, rhubarb, silverbeet, snow peas, spinach, spring onion, squash, strawberries, zucchini.

Sourced from www.environmentvictoria.org.au

Photo by Benji Lee
FoodWise

Frankston City Council has joined forces with the City of Yarra, City of Whitehorse, and not for profits Cultivating Community and Do Something to develop online tools and resources to support households to reduce their waste. You can find these on the FoodWise website – www.foodwise.com.au

‘FoodWise’ is Do Something’s national campaign to reduce the environmental impact of Australia’s food consumption. We want Australians to become more educated and informed about the food that they eat. In short we want Australians to become Food Wise.

The FoodWise web site gives you practical advice and information on what you can do to solve the problem. With the FoodWise web site, our aim is to create a one-stop food sustainability web site.

By bringing together a community of people who love food, we want to create a more sustainable approach to the way that we grow, distribute, consume and dispose of food.

Visit www.foodwise.com.au and find a bunch of great resources including:

- A fantastic recipe database including recipes from Maggie Beer, Fast Ed, Kylie Kwong, Curtis Stone, Olivia Newton-John, Paul McCartney and other food lovers and waste haters!
- A Recipe Finder where you can enter in items you have in your fridge and pantry to find delicious, easy to make recipes to use up what you already have on hand.
- A great Meal Planner tool where you can pull together a list of recipes for the week ahead, and then easily transport the ingredients you require into a handy, customisable shopping list which is smart phone compatible or easily printable.
- Positive, engaging and interactive videos and printable resources about shopping, cooking and storing food for waste avoidance.
- Video tutorials on home composting by Gardening Australia host Costa Georgiadis
- Loads of useful information on everything to do with food, including seasonal produce, growing your own, and stories from celebrities of the food world.

In other words, FoodWise is a how-to guide to cooking up real change – a recipe for taste, not waste!
Home grown fruit and vegetables give us the best of nutrition by giving us access to fresh produce at our doorstep that still contains its maximum amount of vitamins and live enzymes. Gardening also brings people and families together outdoors, getting healthy organic produce, fresh air, exercise and an awareness of our connection with nature all at once! Growing our own food also saves money. Not all of us can afford an organic grocery bill every week, but most of us can afford some packets of seed, and if you make your own compost, you’re sorted!

Council runs a number of gardening workshops throughout the year, and there are also some fantastic online resources to help you turn your patch into an edible wonderland! Here are a few good ones:

* Sustainable Gardening Australia  
  www.sgaonline.org.au  
  (have a look at their Home Harvest booklet)

* Gardening Australia  
  www.abc.net.au/gardening/

* Gardenate  
  www.gardenate.com for handy hints on what to sow when and how

* Frankston Vegie Growers Network  
  www.vegiegrowersnetwork.wordpress.com

If you don’t have space for a garden at home, why not join a local Community Garden? There are three community gardens in Frankston City:

* Groundswell Community Garden  
  Montague Park, Bentley Place  
  (enter off George Street) Frankston  
  www.groundswell.org.au  
  admin@groundswell.org.au

* Joy of the Earth Community Garden  
  Joy Street, Frankston  
  www.facebook.com/JoyoftheEarth  
  joyoftheearth@gmail.com

* Pines Patch Community Garden  
  Mahogany Neighbourhood Centre  
  26 Mahogany Avenue (access on Stringybark Avenue), Frankston North  
  centre@mahogany.org.au

If you have excess produce like fruit, vegetables, herbs, home-made preserves, cordials, eggs and honey, why not join the Frankston Food Swap? 1st Saturday of the month at:

* New Harvest  
  37 Armstrongs Road, Seaford  
  enquire@newharvestproduce.com.au  
  Phone: 0423 931 323

Home Harvest will also sell your excess produce for you if it has been grown organically.

**Hint: Planting**

How deep you plant seeds into the soil depends on how big the seed is. A large seed (roughly 5mm or larger) can go deeper into the soil. Plant it roughly as deep as the seed is wide, and cover it with soil. Small seeds are placed on top of the soil and fine soil should be sprinkled over them. Small seeds are often better sown in seed trays and transplanted into the garden when they are 4-6 weeks old.
Sow What When!

Here is a handy reference guide for what to plant when.
Please use the online resources or your local library for more gardening help.

**January**
Beans, Beetroot, Broccoli, Brussels sprouts, Cabbage, Carrots, Chinese cabbage, Dill, Grapes, Kiwi, Leek, Lettuce, Mustard, Parsley, Radish, Spring onion, Thyme.

**February**
Beetroot, Broccoli, Brussels sprouts, Cabbage, Carrots, Dill, Endive, Leeks, Lettuce, Mushrooms, Parsley, Parsnip, Radish, Rhubarb, Silver beet, Spinach, Spring onion, Sweet potatoes.

**March**
Beetroot, Broad beans, Broccoli, Brussels sprouts, Cabbage, cauliflower, Chinese cabbage, Curry leaf, Endive, Leeks, Lettuce, Onions, Parsnip, Radicchio, Radish, Rosemary, Rhubarb, Shallots, Silver beet, Spinach, Spring onion, Turnip.

**April**
Broccoli, Cabbage, Carrots, Curry leaf, Garlic, Leek, Lettuce, Mushrooms, Onions, Radicchio, Radish, Rosemary, Shallots, Silver beet, Spinach, Spring onion, Turnip.

**May**
Broad beans, Chevril, Curry leaf, Garlic, Leek, Lettuce, Mushrooms, Onions, Radicchio, Rocket, Rosemary, Shallots, Snow peas, Spinach, Spring onion.

**June**
Asparagus, Broad beans, Lettuce, Mushrooms, Onions, Rhubarb, Snow peas, Spinach, Strawberries.

**July**
Asparagus, Broad beans, Broccoli, Cabbage, Leek, Lettuce, Mint, Mushrooms, Onions, Parsley, Snow peas, Spinach, Spring onion.

**August**
Artichokes, Asparagus, Beetroot, Bok choy, Broad beans, Broccoli, Brussels sprouts, Cabbage, Capsicum, Carrots, Chilli, Coriander, Lettuce, Mint, Onions, Potatoes, Parsley, Parsnip, Radish, Rhubarb, Shallots, Silver beet, Snow peas, Spinach, Spring onion, Swede, Turnip.

**September**
Basil, Beetroot, Bok choy, Capsicum, Carrots, Celery, Chervil, Chillies, Chinese cabbage, Chives, Coriander, Fennel, Lettuce, Marjoram, Mint, Onions, Oregano, Rhubarb, Sage, Silver beet, Snow peas, Spring onions, Tarragon, Thyme, Tomatoes.

**October**
Basil, Beans, Beetroot, Brussels sprouts, Cabbage, Capsicum, Carrots, Celery, Chillies, Chives, Coriander, Cucumber, Dill, Eggplant, Endive, Lemongrass, Lettuce, Parsley, Potatoes, Pumpkin, Radish, Squash, Tomatoes, Zucchini.

**November**

**December**
Basil, Beans, Beetroot, Broccoli, Cabbage, Capsicum, Celery, Chinese cabbage, Cucumber, Dill, Lettuce, Pumpkin, Sweetcorn, Zucchini.
Storing food

Keep your fridge healthy

Fridges should be set to 5°C or below. Keep a thermometer in the fridge to make sure the temperature stays around 4-5°C.

If the fridge motor stays on most of the time, or if your milk, cottage cheese, meat (particularly mince meat) or other perishables are ‘going off’ faster than they should, then your fridge may need maintenance and/or adjustment.

- All perishable and cooked food needs to be stored in the fridge.
- Always store raw food below ready to eat food.
- Store raw meats, fish and poultry on the bottom shelf – where it is coldest.
- Don’t overcrowd food in your fridge. To cool food properly the air must be able to circulate around the food. Overcrowding can easily happen when you’re hosting others. Remove any drinks which don’t have to be in the fridge and keep them cool in an ice filled cooler or basin.
- Cool cooked food until steam stops rising. Then place the food directly into an air-tight container and refrigerate.

This information is adapted from the Food Safety Information Council www.foodsafety.asn.au/

Hint: Holidays

Before you go on holiday, don’t throw out your vegies and perishable foods. Turn them into pasta sauces, curries, bakes and other meals you can freeze in airtight containers. Don’t buy fresh groceries in the days before departure, and before you go make extra meal portions to freeze and eat on your return.
How long do things last?

Store super perishable items like seafood, meat, poultry and dairy on the bottom shelf – the coldest part of the refrigeration section of your refrigerator. These food groups will generally keep for the amount of time indicated below (but this depends on variables such as their freshness at the time of purchase, fridge conditions etc). Why not put the following storage guides on your fridge so that you have them as a handy reference!

### Fridge storage

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fruits and vegetables</th>
<th>Dairy and eggs</th>
<th>Meat, fish and poultry</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2 days</td>
<td></td>
<td>Fish • Poultry • Mince</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 days</td>
<td>Berries</td>
<td>Seafood</td>
<td>Deli meat • Meat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 days</td>
<td>Ripe fruit • Vegetables</td>
<td>Milk • Sour Cream • Cream</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 days</td>
<td></td>
<td>Yoghurt • Cream cheese • Soft cheeses</td>
<td>Cured meat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 month</td>
<td></td>
<td>Eggs</td>
<td>Fruit juice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 months</td>
<td></td>
<td>Butter • Hard cheeses</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Hint: Make your own stock

Make your own stock by using leftover vegetables and chicken. To make vegie stock, just simmer a carrot, a celery stalk, an onion and any other floppy vegetables you have in your fridge in a couple of cups of water for 30 minutes. To make chicken stock, add chicken scraps/bones to the vegie stock and cook for an additional 20 minutes. Leftover stock and coconut milk can be frozen in ice-cube trays. Once frozen, transfer to freezer bags and write a note on it what it is. It will keep for up to 3 months.
### Freezer storage

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Freezer storage</th>
<th>Bread, cereal and grains</th>
<th>Fruits and vegetables</th>
<th>Dairy and eggs</th>
<th>Meat, fish and poultry</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3 months</td>
<td>Bread • Cakes with icing • Biscuits • Slices</td>
<td>Ice cream • Unsalted butter • Hard cheeses</td>
<td>Fish • Mince • Pies</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>6 months</td>
<td>Cakes without icing • Pastry</td>
<td>Non-leafy vegetables • Fruit (eg berries)</td>
<td>Salted butter</td>
<td>Beef • Lamb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 months</td>
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### Pantry storage

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pantry storage</th>
<th>Bread, cereal and grains</th>
<th>Fruits and vegetables</th>
<th>Dairy and eggs</th>
<th>Sauces and marinades</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7 days</td>
<td>Bread • Cake • Biscuits • Slices</td>
<td>Unripe fruit</td>
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<tr>
<td>3 months</td>
<td>Cereal</td>
<td>Onions • Potatoes</td>
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<td>Sauces • Marinades</td>
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<td>6 months</td>
<td>Flour • Brown and wild rice • Dried pasta</td>
<td>Dried fruit</td>
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<td>12 months</td>
<td>White rice</td>
<td>Canned fruit and vegetables</td>
<td>Long-life milk</td>
<td>Oil • Vinegar • Jams • Preserves</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This information is adapted from Food Science Australia.
**Bread, pastry and cakes**

**Bread:** Keep your bread as fresh as possible by stopping moisture loss. Sliced bread should last for two to five days when stored in its wrapper, in a bread box or on a dry airy shelf in the cupboard. Storing bread in the refrigerator is not recommended as bread can quickly stale at low temperatures.

For longer than five days, the freezer is the best place to store bread. Freezing does not affect its nutritional value and you can successfully freeze bread for up to three months. It is best to freeze bread quickly and seal it tightly with as little air in the bag as possible.

**Cakes:** Icing a cake can help increase its shelf-life by reducing moisture loss. High-sugar cakes have a longer shelf-life than those with less sugar. Cakes can be kept in an airtight container to reduce moisture loss.

Cakes can also be frozen to prevent them from going stale. Wrap your cakes tightly in plastic wrap or foil to remove any air before freezing. Frozen cakes will last for about three months with icing and six months without icing.

**Hint: Stale bread**

You can make croutons from stale bread. Cut the bread into pieces, coat them in melted butter, place them in the oven at 180 degrees, and dry roast for 15 minutes or until brown. Cool and store in an airtight container. Alternatively, you can throw them in the food processor and turn them into fresh bread crumbs – these can be stored in the fridge or freezer.

**Eggs and dairy**

**Eggs:** The easiest way to store eggs is in their original carton in the fridge. A quick test for freshness is to check if the raw egg sinks in a bowl or tall glass of water. Fresh eggs stay at the bottom of the bowl while stale eggs float.

Over time egg whites break down and cause air to form in the shell, causing old eggs to float.

Did you know eggs can be frozen too? Lightly beat whole eggs then add a small amount of sugar or salt to them before freezing. Add one teaspoon of salt or one tablespoon of sugar to every six eggs. Freeze in small amounts of one or two eggs (about 55g to 100g). Use the salted eggs in savoury dishes and the sugared eggs for cakes, custards and desserts. Don’t forget to label the packages as ‘salty’ or ‘sweet’! These can keep in the freezer for up to 10 months.

**Cereals, nuts, pasta and rice**

**Cereals, pasta and rice:** After opening, store cereals, rice, flour, pasta and other dry ingredients in good quality airtight containers. If you do not have suitable containers, tightly reseal the original packaging, but it won’t last as long. Make sure you check the use by date on each product and ensure you use it up before this date.

Fresh pasta is best eaten within a few days of buying and can be stored in your fridge until the ‘use-by’ date.

**Pasta – each person needs about 90gm of uncooked pasta. Get to know how many handfuls per person – that way you won’t waste any.**

**Nuts:** These store well in the freezer in an airtight container.

**Did you know eggs can be frozen too?**

Egg whites break down and cause air to form in the shell, causing old eggs to float.

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**How long do things last?**

**Biscuits:** Airtight containers are best for keeping sweet and savoury biscuits fresh. Most sweet biscuits can also be frozen due to their low moisture content.

**Hint:**

Stale bread

You can make croutons from stale bread. Cut the bread into pieces, coat them in melted butter, place them in the oven at 180 degrees, and dry roast for 15 minutes or until brown. Cool and store in an airtight container. Alternatively, you can throw them in the food processor and turn them into fresh bread crumbs – these can be stored in the fridge or freezer.
Cheese: Hard cheeses, like cheddar or parmesan, can be stored in plastic wrap or airtight containers in the fridge. If you buy large economy blocks of cheese, cut them into smaller blocks and freeze, or grate and freeze to avoid the uneaten parts going mouldy. Try not to touch the cheese too much, as the bacteria on your fingers spoils it faster. Store soft cheeses, like camembert, in waxed cheese paper or baking paper. Avoid using plastic wrap because it will cause the cheese to sweat. Blue cheese can be wrapped in foil but remember to change the foil every few days because the acidity of the cheese will attack the foil.

Milk: All fresh milk should be stored in your fridge and returned immediately after use. Always check the ‘use by’ date. If you have too many bottles, freeze them while still fresh so that milk is always available later.

Sour cream: Sour cream will stay fresh unopened for up to one month in the fridge. However, it is best used within a few days of opening. Always check the ‘use by’ date.

Yogurt: Yogurt is best consumed within the first 10 days but can last up to six weeks. If it separates, stir the liquid back into the curd before eating. Always check the ‘use by’ date. If you have too much, freeze some for later.

Vegetables

The vegetables you choose to buy and how you store them influences how fresh they stay. Here are our top tips for your fresh vegetables.

Asparagus: Look for tender straight stems with compact tips. Asparagus can be stored in an airtight bag in your fridge crisper. Use as soon as you can after purchase. If your asparagus has become soft, trim the end and stand in a glass of chilled water.

Avocado: Choose unblemished avocados showing a slight give at the stem end. To ripen, leave at room temperature and place next to bananas. When ripe, store in the fridge for up to two days. When cut open, leave the seed in and brush surface with water or lemon juice. The lemon juice will help to prevent the flesh from going brown. Storing unripe avocados in the fridge will prevent them from ripening.

Beans: Choose firm, unblemished beans and store in an airtight bag in the crisper compartment of your fridge.

Beetroot: Beetroots are best stored in the fridge. Beetroot greens (the tops) are edible and are delicious in salads. Cut the greens from the root and store them separately in the crisper section of your fridge.

Bok choy: Choose bok choy with glossy leaves and white healthy stems. Store in an airtight bag in your fridge crisper.

Broccoli: Choose broccoli with a tight compact head that is blue/green in colour. Use as soon as you can after purchase. The non woody part of the broccoli stalk is also great in stir fries, soup and casseroles.

Brussel sprouts: Choose small, compact and firm heads that are bright green. Store in an airtight bag in your fridge crisper and use as soon as possible after purchase.

Cabbage: Select heavy heads of cabbage with shiny leaves and store in an airtight bag in your fridge crisper.

Capsicum: Choose capsicums with firm and glossy skins, no spots or shrivelled skin. Store in the crisper. If you only use part of it, store with seeds and pith to extend its life.

Hint: Yogurt

Buying yogurt in big tubs makes more financial and environmental sense than buying smaller individually packaged tubs. Leftover yogurt can also be made into icy-pole snacks by freezing. Not only do you cut down on food waste, you also get a nutritious and delicious snack!
Carrots: Choose firm carrots with no signs of softness. Store your carrots unwashed in your fridge crisper. Floppy carrots are great in soups, casseroles or grated in bolognaise.

Cauliflower: Choose a clean white head with firm tight clusters heavy for their size. The leaves should be fresh and green.

Celery: Choose fresh bunches with a tight formation. Store unwashed celery in an airtight bag in your fridge crisper with top and base removed (the bases and leaves are good flavour for soups, stocks and stews) as are old, floppy celery stalks that don’t get used in time.

Chinese broccoli: Choose clean, crisp leaves and compact flowers.

Chinese cabbage: Store Chinese cabbage in an airtight bag in your fridge crisper.

Corn: Select corn with a green husk. Corn can be stored for a short time in an airtight bag in your fridge crisper. It is best to leave the husk on to stop the corn drying out.

Cucumbers: Choose firm, fresh, dark green cucumbers. Use cucumbers as soon as you can after purchase. If your cucumber gets floppy, grate it and mix it with yogurt and serve with curry.

Eggplant: Choose firm, dark and shiny eggplant that is heavy for its size. It should have flesh that bounces back when lightly pressed. Try to avoid those with brown spots or shrivelled skin.

Fennel: Choose firm white fennel with fresh green leaves.

Ginger: Ginger root can be frozen or stored in an airtight container to retain moisture. It will stay fresh for a week at room temperature or up to one month in the fridge.

Garlic: Garlic stored under ideal conditions in a dark, cool, dry place with plenty of air (ventilation) can last up to one year. Try to use fresh garlic within a few weeks of buying it and do not refrigerate it unless the garlic has been peeled or chopped.

Herbs: If you need to store fresh herbs, trim the stems then place them in a jar with about one to two centimetres of water in the bottom. Change the water every two days to keep them fresh. To refrigerate herbs, place a plastic bag over them, then refrigerate. You can also freeze them – they’ll keep up to 6 months.

Lemon or citrus juice: Lemons last well in a fruit bowl, but if one is overripe, it will cause all the rest to ripen too. Squeeze them before they reach this stage, make a yummy cake or lemonade and then freeze any leftovers in ice cube trays for future use.

Lettuce: Choose lettuce that is firm with crisp leaves and remember to check for decay at the stem end. Store in the crisper. Use it as soon as possible after purchase. Do not store lettuce with melons, apples, pears, or other such (ethylene gas-emitting) fruits as they will cause the lettuce to turn brown.

Mushrooms: Look for freshness, firmness and colour. Withered mushrooms are a sign of age. Mushrooms are best stored in a brown paper bag (plastic makes mushrooms ‘sweat’) in your fridge, but not in your crisper. Do not store them near foods with strong odors or flavours – they’ll absorb them like a sponge.

Onions: Choose firm onions. Chives, spring onions and leeks should be stored in an airtight bag in your fridge crisper. All other types of onions should be stored in a cool dark place in open trays. Avoid storing onions and potatoes together, as the gases they each give off will cause the other to spoil.

Parsnips: Choose firm, white, small parsnips with no signs of softness.

Peas: Frozen peas are convenient and available all year round. When in season choose fresh, firm, bright green peas that are not shrivelled or wilted. Store peas in an airtight bag in your fridge crisper.
**Potatoes:** Remove from plastic bags and store in a cool, dark, dry place away from onions. A cardboard box or brown paper bag is ideal. Do not refrigerate or store for longer than necessary as potatoes will turn green and go soft. If your potatoes become green or soft you should compost them or add them to your worm farm.

**Pumpkin:** Store cut pumpkin in plastic wrap in your fridge crisper or at room temperature for whole pumpkins.

**Radish:** Select firm, fresh-looking radishes. Store in your fridge crisper with all tops and leaves removed. Use within a week of purchase. To restore crispness and crunch, stand in chilled water before using.

**Silverbeet:** Choose fresh, dark green bunches, with no signs of blemish or wilting. Store in an airtight bag in your fridge crisper and use as soon as possible after purchase.

**Spinach:** Choose fresh, dark green bunches, with no signs of blemish or wilting. Store in an airtight bag in your fridge crisper and use as soon as possible after purchase.

**Sweet potato:** Avoid sweet potatoes that are cracked, bruised or soft. Store in a cool, dark, well-ventilated place.

**Tomatoes:** Select bright coloured tomatoes. Store tomatoes at room temperature away from direct sunlight to allow for natural ripening. To avoid over-ripening, tomatoes can be stored in your fridge crisper however they will lose some of their flavour. If you have an excess, make tomato sauce and store in airtight containers.

**Zucchini:** Choose zucchini with glossy skins and no soft areas. Store zucchini in a bag (preferably paper or cloth to prevent ‘sweating’) in your fridge crisper and use as soon after purchase as possible.

**Fruit**

Keep an eye on your fruit bowl – ripe and rotting fruit will accelerate the deterioration of other fruit in the bowl. Separate fruit that is very ripe from the rest – preferably in the fridge.

**Apples:** Choose firm apples and avoid bruises. Refrigerated apples will keep longer than those left at room temperature. To maximise your apple’s flavour return it to room temperature before eating.

**Apricots:** Choose plump, firm (but not hard) fruit. Select your apricots based on how it smells or tastes, not how it looks. Apricots will ripen at room temperature. If refrigerating, keep apricots at room temperature for several days before eating to fully develop their flavour.

**Bananas:** Choose firm fruit and only buy for immediate use, especially in summer. Store bananas at room temperature in the open (not in the cupboard) so they do not ripen too quickly. Once ripe, they can be stored in the fridge but their skin will turn black. Choose bananas at different stages of ripeness so they do not all ripen at once. You can freeze bananas without their skin in a zip-lock bag for up to three months and use them for smoothies or baking. They also make great substitute icy-poles!

**Blueberries:** Blueberries are usually sold in punnets and can deteriorate fast. Choose plump, firm good coloured berries. Check the base of the punnet for mould or spoilage. Store your blueberries covered in the fridge and use as soon as possible.

**Hint: Greens**

Droopy greens in your fridge? Place them in ice cold water for 10-20 mins to revitalise and then spin or pat dry.
Cherries: Choose plump firm cherries with fresh green stems. Avoid over ripe and split fruit. Wash cherries just before using them. Cherries can be stored in an airtight container in the fridge for a short time only.

Custard apple: Ripe custard apples yield slightly when gently squeezed. When buying a custard apple try to avoid dark blemishes and choose fruit that is heavy for its size. Hard custard apples should be stored at room temperature until they soften and can then be refrigerated. Be careful handling custard apples as the fruit bruises easily.

Feijoa: Ripe feijoas yield slightly when gently squeezed and are fragrant. Avoid soft fruit. Let feijoas ripen at room temperature then refrigerate.

Figs: Figs should be plump. Try to avoid shrivelled or over sticky skins on fruit. Figs are highly perishable and should be stored in single layer in the fridge for a short time only.

Grapes: It is important to only choose ripe, firm grapes in bunches without withered or broken fruit or stickiness. Grapes do not ripen once they have been removed from the vine. Grapes can be stored in an airtight container in the fridge for a short time only. Remove any squashed or rotten grapes before storing. You could also freeze them for a tasty summer snack.

Grapefruit: Try to choose heavy fruit because lighter fruit can have thick skin and little flesh and juice. Small blemishes on the grapefruit's skin do not reduce its quality. Store under refrigeration.

Guava: Choose firm fruit with a greenish-yellow skin colouring. Ripe fruit should yield to gentle pressure. Keep at room temperature until ripe and then place in refrigerator crisper.

Honeydew melon: All melons should be heavy and firm for their size. Avoid soft melons. Honeydew melons will yield to gentle pressure at the flower end. Store in the fridge and when cut, place in an airtight container.

Kiwi fruit: Choose only firm fruit, which yields to gentle pressure. Kiwi fruit ripens at room temperature. To ripen faster, place in a brown paper bag with an apple or banana. Kiwi fruit can also be stored in the fridge during the summer months if necessary.

Lemons: Choose heavy, glossy, yellow and firm fruit. Ripe lemons have a pleasant citrus fragrance. Lemons may be stored at room temperature or in the fridge.

Limes: Select heavy firm fruit, evenly coloured and glossy. Limes may be stored at room temperature or in the fridge. Keep out of sunlight, as limes will deteriorate.

Lychees: Choose only ripe fruit as green fruit will not ripen. Look for firm fruits with no signs of decay at stem end. Store covered in the fridge as lychees deteriorate rapidly.

Mandarins: Choose fruit with glossy skin, fine texture and that feel heavy for their size. Try to avoid fruits with soft spots. A loose feel and puffy appearance is normal due to the easy-to-peel skin. Mandarins can be stored either at room temperature or in the fridge.

Mangoes: Select mangoes that yield to pressure and avoid signs of bruising or whitening. Mangoes can be ripened at room temperature. Mature-green mangoes usually ripen within 7–10 days between 18–22°C. Keep ripe mangoes well wrapped in the fridge (about three days).

Nashi pears: Choose firm, unblemished fruit. Depending on the variety, the colour may be either green-yellow or part-to-full cinnamon/brown. Avoid fruit that is rubbery. Nashi pears are best stored in your fridge crisper.
**Nectarines**: Choose fruit without bruising. Green fruit will not ripen properly as it has been picked when immature. Ripen your nectarines at room temperature and then store in the fridge if necessary for a short time.

**Oranges**: Choose firm, heavy and glossy fruit and try to avoid soft spots. Oranges can be stored at room temperature or in the fridge.

**Passionfruit**: Choose heavy fruit without excessive wrinkling. Store in airtight bags in the fridge or scoop out the pulp and freeze.

**Pawpaw**: Choose sweet smelling fruit without bruises and black spots, which are a sign of deterioration. At times ‘freckles’ appear on the skin. This does not affect the flesh. Pawpaw is a very delicate fruit, handle it carefully to reduce bruising. It may be stored in the fridge for a short time.

**Peaches**: Ripe, firm peaches will soften at room temperature. Refrigerate ripe fruit for a short time only.

**Pears**: Choose fairly firm unblemished fruit. Handle gently as pears can bruise easily even when not fully ripe. Pears that have spent a short time in cool storage will ripen quickly. Firm unripe fruit can be kept at room temperature where it will change from hard green with little flavour, to ripe yellow, which will be full of juice and flavour. When full ripeness is achieved rapid deterioration takes place so keep in the fridge for a very short time only.

**Pineapples**: Select fruit that is plump and heavy for its size (a sign of good juice content), with green fresh looking leaves and a distinct sweet-tropical aroma. Pineapples do not turn gold during winter, so a green tinged pineapple can still be ripe and ready to eat. Pineapples are best stored in the fridge and should be used as soon as possible. If stored out of the fridge, keep out of direct sunlight. Keep in airtight container if already cut.

**Plums**: Select plump full-coloured fruit, firm but yielding to gentle pressure. Avoid hard or poor coloured fruit and brown discolouration and cracking. Plums will ripen at room temperature for greatest flavour. You can store them in the fridge for a short time only.

**Pomegranate**: Choose those heavy for their size with bright skins. Pomegranates should be stored in a cool, dark place or in the fridge.

**Raspberries**: Choose bright red, firm berries and check the base of the punnet for spoilage or mould. Store covered in the fridge. Use as soon as possible as raspberries can deteriorate fast.

**Rhubarb**: Choose crisp, firm and long brightly coloured stalks and avoid rough or droopy stalks. Rhubarb can be kept in the fridge, sealed in either a plastic bag or an airtight container.

**Rockmelon (Cantaloupe)**: A porous skin allows an exotic smell when ripe. Ripe rockmelon will yield to gentle pressure at the flower end. Store in the fridge. When cut, place in an airtight container.

**Strawberries**: Choose clean bright red fruit. A fresh, bright, green stem should be attached. Check the base of the punnet for mould or moisture from overripe fruit. Store in the fridge.

**Watermelon**: Watermelon should sound hollow when tapped. Watermelons should be kept in the fridge and when cut, cover with plastic film or store in an airtight container.

**Meat, chicken and fish**

**Raw Meat**

It is essential that raw meat and poultry are refrigerated promptly after purchase and remain refrigerated until they are ready to be cooked. It is important to keep raw meat in a sealed container or wrapped to avoid contamination with other food types such as salads or vegetables. Store your meat in the coldest part of the fridge – usually at the back on the bottom shelf, above the crisper. The biggest source of heat in a fridge is the warm air that rushes in every time you open the door. Cold air sinks, so it collects at the bottom and, in a fridge freezer, the bottom shelves will be coldest. But in a fridge with an ice-making compartment at the top, it will be the top. Frost-free fridges circulate the air and have much more even temperature distribution.
Wrapped fresh meat can be kept safely for up to three days in cold temperatures 0-3 degrees Celsius or less (based on the coldest part of your fridge). Wrapped meat remains moist and maintains its quality but surface growth of microorganisms is encouraged and the meat becomes slimy after about three days. If you notice an off odour, the best thing to do is to throw the food out.

Unwrapped meat lasts longer than wrapped meat. When meat is stored unwrapped, the exposed surface dries out. This drying retards microbial growth but over-drying causes undesirable colour changes and loss of flavour.

A compromise can be reached by storing your meat in an adequately ventilated container or loosening the wrapping around the meat so air can circulate. To ensure all surfaces are exposed to drying, place the meat on a clean stainless steel, chrome plated or plastic rack. Do not sit the meat on a plate or other solid surface, or pack it too closely. This will reduce the drying effect.

Cured meat has a longer storage life. Unwrapped cured meat may last up to three weeks at 0° to 3° C.

Uncooked minced meat, liver, kidneys, poultry and seafoods need careful storage because they usually carry large numbers of spoilage microorganisms. These can grow even at refrigeration temperatures, so always store these foods in the coldest part of the refrigeration section as close as possible to 0° C. The longest recommended storage time is three days.

Before storing chilled chicken for a couple of days, it is a good idea to take off the plastic wrapping, wash the chicken thoroughly, dry it with a paper towel then store as above.

Defrosting tips for raw meat and poultry

It’s a great idea to freeze raw meat and chicken if it will not be used within two days of purchase. Never defrost meat or poultry at room temperature on the bench top. It is best to plan ahead for slow, safe thawing in the fridge. Boneless chicken breasts will usually defrost overnight. Whole chickens might take one to two days or longer. Once defrosted, meat and poultry can be kept in the fridge an additional day before cooking.

Meat can also be defrosted in cold water in its airtight packaging or in a leak proof bag. Submerge meat or poultry in cold water, making sure to change the water every 30 minutes to ensure it stays cold. A whole (1.5 to 2 kilograms) package or parts should defrost in two to three hours.

Meat and poultry defrosted in the microwave (use the defrost setting) should be cooked immediately after thawing because some areas might become warm and begin to cook during microwaving. Storing partially cooked meat or poultry is not recommended because any bacteria present would not have been destroyed.

Cooked Meat

Meat, poultry and seafood must be refrigerated as soon as possible after cooking. Never leave cooked meals at room temperature for longer than two hours. Keep hot food in an oven or on a stove, above 60 degrees Celsius until you are ready to serve. If not eaten within two hours, cooked meals should be refrigerated.

Avoid condensation and do not cover hot pieces of meat before refrigerating. Place cooked meat in your fridge uncovered until it cools, then cover the container or wrap the meat tightly with cling wrap. Store cooked products above any raw meat, poultry or seafoods to avoid cross contamination from raw meat liquid or drip where this could occur. However, if the top shelves of your refrigerator are the coldest, the more perishable fresh meats should be stored there. Special care should then be taken to cover other dishes to prevent contamination.
Delicatessen meats

Delicatessen meats such as ham, corned beef, salami and lunch meats must be stored in the fridge. Lunch meats will only keep for four to five days after purchase. Only buy small quantities of sliced luncheon meats to ensure you eat them before they go bad.

Pre-packaged delicatessen items can be stored until the ‘use-by’ date.

Fish

Fresh whole fish should be gutted and washed if it is to be stored for more than 24 hours. Cooked or uncooked fresh seafood should be kept for only one or two days in the coldest, non-freezing, part of the fridge ensuring it will not touch or drip onto other produce.

Use within two to three days after purchase. Seafood must be well wrapped to prevent drying as well as the strong smell from tainting other foods in your fridge.

If freezing fish, clean and prepare it as if you were going to eat it and freeze as fillets. You can freeze a whole clean fish, if you want to cook and serve it whole. Make sure you label and date the fish.

If your freezer can maintain a temperature of –18 degrees Celsius or colder, lean seafood such as prawns, bream, whiting, snapper, lobsters and scallops will keep for 9-12 months. Fatty seafood such as mullet will only keep well for three to four months before off-flavours develop.

Prawns

Prawns are a summer favourite especially during the festive season. If you are buying whole prawns the heads should be firmly attached and the shell tight and shiny.

It is best to store prawns in the fridge away from other foods in an airtight container and leave them in their shell for as long as possible. Prawns should be eaten within three days or can be frozen for up to three months.

Ham

Talk to your butcher about what size ham is best for your needs. Hams can be purchased without packaging or wrapped in heat sealed plastic. Always follow the storage instructions. A reduced-salt ham will be healthier, but may not last quite as long.

Keep your ham wrapped in a clean cotton pillow case or ham cloth that has been rinsed in a solution of two cups water and two tablespoons white vinegar. Replace the wrapping every three days. Store your ham on a tray or plate in the fridge. Don’t let any raw food such as other meats touch the ham.

When serving, slice off the amount of ham you need and return the ham to the fridge. Ham needs to be eaten within two hours or returned to the fridge.

Leftover sliced ham can be kept in the fridge for up to two days if wrapped in plastic or foil. If your fridge is overflowing, slice all the ham off the bone and enclose in cling wrap, then foil. It will keep in the freezer for a month or more, depending on the freezer temperature.

Information provided by Food Wise

How NOT to shop til you drop...

**Menu Planning**

Our shopping habits directly link to the amount of food we waste. We buy far more than we need and waste food which is perfectly edible. Plan your shopping for a waste free kitchen:

**STEP 1** Shopping list

To avoid over-buying – write a shopping list and stick to it. Take two minutes before you leave the house to check your cupboards, fridge, freezer and veggie patch, to gauge what you already have in stock and avoid double-ups. You may even find inspiration for meal ideas.

**STEP 2** Plan a weekly menu

Plan a weekly menu, including supplies for morning teas and lunch boxes. Make the most of leftovers! Make a casserole one night and use leftovers the next night in a pie. If you use half a pumpkin in a curry, use the other half in a lasagna the next night.

Ensure you use the most perishable food like meat and dairy products earlier in the week, and plan meals like soups or casseroles later in the week to use any spare vegetables that may be on the way out.

Write down all ingredients needed, then cross-check the list with your fridge and pantry. Buy only what you don’t already have. You’ll also save money by not impulse buying, and you’ll have a healthier and more varied diet for it.

**STEP 3** Special offers

While buying on mass can be a money saver – especially for dry goods which can last months stored well in your pantry – this can also lead to waste – particularly for perishable food. Always check the use-by date and make a plan for how to use them to make sure nothing goes to waste. Freezing goods in airtight containers before they reach their use by date can also prolong their edible lifespan.

**STEP 4** Know when not to shop

Never shop for food when you’re hungry. You will be more susceptible to food waste traps and less likely to make smarter, more sustainable choices.

**STEP 5** Kidspeak

You’re unlikely to let your children dictate the way you dress in the morning or the colour you decide to paint your house. The same should apply for food. While it’s fantastic to involve kids in the kitchen and helping to choose foods from your local market or store, don’t let their spontaneous desire for foodstuffs draw you into buying foods you don’t want or need.

For fantastic resources to help you be food wise, visit www.foodwise.com.au

For some great resources on buying in season and ethical shopping visit www.sustainabletable.org.au
**Menu Planner & Shopping list**

**Remember** to check your fridge and pantry first so that you don’t double up, and plan your meals around what you already have.

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<tr>
<th>Meal</th>
<th>Ingredients needed</th>
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<td>Breakfast</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friday</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Breakfast</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saturday</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Breakfast</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunday</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Breakfast</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Staples / Snacks / Other**

**Photocopy** this Meal planner & Shopping list template as many times as you like! add, or visit www.foodwise.com.au and use the great meal planner and automated shopping list there.
Section 3: Shop smart and save
Shop smart and save

To help reduce waste it is important to consider shopping choices and a product’s life cycle.

Every product goes through a series of stages which uses natural resources and generates waste, including:

- raw material extraction and processing
- manufacturing
- packaging and distribution
- product use
- product disposal

Being aware of this helps us make better informed and ethical choices.

Don’t rely on environmental claims made by manufacturers. Savvy marketing can give the illusion a product is environmentally friendly and is known as ‘Green washing’.

Before making a purchase, consider the following.

**Do I really need it?**

Avoid unnecessary consumption. Do you really need it? Is it urgent? Important? **Or is it an impulse or habitual buy?**

If you need it then ask yourself if you can borrow, share, rent/lease or buy the product second hand.

“Aussies have admitted to spending over $10 billion every year on goods we do not use: clothes and shoes we never wear, CDs we never listen to, DVDs we never watch and food we never eat and each year in Australia nearly 20 million tonnes of waste goes to landfill. By way of comparison, this amount exceeds spending by Australian governments on universities and roads”.

Clive Hamilton, Affluenza.

“Being on the program has helped me to foster a more considerate culture – my family now think about what we buy – especially packaging and buying disposables. It gives us a sense of satisfaction and pride in doing the right thing.

Halve Garbage Waste participant
Buy nothing new month

Buy Nothing New Month is the global movement for collective, conscientious consumption, taking place in October each year.

It’s a little idea that started in Melbourne and is spreading to Europe and the US.

It’s a one month challenge to buy nothing new (with the exception of essentials like food, hygiene and medicines).

Buy Nothing New Month isn’t Buy Nothing New Never. Nor is it about going without.

It’s about taking one month to think, “do I really need it?” If I do, “can I get it second-hand, borrow it or rent it? What are my alternatives? Can I borrow from a friend? Can I swap with my neighbour?”

It’s about thinking where our stuff comes from (finite resources) and where it goes when we’re done (often landfill) and what are the alternatives out there to extend the life of our ‘stuff’.

It’s easy. It’s fun. It’s moving from consumption-driven to community-driven.

It’s good for us, our wallets and our planet.

Hop on board! www.buynothingnew.com.au

What is it made from?

It’s not always easy to know what materials have gone into a product and which have the lowest environmental impacts. Consumer and environment groups such as www.ethical.org.au and www.ecobuy.org.au can also be helpful when researching the environmental and social impacts of products, or looking for environmentally responsible alternatives to products you already buy.

Products made from recycled materials (for example paper and cardboard, aluminium, steel and some plastics) have reduced their impact on the environment and provide a market for the recyclables you put in your recycling bin.

Look for products made from post-consumer recycled content. This means the product has been made from material that has completed its life cycle as a consumer item.

Biodegradable materials are organic and break down into natural raw materials (CO2, water, simple compounds and biomass) as a result of micro organisms (bacteria, fungi and algae).

Degradable materials can break down into smaller parts as a result of physical or chemical processes. Degradable plastics are oil based products with chemicals added to assist them to break down. While they may ‘break down’ faster, they will still persist in the environment for many years to come – just in smaller pieces. Many plastic bags you find in supermarkets now are ‘degradable’ – not biodegradable. It’s best to avoid plastic bags whenever possible.

Compostable materials will biodegrade within a certain timeframe in the presence of micro organisms, heat, oxygen and moisture, and will disintegrate in a composting environment creating no toxic residue. In landfill there is not enough oxygen for biodegradable and compostable materials to break down effectively, which is why methane, a potent greenhouse gas, is created from such items in landfill.

As a guide, look for the following information about materials:

✔ 100% post-consumer recycled content as a first preference and recycled content as a second preference (for paper, plastic and glass)
✔ Unbleached and totally chlorine free (for paper products)
✔ Made from sustainably managed timber – preferably Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certified (for wood and paper products)
✔ Palm oil free
How was it produced?
The manufacturing process can cause environmental impacts. Ask whether the manufacturer has tried to improve the production process to use less energy, materials and water, or create less waste.

Products with respected green product certification will feature logos such as Good Environmental Choice Australia and the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC).

Some companies include ISO 14001 certification on product labels. This certification indicates the company has set goals to improve their environmental performance and has a system in place to meet these goals.

How is it packaged?
Packaging is a major cause of household waste. Increasingly, manufacturers and retailers are getting the message that we don’t want unnecessary packaging. Choosing products with less packaging reinforces this message.

If you can’t avoid packaging, choose packaging made from recycled materials and/or can be recycled. Look for the recycling symbol and/or the plastic identification code on plastics.

In Frankston City you can recycle rigid plastic bottles, containers and packaging codes 1-7, but not polystyrene or soft, ‘scrunchable’ plastic packaging, plastic bags or plastic wrap in your yellow lidded recycling bin.

• Keep a compact reusable bag in your bag or glove box
• Take your own reusable bags and reusable plastic containers to the supermarket so you don’t have to use their packaging. Use small mesh sacks for your fruit and vegetables
• Instead of buying individually packaged goods like yogurt or juice, buy one larger container and decant them into small reusable containers for lunch boxes
• Take your own reusable plastic containers to the butcher or deli so they can place your meat, cheese, or other goodies in directly
• If you get caught without a bag, ask for a cardboard box. Council’s yellow-lidded recycling collection will recycle cardboard, but we can’t accept plastic bags.

Hint: Clean green
Make your own green cleaning products and avoid the packaging. There are many great sites on the internet where you can find advice. Visit www.environment.nsw.gov.au/households/EasyCleaning.htm to download a two page green cleaning guide.

“Being on the program has forced our household to be more considerate about our personal waste.”
Halve Garbage Waste Participant
**Case Study**

**Halving your waste (or at least your ‘collection’ capacity) is certainly very achievable.**

We have a household of five, and manage easily most of the time! By recycling and composting and trying to avoid buying over-packaged products, we manage to have room left in our garbage bin each fortnight.

By choosing to use modern cloth nappies, we’re making a huge impact in ensuring that thousands of nappies don’t end up sitting in landfill – for up to 500 years! It is a bit of extra work, but worth it to help create a better environment for our children. We generate our own solar electricity as well as buying 100% Green Power, so there are no emissions associated with use of our washing machine.

We also look forward to making the most of the Council’s new Recycling Hub facilities. Finally I’ll have somewhere local and accessible to regularly drop off soft plastics, batteries and corks – yay!

Ultimately it’s about having the WILL to do it. There are practical/financial concerns too: less waste means lower rates, more recyclable material means more income for Council, which again lowers rates. And less thrown out full stop means fewer loads by trucks, which means fewer transport emissions. It just makes sense from so many angles!

Claire & Jonathan Dawson, Halve Garbage Waste participant
Alternatives to disposables

Plastic bags
Australians use over 6 billion non-biodegradable plastic bags each year. Most people only use them once, then throw them away. As they are light weight, they often end up in the ocean where turtles, dolphins and other sea animals mistake them for jelly fish, then die a painful death.

Plastic takes over 400 years to break down, which means every single plastic bag you have ever used is still in the world today. Keep a compact reusable bag in your glove box or handbag, and take bags with you when you are shopping.

Visit www.banthebag.com.au to learn more about plastic bags.

Many people are still using single use plastic bags for their fruit and vegetables at the supermarket. Try using Fregie Sacks or other bags that you can reuse when buying your loose items at the store. www.thefregiesack.com.au or www.onyainnovations.com.au

If you know you are going shopping, take some reusable plastic containers with you to use at the deli section or to put dried fruit, nuts, lettuce, beans and more into, rather than using the plastic bags provided by the store. If you have old plastic bags, take them to the Frankston Civic Centre or library to recycle.

Bottled water
Australians spend more than half a billion dollars a year on bottled water. Australia’s annual use of bottled water generates more than 60,000 tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions – the same amount that 13,000 cars generate over the course of a year. Rather than buying thousands of single use bottled water, carry a reusable bottle with you. Victoria has excellent drinking water, so why spend extra money on something that can come for free?


Refillable cup
Cutting down on waste means cutting down on disposables, but you don’t have to kick your take-away coffee habit if you carry a reusable cup, such as a Keep Cup with you. This reusable cup is small and light so you can take it with you everywhere and never be caught out when coffee calls.

Nappies
There are many modern, easy-to-use alternatives to disposable nappies now available including reusable cloth nappies and compostable nappies. Reusable nappies can be purchased online, at wholefood stores and at some supermarkets and baby stores. Join the SE Melbourne Cloth Nappy Network on Facebook and chat with other people who already use them, and visit the Casey Nappy Expo in October/November to learn more about the range of reusable nappies available.

Ecotushies
0407 197 864
info@ecotushies.com.au
www.ecotushies.com.au

Ecotushies have a nappy library available so that you can try before you buy.

Little Diamond Bums
Locally produced modern cloth nappies
Frankston South
info@littlediamondbums.com
www.littlediamondbums.com.au
0408 NAPPY / 0408 662 779
Personal hygiene products
Menstrual cups are a great new alternative to tampons. They are hygienic, easy to use and comfortable. Reusable pads are also a good option. Both are available online and at some wholefood stores. Visit these websites to learn more.

www.labyrinth.net.au/~obsidian/clothpads
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Menstrual_cup

Box it don’t wrap it
Use reusable sandwich containers or a lunchbox to keep your sandwiches and snacks fresh and in one piece.

Compostable partywares
Use real crockery and cutlery for entertaining and picnics and consider compostables as an alternative to disposables. It is possible to find a large range of plates, cutlery, cups and other items made from bamboo, palm leaves and corn starch that can be composted rather than landfilled. For more information on bioplastics visit the following websites:

www.worldcentric.org/biocompostables/bioplastics
www.greenpackshop.com.au
www.goinggreensolutions.com.au

Avoid packaging
One of the biggest challenges when cutting down on waste is avoiding plastic or polystyrene packaging. New Harvest in Seaford offers loose, bulk items such as rice, pasta, cereals, grains, coffee, nuts, flours and refillable options for olive oil, shampoo, laundry liquid and washing up liquid to name just a few. You can take your own containers to fill up and save on packaging.

New Harvest
37 Armstrongs Road Seaford
03 9785 2114 or 0423 931 323
www.newharvestproduce.com.au

Recharge
Australians use approximately 10,000 tonnes of batteries every year, of which around 70 per cent are single-use batteries and mostly end up in landfill. Batteries can contaminate soil and groundwater as many contain toxic metals such as cadmium, mercury and lead. Others contain valuable materials like magnesium and zinc. Rechargeable batteries can be recharged hundreds of times, so not only do they save you money, but through effective recycling can reduce waste, reduce natural resource use and reduce the greenhouse gasses associated in extraction of these resources. While rechargeable batteries cost more initially, they can be reused hundreds of times and last for years, if used properly.

If you have old non-rechargable batteries, take them to the Frankston Civic Centre or library to recycle.

“It feels good that we have so little waste. We’re doing our bit – saving landfill and the environment.”
Halve Garbage Waste participant
Section 4: Your garden will eat it
Composting and worm farming

The Good News
• Compost improves soil structure and adds nutrients
• Compost and mulch help retain moisture in the soil, saving you water
• Composting can reduce the greenhouse gas – methane – which is produced by rotting rubbish in tips
• Composting saves landfill space
• Composting reduces the cost of rubbish disposal to the community
• Composting and worm farming is easy!

How To Compost

STEP 1
Get a compost bucket
Find a container – preferably with a lid – that you can keep in your kitchen to collect your food scraps in. Choose a container that is big enough to fit your daily scraps in, but small enough that you will need to empty it fairly regularly to prevent it from getting smelly. Also choose a container that is easy to clean. Some people like to line their compost bucket with newspaper or compostable bags to make cleaning easier. Make sure everyone in your household knows what it is, and what can and can’t go in it.
STEP 2
Select a location for your compost bin

Where will it be accessible and practical? – if you put it at the back of the garden behind your garden shed where spiders like to hang out, it is less likely that you will use your compost bin effectively. Have it reasonably close to your kitchen, but also close to where you will be using the compost when it is ready.

A shady spot in the garden is an ideal location for your compost bin. Too much sun can dry your compost, however if you only have sunny places available, don’t worry, you will still be able to make fantastic compost – and it will also heat up more quickly, you may just need to add a little water over summer. The bottom of the compost bin should be open so that the compost can make contact with the ground, allowing worms to come and go, and nutrients to get into the soil. If you have a tumble bin or a closed compost system, you can put it anywhere.

If you can, have two compost bins – one as the ‘working bin’ (the one you add to every day) and one as the ‘digesting bin’ (the one you leave to digest after it is full so that you can use your compost more quickly).

STEP 3
Start filling your compost bin

Adding a diversity of materials to your compost is vital. It will keep the good bacteria alive and happy and will also ensure materials break down efficiently. Try to get a good balance between nitrogen rich (greens) and carbon rich (browns) products over time. For example, after a few days of placing food scraps into the compost bin, cover it with a layer of soil, garden waste or shredded newspaper. This helps discourage insects and vermin from feeding in your compost and it also helps heat the compost and accelerate the decomposition process.

“Sometimes I ask my neighbours for their grass clippings and also when the grass is being cut in my local park I fill several doggie bags full of clippings for the compost bin and my chickens for fresh green pick. Autumn is a great time of year to stock up on browns! There are plenty of things around us if we keep our eyes open!”

Halve Garbage Waste participant
### Have a good balance between ‘Greens’ and ‘Browns’

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Greens (nitrogen rich)</th>
<th>Browns (carbon rich)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>✔ Fruit &amp; vegetable scraps</td>
<td>✔ Dry grass and weeds (try to use seedless ones)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✔ Tea leaves and bags</td>
<td>✔ Autumn leaves</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✔ Coffee grounds</td>
<td>✔ Straw</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✔ Green leaves</td>
<td>✔ Shredded newspaper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✔ Flowers</td>
<td>✔ Paper towels (perhaps collect them from the bathrooms)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✔ Blood and bone</td>
<td>✔ Ash</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✔ Fresh manures</td>
<td>✔ Dolomite</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✔ Weeds and grass clippings from the garden (avoid noxious weeds)</td>
<td>✔ Wood chips / Saw dust</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✔ Citrus and onions are all ok (so long as they are balanced by browns)</td>
<td>✔ Vacuum dust / hair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✔ Small quantities of bread, rice and pasta only</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✗ No meat or dairy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### STEP 4

**Monitor the air and moisture levels**

Air and moisture are crucial for keeping the decomposition process active. The contents of your compost bin should be kept slightly moist. After placing dry materials such as leaves or dry grass clippings into your compost, spray the surface with a small amount of water to dampen these materials. If your compost becomes too wet, dry ingredients such as twigs, leaves and dry grass clippings need to be added.

**Probably the most essential part of composting, and the one that too often gets forgotten, is aeration. It is very important to turn your compost every week or at least every fortnight.**

Not only does this help to aerate the mix, accelerating the decomposition process, it also prevents the bin from getting smelly, and discourages rodents from nesting there. Using a garden fork can sometimes be awkward. A compost mate is a corkscrew shaped item that makes it very easy to turn your compost (available for purchase at Council’s service centres).

### STEP 5

**Harvesting your compost**

The process of breaking down kitchen and garden waste takes about eight to 10 weeks – longer if you don’t turn it regularly. When the compost is ready, it will be dark and look like rich soil. To harvest your compost, lift the compost bin away from the heap, scrape any materials that have not decomposed from the top of the heap and place them to the side to be put back into the compost bin. You should be left with a pile of compost ready to use in your garden.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Problem</th>
<th>Cause</th>
<th>Solutions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Too slow</td>
<td>• Too dry</td>
<td>• Make sure you have a diversity of green/brown material and that you keep it aerated and moist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Not the right mix of ‘greens’ and ‘browns’</td>
<td>• Turn more frequently</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Not enough air</td>
<td>• Add compost worms to your heap (not really necessary, but it could help)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Place a length of slotted agricultural pipe in the heap (not relevant for the compost tumbler)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flies</td>
<td>• Most of the flies in and around a compost heap are small vinegar</td>
<td>• Cover organic waste with a thin layer of soil, dry grass/leaves or dolomite to reduce the acidity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>flies which are quite harmless</td>
<td>• Avoid adding meat or dairy products</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• If the flies are house flies or blowflies, then they are being</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>attracted by meat or dairy foods</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smelly</td>
<td>• Too wet</td>
<td>• Sulphur (rotten eggs) smell = too wet. Add dry material such as dry grass clippings or shredded newspaper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Too acidic</td>
<td>• Ammonia (acidic) smell = too much nitrogen, add lime, ash or dolomite</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Insufficient air</td>
<td>• Turn the heap more frequently and add twigs to make air spaces</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ants &amp; Slaters</td>
<td>• Heap is too dry</td>
<td>• Regularly spray with water</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Cover each layer of food with a handful of soil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Ants &amp; slaters aren’t really a problem, so if you don’t mind having them there, leave them be!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Too wet</td>
<td>• Too much water has been added</td>
<td>• Improve the drainage under the heap (not relevant for the compost tumbler)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Organic waste is too moist</td>
<td>• Mix in some dry material such as dry grass clippings or shredded newspaper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Inadequate drainage</td>
<td>• Make sure the lid is closed to stop the rain getting in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rats, mice &amp; other animals</td>
<td>• Attracted by uncovered food and/or warmth of heap</td>
<td>• (This isn’t relevant for the compost tumbler as they can’t access the bin)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Turn regularly to prevent rodents nesting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Cover each addition of food with a layer of soil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Place the bin on a layer of fine wire mesh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Too dry</td>
<td>• Not enough moist organics</td>
<td>• Spray with water – but make sure you don’t overwater. A dry bin is easier to fix than a wet bin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Eat more fruit!</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
How to worm farm

Worm farms are an excellent alternative to compost bins and are ideal for people with small gardens or minimal garden waste. Well maintained worm farms do not smell and can be kept on your veranda, deck, garage or even indoors. Maintaining a worm farm is relatively simple and can be loads of fun for both adults and children.

STEP 1

Select a location for your worm farm

Your worm farm should be placed in a shady environment sheltered from direct sunlight and rainfall. Worms don’t like vibrations or loud noises, and prefer a temperature of between 18-24°C. You could set it up on the balcony, in your garage, or even inside in your laundry.

STEP 2

Set up your tiered worm farm

All worm farms should have at least two tiered containers. The bottom container will collect liquid fertiliser (worm wee). The worms will live in the upper container or containers, feasting on your food and paper scraps and producing valuable castings (worm poo).

1. Fit the first working tray into the tray where the liquid collects.
2. Line this first tray with some sheets of moistened newspaper.
3. Add a thick layer of moist compost/coconut fibre, distributing it evenly across the container. This provides a bedding layer for the worms, provides particles to help the worms grind their food and introduces tiny creatures that assist in breaking down food waste.
4. Add compost worms – you will need at least 1,000 worms (250gms).
5. Cover the surface with a layer of damp newspaper (about five sheets), or old carpet underlay.
6. Place lid on top of worm farm.
7. Leave the worms to settle in. Do not feed them any more for about one week. They will spend this time adapting to their new home and burrowing in preparation to do their work – eating your scraps.

“I love how interactive they are – they get like spaghetti in parts. I get stacks of juice for my garden (often 1L per day) and can sell it at markets!”

Halve Garbage Waste participant
**STEP 3**

**Feed your worms**

Start feeding your worms after about one week. Paper, vegetables and fruit scraps can be placed directly onto the bedding layer. Chopping or shredding food scraps will help the worms eat scraps faster.

Always keep the food scraps covered with moist newspaper or carpet underlay. Try to avoid over feeding your worms as this may result in left over food rotting and smelling.

Worms are sensitive to acid, so keep the amount of citrus and onion you feed them to a minimum.

- ✔ Fruit and vegetable scraps
- ✔ Tea bags and coffee grinds
- ✔ Egg shells (crushed)
- ✔ Bread/pasta (small amounts)
- ✔ Citrus (small amounts)
- ✔ Plant cuttings
- ✔ Tissue paper and paper towel
- ✔ Dry cow or horse manure
- ✔ Lime (small amounts)
- ✔ Moist shredded paper
- ✘ No meat or dairy products

**STEP 4**

**Monitor your worms**

The castings in your worm farm should feel like a damp sponge. If it is too dry, a spray of water on each layer should provide the moisture needed to keep worms in a stable environment. If your worm farm collects rain, your worms could drown. Move it into a more sheltered position and add shredded newspaper to absorb excess water.

You can sprinkle lime, wood ash or dolomite on your worm farm every few weeks to regulate the PH levels if you wish, but it is not essential.

When the first tray is full, you can add the second working tray, making sure the bottom of it is touching the layer of food below. It will be some time before you will need the second tray – but don’t worry, you will get there! The worms will take some time to move up to the second tray – you may need to physically move them up if they are taking too long.
STEP 5

Harvesting your castings and liquid fertiliser

It may be several months or even a year before you have a significant quantity of castings, however you can harvest small quantities of castings to use in potting mix as you go. As fruit and vegetables are 90 per cent water, the liquid fertiliser (or worm wee) will be available more frequently, and can be poured directly from the bottom container. Dilute 1:10 and use on your garden. If you find any worms among the liquid carefully place them back into the bedding.

To harvest the castings, take the lid off and leave it for a while. Worms are sensitive to light, so they tend to burrow downwards. Scrape off the castings layer by layer, allowing the worms to move down each time so that you keep as many worms as you can in your worm farm. Repeat until you have separated the castings and worms. If you lose some worms to the garden, don’t worry, the remaining worms will reproduce to make up the numbers.

Mix the castings with soil or potting mix, or mix them with water to make a nutrient rich smoothie and pour onto your garden – this is particularly useful for pot plant gardens.

Where to buy worms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Contact Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Blackfish Plains Wormery</td>
<td>5997 2041 <a href="mailto:info@wormery.com.au">info@wormery.com.au</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Browns Compost Worms</td>
<td>Milne Street Crib Point 0426 570 258</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bunnings Warehouse</td>
<td>Cnr McMahon Street and Gertrude Street 03 8790 7100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><a href="http://www.bunnings.com.au">www.bunnings.com.au</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chooktopia</td>
<td>Langwarrin 0408 056 185 <a href="http://www.chooktopia.com.au">www.chooktopia.com.au</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eltham Worms</td>
<td>Mobile 04 1931 0003 email: <a href="mailto:elthamworms@yahoo.com">elthamworms@yahoo.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><a href="http://www.elthamworms.com.au">www.elthamworms.com.au</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maze Products</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><a href="http://www.mazeproducts.com.au">www.mazeproducts.com.au</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The EnviroShop</td>
<td><a href="http://www.enviroshop.com.au">www.enviroshop.com.au</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tumbleweed</td>
<td>1800 809 088 <a href="http://www.tumbleweed.com.au">www.tumbleweed.com.au</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Worm Lovers</td>
<td>0411 723 228 <a href="mailto:info@wormlovers.com.au">info@wormlovers.com.au</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><a href="http://www.wormlovers.com.au">www.wormlovers.com.au</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Worms R Us</td>
<td><a href="mailto:Manager-WormsRUs@hotmail.com">Manager-WormsRUs@hotmail.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><a href="http://www.wormsrus.com.au">www.wormsrus.com.au</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wyndywood Worm Farm</td>
<td>5781 0351 <a href="http://www.wyndywoodwormfarm.com">www.wyndywoodwormfarm.com</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

“My children love looking at the worms and holding them. It’s such a great way to teach them about nature.”

Halve Garbage Waste participant
## Worm Farm Trouble Shooting

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>Solution</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ants</strong></td>
<td>Your worm farm may be too dry. Water the worm farm lightly. Stand the feet of the worm farm in containers of water to deter the ants.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Smelly</strong></td>
<td>Worm farms generally smell earthy or loamy. If the worm farm becomes smelly, mix the uneaten food through and cover with a few sheets of wet newspaper. If the worm farm is too wet, add shredded newspaper to soak it up. You can also sprinkle lime, wood ash or dolomite on your worm farm every few weeks to regulate the PH levels.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Small flies and other insects</strong></td>
<td>Worm farms are home to many different organisms who all take part in the breakdown process. They will probably bother you more than the worms, so if you can handle it, just let them be. If there are large amounts of insects however, the farm may be too wet. Add shredded newspaper (not too much) to soak up the excess liquid. Keep draining the liquid castings from the bottom tray. Check what kind of food you have added. If you’ve eaten a lot of acidic food lately, you may need to sprinkle on some lime, wood ash or dolomite to regulate the PH levels, and cut back on the citrus fruits for a while. Vinegar flies are not harmful (albeit annoying!) but might indicate that too much food is being added for the number of worms. This is particularly common in the early stages when your worms are still getting settled and starting to breed. Stop adding food for a while to give the worms a chance to catch up.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Drowning worms</strong></td>
<td>When the worm farm is too hot, the worms will often move down to the tray where the worm wee collects. If that tray is not drained regularly, the worms can drown (or boil!). Place some rolled up newspaper or other material so that the worms have something to ‘climb’ up onto above the worm wee line, and make sure you check that tray regularly. You could also place a bucket under the tap and leave it open so that the worm wee drains out immediately.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Too hot</strong></td>
<td>Worms don’t like too much heat. Make sure your worm farm is in the shade, and on very hot days, spray it with water and ensure that it is never in full sun. You may like to consider bringing your farm inside or under your carport/veranda. You can also pour cold water through it during the hot part of the day, or put ice cubes on top so that they can melt slowly and give the worms some cool relief, but be careful not to drown them. ‘Fluff’ the castings to improve air flow. Be careful not to block the ventilation holes in your farm – otherwise your worms will suffocate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>My worms aren’t moving up!</strong></td>
<td>When you get your worm farm, there will be instructions on how it works. In this, it says that the worms will move up to the next layer when they have eaten everything in the first tray. Unfortunately, the worms didn’t read the manual! Worms love hanging out in their own castings, so if you think the castings are ready (dark brown with little or no food scraps left), scoop up any left over worms and pop them into the next tray. Worms don’t like the light, so if you open the lid, they will start heading downwards. Then you can keep scraping off the top layer as they move down. You will probably loose a few worms to the garden, but the remainder will quickly make up the numbers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Going on holiday?</strong></td>
<td>If you are going away for a week or two in the cooler parts of the year, your worms should be fine if you leave them with enough food, dampen the layer of newspaper on top, and leave the tap open with a bucket underneath so that the worms don’t drown if they move down to the bottom tray. If you are going away for more than that, or if you are away over summer, either take your worms with you, or organise a worm sitter. Make sure you tell them everything you know about looking after worms.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Case Study

Local community garden enthusiast and mother of four Daisy Sehic has been composting for years, her father instilling a love for gardening in her from a young age.

“My father was composting for years – long before it became popular, and it was just a regular part of growing up. As a child I loved watching new shoots pushing up from the soil, and plump vegetables ripening. I still love it – I have a veggie patch at home which I am constantly experimenting with – and one of the most important means for success is my compost! I have two compost bins at the moment, and my garden loves it. I am a bit of a messy cook, so I keep a container in the sink while I’m cooking so that I can just push all the scraps in. I use an ice cream container as it has a lid – which helps keep away the little midgy flies and the smell, and also make sure that I empty it regularly so that it doesn’t go mouldy.

Last year I had fantastic compost as I really got into stirring it regularly – nearly every week, and it was so rich and dark and broke down so quickly... this year I have been a bit lazy, but they are still chugging along ok.

Composting is definitely an important part of my life – I hate seeing food ending up in the bin. I think food waste is a huge problem – not only for the environment, but also as so many people don’t have access to good food. We all need to be responsible for what we consume. Some tricks I do at home are to freeze left-overs rather than put them in the fridge, where they can get forgotten about or go off.

Having a family of six means that you can end up with a lot of waste, so being aware of what we buy, and feeding our food scraps to our worms and chooks really helps to keep the waste we send to landfill at a minimum. We are part of the Halve Garbage Waste program, so we only put our bin out once a fortnight – it’s usually getting pretty full, but we manage – it definitely makes you more aware about not buying things with excess packaging! It can sometimes be hard when the kids buy extra stuff, but they have grown up with me being pedantic about not wasting things, so they are pretty cool with the whole recycling and composting thing. I wish they were a bit more involved, but you can’t have everything – they’re pretty good – and they know that it makes me happy!”.

Daisy Sehic, Halve Garbage Waste participant
Some interesting facts about worms!

- Worms are hermaphrodites (they have both male / female organs)
- Worms can eat their own weight daily
- Mature worms (2-3 months old) lay eggs
- Worm eggs have 1-20 babies
- Worms can double their population in 6-8 weeks
- Worms will limit their population to the space they have

There are three main types of composting worms:

1. Tigers (*Eisenia fetida*)
2. Reds (*Lumbricus rubellus*)
3. Indian Blues (*Perionyx excavatus*)

There are 3,500 species of worms throughout the world. The largest worm in Australia is the giant Gippsland worm (*Megascolides australis*).
Section 5: Bin it or recycle?
Through recycling and composting we can prevent the majority of waste from ending up in landfill and save valuable resources.
How we dispose of products has a huge impact on the environment, so it is very important that we dispose of waste correctly.

When it comes to waste management, think of the five Rs!
Use the 5 R’s Reduce, Reuse, Restore, Repurpose and Recycle

1. **Reduce** — Think before you buy! Do you really need it? What else could you use instead that you already have? Use a shopping list when you go shopping and stick to it. Reducing consumption is the most effective and simple way to reduce waste and our impact on the environment.

2. **Reuse** — packaging and products such as glass jars, plastic containers and paper and plastic bags to store food. Old clothes make for useful cleaning cloths and rags. Hold on to single-sided printed paper for lists and scribble paper by the phone. Reusing products is the second most effective way to reduce waste. It is preferable to reuse rather than recycle in order to save on the resources (energy and water) that are required for the recycling process.

3. **Restore** — Can you restore or mend it rather than buy a new one? Get out the old needle and thread and sew up that hole — it’s a great thing to do in front of the telly!

4. **Repurpose** — Can you add to it so it’ll meet your needs? Can you use it for something else? E.g. you can make fingerless gloves out of sleeves of old jumpers. Or funky handbags out of old clothes. There has been a resurgence in repurposed clothes.

5. **Recycle** — everything you can! Visit www.recyclingnearyou.com.au to find where you can recycle items locally. Council also has a great A-Z listing of where you can recycle different items locally on our website under the recycling section. Search for the Recycling Directory. Check out page 56 for more information on recycling.
Recycling Tips

Labels – don’t worry about removing them. When items are washed in the recovery and sorting process any glues and labels are washed off.

Wax scratch test – wondering how to tell the difference between valuable liquid paperboard and wax cardboard? Scratch your fingernail along the surface of the item. If your fingernail is clean and no wax lifts off, it’s liquid paperboard and can be recycled.

Plastic tab on bottle necks – once the bottles are crushed this minor contamination is separated via flotation and removed.

Squash where possible – make the most of your bin space. Squash all plastic bottles, containers and cardboard boxes to make more space in your bin and the collection vehicle.

Food scraps – you can recycle your food scraps at home using a compost bin, worm farm or bokashi bin. Visit www.bokashi.com.au to learn about bokashi bins.

Wash or rinse? – Scrape out any leftovers as best you can. There’s no need to wash them clean, but if you are worried about smelly items, use left over water from dish washing to give them a quick rinse. Make sure you remove all the food scraps from your pizza boxes – a little bit of cheese is fine.

Separate bins – have separate bins for waste, recyclables and food scraps in the kitchen – it makes it so easy!

Bottle tops – remove tops and lids from all bottles and jars – but they are still recyclable. This makes them easier to compact in your bin and collection vehicle and also helps separation when they are made of different materials.

Metal lids – from jam jars etc. are fine to go in the recycling bin, as they will be picked up with a magnet during the recycling process.

What do I do with lids?

Please remove the lids from your plastic bottles before you place them in your recycling container to ensure that the bottle is empty.

Plastic bottles must be empty because the weight of a half full bottle makes it more difficult for the recyclers’ automated systems to recognise it as a plastic bottle. If the lid is off, people are more likely to empty the bottle before putting it in their recycling bin.

Also, if the bottle is empty but with the lid on, it makes it more difficult to squash down, and later the air could expand causing the bottle to ‘explode’.

Plastic lids can go into the yellow lidded recycling bin (they are made from recyclable plastic), however as they are so small, they will most probably fall through the cracks in the machinery, so may not be recycled. If your bottle is empty, you can leave the lid on, but squash the air out first. You could also collect the lids in an ice-cream container and put them in that way. Some preschools can use them in art and maths activities.

“Instead of more waste and breaking the natural cycle, I get pleasure in closing the loop with re-cycle.”

Halve Garbage Waste participant
Recycling: the rules

Yellow lid recycle bin

\[\text{YES}\]

- Plastic bottles & containers
- Glass: bottles and jars only
- Steel & aluminium cans, aerosol cans & foil
- Cardboard
- Paper

Loose items only

\[\text{NO}\]

These items can NOT go in the recycle bin

- Glass, pyrex or ceramic crockery, window glass, mirrors
- Soil, bricks or building rubble
- Soft ‘scruncheable’ plastic
- Rubbish, nappies or food scraps
- Toys, bric a brac
- Plastic Bags
- Polystyrene
- Light bulbs
- Syringes, medical or hazardous waste
- Chemicals, liquids or batteries

Recyclables MUST BE LOOSE

NO plastic bags

Plastic bags can jam the machinery in the recycling process and will not be ‘opened’ but will be sent to landfill with all its contents – what a waste!

**Hint: Glass**

Only put glass bottles and jars in your recycling bin. Other types of glass such as windows and drinking glasses are not compatible with the yellow-lidded recycling system, as they are made from different types of glass to bottles and jars.
The Scrunch Test
A handy way to decide if a plastic item can be recycled or not is to do the scrunch test – if the plastic item can be scrunched easily into a ball or breaks apart easily, it can NOT go in your recycling bin.

For example, chip packets and plastic bags can easily be scrunched into a little ball, therefore they can NOT go in your recycling bin. Polystyrene (like meat trays and takeaway cups) breaks when you scrunch it, so can’t go in your recycling bin either.

Juice bottles, yogurt tubs, strawberry tubs, margarine containers and juice bottles on the other hand are not as easy to scrunch into a little ball, so they are fine to go in your recycling bin.

Another way to think about it is items that hold their shape – if you were to pour water into a plastic item, would it expand to hold the water (like a plastic bag) or would it hold the water within its own shape (like a margarine container)? If it holds its own shape, it can go in the recycling bin.

This code identifies the type of plastic the product is made from, which then determines what products that plastic can be made into after being melted down.

The code was originally introduced to support recycling programs by helping consumers and recyclers to sort plastic packaging by resin type. It is now widely used in consumer education on recyclability, e.g. by local councils.

These days, most recycling facilities in Victoria can recycle all seven rigid plastic products – so if it is a container or bottle or rigid plastic packaging it can go in your recycling bin.

Unfortunately, the usage guidelines also allow the use of the PIC on flexible or ‘soft’ plastic packaging like bags, bubble wrap and film. This can be confusing, as soft plastics are currently not able to be collected through the kerbside recycling service (yellow lidded bin).

Rather than looking for the PIC, use the ‘Scrunch Test’ to work out what plastics can go in your recycling bin.

Remember, the kerbside recycling service was set up for packaging, so this is what it can currently accept. Other hard plastics like toys can not go in your recycling bin.
### Plastic Identification Table

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Plastic Identification Code</th>
<th>Name of plastic</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Some uses for virgin plastic</th>
<th>Some uses for plastic made from recycled waste plastic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PETE</td>
<td>Polyethylene terephthalate (PET)</td>
<td>Clear, tough plastic, may be used as a fibre.</td>
<td>Soft drink and water bottles.</td>
<td>Soft drink bottles, detergent bottles, clear film for packaging, carpet fibres, fleecy jackets, filling for sleeping bags and carpet fibres.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HDPE</td>
<td>High density polyethylene (HDPE)</td>
<td>Very common plastic, usually white or coloured.</td>
<td>Milk and cream bottles, bottles for shampoo and cleaners. <strong>Shopping bags, freezer bags.</strong></td>
<td>Compost bins, detergent bottles, crates, mobile rubbish bins, agricultural pipes, pallets, kerbside recycling crates.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V</td>
<td>Un-plasticised polyvinyl chloride (UPVC)</td>
<td>Hard, rigid plastic, may be clear.</td>
<td>Clear cordial and juice bottles, blister packaging.</td>
<td>Detergent bottles, tiles, plumbing pipe fittings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PPV</td>
<td>Plasticised polyvinyl chloride (PPVC)</td>
<td>Soft, flexible plastic.</td>
<td>Garden hose, shoe soles, blood bags and tubing, cling wrap.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LDPE</td>
<td>Low density polyethylene (LDPE)</td>
<td>Flexible plastic.</td>
<td>Ice-cream containers lids, garbage bins. <strong>Garbage bags, bubble wrap.</strong></td>
<td>Film for builders, industry, packaging and plant nurseries, bags.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PP</td>
<td>Polypropylene (PP)</td>
<td>Hard, but flexible plastic – many uses.</td>
<td>Ice-cream containers, hinged lunch boxes. <strong>Chip packets, drinking straws, woven plastic bags.</strong></td>
<td>Compost bins, kerbside recycling crates, worm factories.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EPS</td>
<td>Expanded Polystyrene (EPS)</td>
<td>Foamed, lightweight</td>
<td><strong>Hot drink cups, takeaway food containers, meat trays, packaging.</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OTHER</td>
<td>Other</td>
<td>Includes all other plastics, including acrylic and nylon. These plastics – if they take the form of plastic containers or bottles – are also able to be recycled in your yellow-lid recycling bin.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Please note:** In Frankston City, all rigid plastic containers, bottles and packaging can be placed in your yellow lidded recycling bin. Soft plastics – like plastic bags, lolly wrappers, chip packets etc can NOT be recycled through the yellow-lidded recycling bin, even if it has a plastic identification code or recycling symbol on it. These must be returned to the manufacturer, or taken to the Recycling Hub in Council’s Civic Centre or Frankston Library, or participating supermarkets for recycling.

**Please DO NOT place items highlighted red in your recycling bin! The recycling facilities can not process these items.**
A – Z of items that CAN go in your recycling bin

Please note – all items must be EMPTY and free from food scraps and liquids.

A
Advertising material
Aerosol cans
Aluminium cans, trays and foil (scrunched into a ball)

B
Beauty product containers (plastic)
Berry punnets
Biscuit trays (plastic)
Books
Bottles
Bottle tops
Boxes (cardboard)

C
Cake trays (plastic or foil)
Cans
Cardboard
Cartons
Cereal boxes
Cat food tins
Compact disc case (no disks)
Cooking oil tins
Cutlery (plastic)

D
Deli/butchers papers
Detergent bottles
Deodorant cans & roll-ons
Dog food tins

E
Egg cartons
Envelopes (including with plastic windows)

F
Foil (clean – scrunched into a ball)
Foil lined cartons
Food cans
Food trays (plastic)

G
Gift wrapping paper
Glass bottles and jars
Greeting cards

H
Hand cream containers
Household cleaning product containers & bottles

I
Ice cream containers
Insect spray bottles and cans

J
Jars
Juice cartons & bottles
Junk mail

K
Kitchen storage containers (plastic)

L
Lids (metal & plastic)
Long life cartons (milk, juice, stocks & sauces)

M
Magazines
Margarine containers
Medicine bottles
Milk cartons & bottles
Moisturiser & make-up containers (plastic)

N
Newspapers

O
Office paper

P
Paint tins (DRY)
Paper
Paper bags
Paper plates
Paper towel roll
Pet food cans
Phone books
Pizza boxes (empty)
Plant pots (small plastic)
Plastic containers & bottles
Plastic crockery
Plastic packaging (rigid)
Pool chemical containers

R
Receipts
Rigid plastic containers
Rigid plastic packaging

S
Sauce bottles
Serviettes (paper)
Shampoo & conditioner bottles
Spray cans
Steel cans
Strawberry punnets

T
Takeaway containers (plastic & cardboard)
Telephone books
Tin cans
Tissue boxes
Toilet paper rolls
Tomato punnets
Tuna cans
Tupperware

V
Vitamin bottles

W
Washing powder boxes/bottles
Wrapping paper

Y
Yoghurt containers
What happens to my recyclables?

Old paper & cardboard
is recycled into new paper
or cardboard products.

Glass containers are 100% recyclable and can be made into new glass containers such as bottles and jars.

PET bottles (e.g. soft-drink bottles) are made into products such as new bottles, clear packaging film, fleecy jackets, carpet fibres and PET for packaging.

HDPE Bottles (e.g. milk containers and shampoo bottles) are made into products such as garbage bins, compost bins, pipes, crates, detergent and oil bottles.

Polystyrene PS (e.g. yoghurt tubs and margarine containers) are made into clothes pegs, coat hangers, office accessories, rulers, video/CD boxes.

Steel cans are melted and made into just about any kind of steel product such as road signs, appliances and car parts.

Aluminium cans can be made into cans, car parts and a range of other products.


Photo by Benjiy Lee
Other items that we can avoid sending to landfill

For a comprehensive list of local recycling options, please visit Council’s website and view the Frankston City Recycling and Safe Disposal Directory (it is located on the recycling page). This directory has been put together to help you find a new life for products you no longer have a use for, or safe disposal for items that should not be placed in your rubbish bin – including computers, televisions, mattresses, mobile phones, chemicals, white goods and more. Through the collation of this list of companies, charities and organisations we have aimed to provide you with alternatives to landfill for your unwanted goods. Your rubbish is your responsibility, so please do the right thing for the environment and future generations.

If the item you are looking for is not listed, please visit www.recyclingnearyou.com.au or call the Recycling Near You Hotline on 1300 733 712 for further details.

Mobile phones
You can leave old mobile phones, batteries and accessories at mobile phone dealers participating in Mobile Muster, or at a Council Customer Service Centre or Council’s Recycling Hub.

Batteries
You can recycle your household batteries at all Aldi Stores, Battery World (138 Beach Street, Frankston), Ikea, Detox Your Home collections, and Council’s Recycling Hubs.

Household chemicals
Contact Sustainability Victoria on www.sustainability.vic.gov.au/DetoxyourHome or 1800 353 233 for information on chemical collections. Paint, motor oil, all types of batteries, BBQ gas cylinders and fluorescent tubes can be dropped off for free at Mornington Waste Disposal Centre (134 Watt Road, Mornington, 1300 850 600).

Printer Cartridges
Planet Ark facilitates the Cartridges 4 Planet Ark program. You can drop your cartridges into participating Australia Post, Harvey Norman, Dick Smith, Tandy, JB Hi-Fi, The Good Guys and Officeworks stores.

Plastic bags
If you do end up with plastic bags, many supermarkets now collect them for recycling. Visit www.recyclingnearyou.com.au to find one near you. You can also recycle them and other soft plastics in Council’s Recycling Hubs.

Electronic waste
The National Television and Computer Recycling Scheme is currently being rolled out. Under this scheme free collection points for used TVs and computers will be set up around the country.

For more information, please visit www.dropzone.org.au or www.environment.gov.au/settlements/waste/ewaste/

Local Drop Zones include:

Officeworks Frankston – Computers only
351-355 Nepean Highway, Frankston, 3199; 9784 3600. Limit of five items (including computer accessories) per customer.

Harvey Norman Frankston – TVs only
Warehouse - 1/144-146 Bangholme Road, Dandenong South, 3175 (VIC). TVs can also be brought to the back of the store at 87 Cranbourne Road, Frankston. Please call first: 03 8796 0600.

Televsions and computers collected through Council’s Hard Waste service will be recycled through the scheme.

Phoenix Free Fridge Collection
The Brotherhood of St. Laurence offers a free pick up service for disused fridges for repair, retrofit and recycling. Phone: 1300 366 283 www.phoenixfridges.com.au

Plant Pots
Take all your unused plastic plant pots and trays to the nursery for recycling.

Frankston Indigenous Nursery
32b McCulloch Avenue, Seafor. (next to the Frankston SES) 5 minute walk from Kananook Railway Station (Melway Ref:99 E8)
Polystyrene

Products made from polystyrene, for example fruit and vegie boxes, meat trays, coffee cups and packing filler, are not accepted for recycling in Council’s recycling bin.

Polystyrene does not break down and takes up precious space in landfill. As it is light, polystyrene is easily blown by the wind, ending up as litter in the environment where it can harm animals and marine life. Avoid buying products packaged in polystyrene.

Mattresses

Annual Hard Waste Collections
You can put 2 mattresses out for recycling through the free annual hard waste collection – usually in October/November each year (you will be notified by a flyer in your letterbox regarding the exact dates).

Please see the Recycling and Safe Disposal Directory for other local mattress recycling options.

Recycling Hubs

You can take your old mobile phones (and accessories), household batteries, light globes (CFL, halogen and fluorescent tubes), CDs, DVDs, corks, x-rays, floppy discs, VHS & cassette tapes, and clean soft plastics to the Recycling Hubs located in Council’s Civic Centre and Frankston Library.

Please ensure you sort your items correctly and place breakable items in the compartments carefully.
Garden waste

Frankston City Council provides an optional ‘user-pays’ fortnightly kerbside collection for garden waste. Waste placed in this ‘light green-lidded’ bin is recycled into garden products such as mulch and compost. Please put out your garden waste bin on alternate weeks to your recycling bin.

Charges change each year, so please visit Council’s website on www.frankston.vic.gov.au for details.

Items permitted in Garden Waste Bins
✔ Grass
✔ Leaves
✔ Flowers
✔ Shrubs
✔ Prunings
✔ Cuttings
✔ Branches
✔ Weeds
✔ Ivy
✔ Bamboo
✔ Blackberry

There is a weight limit of 60kgs in order for the bin to be collected. If you struggle wheeling it to the kerb, then it is probably too heavy for the trucks to lift.

Items not permitted in Garden Waste Bins
✗ Clumps of earth (be careful when you are pulling out grass and weeds)
✗ Plastic bags
✗ Plant pots
✗ Rubble
✗ Dirt
✗ Large logs or stumps
✗ Household rubbish
✗ Dog poo

After your garden waste is collected it is taken to a mulching station and chipped. It is then composted for 6-8 weeks, which kills any pathogens and weed seeds. After processing, the mulch is available for purchase from various distributors, and used in parks and gardens.
Hard Waste Collection

Annual Hard Waste Collection
Council provides a free hard waste collection every year, usually in October and November. Information regarding the annual free collection is distributed to residents via a letter box drop to each household.
Each household can place up to two (2) cubic metres, stacked into four neat piles – hard waste and salvageable items, metal waste, mattresses, bed bases and garden waste.
Please visit Council’s website to learn what can and can not be collected.

At call hard waste collections
Council is currently providing a subsidised ‘At Call Hard Waste’ collection service until further notice.
Each household in the municipality is eligible for a discount on one at call hard waste collection (up to 2 cubic metres) for $50. Subsequent collections cost $75 for up to two cubic metres. As disposing of one cubic metre of hard waste at most waste transfer stations costs approximately $100, this service is excellent value for money.
Items collected are the same as the annual hard waste collection service with the exception of mattresses, which can be collected for an additional charge of $22 per mattress (which covers the cost of recycling it).

Payments and Bookings
Payment is by Credit Card only. For bookings, call WM Waste Management Services Pty Ltd directly on 9721 1915.
Please note – prices are subject to change, but were correct at time of printing.

Transfer Stations
Council is currently investigating options for a new transfer station in the municipality. Given the costs of establishing and managing such a facility, we need to ensure that all options are properly explored. Please visit our website for any updates on local transfer stations.
Neighbouring Transfer Centres include:
Clayton South Regional Landfill: Corner Clayton and Ryans Roads, Clayton (Melway Reference: 79, B10) Ph: 9558 0112
Kingston Waste Transfer Station: 24-30 Fonseca Street, Parkdale (Melways Reference 87, J8) Ph: 9580 4842
Mornington Waste Disposal Centre: 134 Watt Road, Mornington (Melway Reference: 145 K3) Ph: 1300 850 600
SITA/Outlook Waste Transfer and Recycling Centre: 274 Hallam Road, Hampton Park; (Melway Reference: 79, B10) Ph: 9799 6255
Placing items on the nature strip outside of the Hard Waste collection is illegal and fines do apply. Please do the right thing and book a hard waste collection.
Do a good deed – donate to charity

Donation Checklist

✔️ Is the item still intact?
✔️ Is the item washed or cleaned?
✔️ Is the item in appropriate condition?
✔️ Do you think the item is good enough to sell?

If the answer to all these questions is YES, then your goods are in acceptable condition to donate!

Ask yourself these questions before donating:

- Am I giving away this product because it does not work?
- Am I giving away this product because it is dirty?
- Am I giving away this product because I have no other way of disposing of it?

If the answer to any of these questions is YES, then it is not a donation and you may actually be costing the charity money through waste disposal expenses.

“Why did I join the program? Well... it just feels like the right thing to do.”
Halve Garbage Waste participant

Freecycle, Gumtree or Ziilch – free online sites to give away or sell quality items.

Ziilch is a comprehensive re-use website providing individuals, not for profits, charities, waste management and council groups with an online resource for finding, giving away and managing re-usable items. Started by a Frankston local, there are LOTS of quality items looking for a good home – and people looking for quality items!

www.melbourne.gumtree.com.au is a fantastic place to get a bargain, and to sell or give away items you no longer want.

Freecycle – www.freecycle.org
The Freecycle Network™ is a grassroots and entirely nonprofit movement of people who are giving (and getting) stuff for free in their own towns and thus keeping good stuff out of landfills. Membership is free, and everything posted must be FREE, legal and appropriate for all ages. To view the items being given away or sought in Frankston, join up to the Frankston Freecycle group.

www.melbourne.gumtree.com.au is a fantastic place to get a bargain, and to sell or give away items you no longer want.

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Charity and second hand store listing

Below is a list of local charities and second hand stores that may accept your quality, no-longer-wanted goods. Some organisations also offer a pick-up service for donated items. Please contact the organisation first to determine whether or not your goods are appropriate.

Organisations and goods accepted / not accepted

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contact Details</th>
<th>Examples of goods that ARE accepted</th>
<th>Examples of goods that are NOT accepted</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Brotherhood of St Laurence**  
1-3 Station St, Seaford  
Ph: 9786 7015  
For furniture collection, call 1300 366 283  
www.bsl.org.au | ✔ Clothing  
✔ Bric a Brac  
✔ Toys  
✔ Books  
✔ Manchester | ✘ Baby goods  
✘ Damaged or soiled goods |
| **City Life**  
14 Clyde Street Mall  
Frankston  
Ph: 9770 0660 | ✔ Collectables  
✔ Crockery  
✔ Books  
✔ Whitegoods  
✔ Clean clothing  
✔ Manchester – clean  
✔ bedding linen, towels, blankets  
✔ Toys | ✘ Damaged, soiled, worn out goods  
✘ Furniture  
✘ Electrical equipment – apart from whitegoods |
| **Diabetes Australia Vic**  
To book a FREE collection  
Ph: 9923 8400 or go online to www.diabetesvic.org.au | ✔ Clothing  
✔ Shoes  
✔ Toys  
✔ Books  
✔ Crockery  
✔ Linen  
✔ Pots and pans  
✔ Small items of furniture (small enough for one person to lift and carry) | ✘ Large Furniture (this can be dropped off to any Savers Store – see details below)  
✘ Mattresses  
✘ Baby furniture  
✘ White goods  
✘ Gas bottles  
✘ Construction material  
✘ Weapons and explosives  
✘ Flammable products  
✘ Large appliances |
| **Lions Book Shop**  
10-112/433 Nepean Highway  
Frankston  
Ph: 9786 2768 | ✔ Books | ✘ Damaged, soiled, worn out goods |
| **Red Cross**  
13b Thompson Street  
Frankston  
Ph: 9770 2355 | ✔ Ladies and Men’s Clothing and shoes  
✔ Some baby clothing | ✘ Children’s wear  
✘ Bric a Brac  
✘ Manchester  
✘ Furniture |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Contact Details</strong></th>
<th><strong>Examples of goods that ARE accepted</strong></th>
<th><strong>Examples of goods that are NOT accepted</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **RSPCA Victoria** | ✔ Clothing  
 ✔ Household goods  
 ✔ Crockery  
 ✔ Some electrical goods | ❌ Soiled clothing and Manchester  
 ❌ Damaged glassware and china  
 ❌ Damaged/broken furniture  
 ❌ Pillows and mattresses |
| 4 Peninsula Walk, Corner of Playne and Young Streets, Frankston  
 Ph: 9783 5994  
 rspcavic.org | | |
| **Salvos Shop** | ✔ Bric a brac  
 ✔ Furniture  
 ✔ Clothing  
 ✔ Jewellery | ❌ Dirty mattresses  
 ❌ All baby goods  
 ❌ Bikes  
 ❌ Violent books |
| 17 Thompson Street, Frankston  
 Ph: 9770 2549  
 For pick-up service, call 13 72 58  
 www.salvationarmy.org.au | | |
| **Salvos** | ✔ Clothing  
 ✔ Anything in good working order | ❌ Televisions  
 ❌ Computers |
| 5/2 Amayla Crescent, Carrum Downs  
 9776 4691 | | |
| **Savers** | ✔ Clothing  
 ✔ Shoes  
 ✔ Books  
 ✔ Furniture  
 ✔ Household items | ❌ Mattresses  
 ❌ Batteries  
 ❌ Paint  
 ❌ Broken items  
 ❌ Large white goods e.g. fridges, etc  
 ❌ Damaged, soiled, worn out goods |
| 16 Playne Street  
 Frankston  
 Ph: 978 31711  
 For pick-up service, call 9923 8400  
 (Diabetes Australia) | | |
| **St Pauls Shop** | ✔ Books  
 ✔ Jewellery  
 ✔ Bric a Brac  
 ✔ Clothing  
 ✔ Manchester  
 ✔ Crockery  
 ✔ Small items of furniture | ❌ Children’s car seats  
 ❌ Helmets  
 ❌ Prams  
 ❌ Large furniture  
 ❌ Damaged goods |
| 29 Ross Smith Avenue  
 East Frankston  
 Ph: 9783 3984 | | |
| **Vinnies** | ✔ Clothing  
 ✔ Shoes  
 ✔ Books  
 ✔ Furniture  
 ✔ Household  
 ✔ Jewellery | ❌ Damaged, soiled, worn out goods |
| 25 Ross Smith Avenue  
 East Frankston  
 Ph: 9769 6060  
 For pick-up service, call 1800 621 349  
 www.vinnies.org.au | | |
| **Vinnies** | ✔ Clothing  
 ✔ Bric a brac  
 ✔ Books  
 ✔ Manchester | ❌ Furniture  
 ❌ Electrical |
| 154 Austin Rd  
 Seaford  
 9776 9264 | | |
| **Vinnies** | ✔ Clothing  
 ✔ Anything in good working order | ❌ Computers  
 ❌ Items that have a heating element  
 ❌ Older style televisions |
| 562 Frankston/Dandenong Road  
 Carrum Downs  
 9770 8669 | | |
Section 6:
The program
“As a family of 5 on the Halve Garbage Waste program, we have had to think more about the rubbish we send to landfill. So our children now automatically separate their rubbish into recyclable goods, food for the worms, compost and landfill. Our garden benefits from the worm waste and the compost, and we know we are significantly reducing our contribution to landfill and overall carbon emissions”.

Halve Garbage Waste participant
FAQs

I can manage the fortnightly collection for most of the year, but it gets a bit tricky over Christmas and New Year’s Eve. What can I do?

*Halve Our Waste* participants can put their rubbish bin out weekly between 1 December and 31 January. Please note you don’t have to put your bin out weekly, only if you need to.

Plan ahead to ensure you minimise the amount of waste you generate during the festive season. See page 10 for some helpful tips.

My bin gets a bit smelly over summer. What can I do?

Smelly bins are only really a problem if you leave the lid open – with the lid properly closed, not much smell should escape. Most rubbish bin smells are from organic material breaking down without oxygen. When you start composting, most of this will go in your compost bins. Meat and dairy scraps are the main concern. Other participants recommend keeping the meat and dairy scraps in a bag or container in the fridge or freezer until bin day. If you do a fridge clean out, try to time it just before bin day, so off products aren’t sitting in your bin for long.

If you are really concerned about your bin getting smelly, you could give it a rinse out every now and then, and tip the water out on your lawn.

Can I cancel at any time if it is not suitable for our household?

Yes. While we encourage you to find strategies to help you reduce the amount of waste you are generating, we understand that it can be difficult. There are no cancellation fees, however please note that you will need to stay on the program for a full financial year to receive the $20 reward. If you withdraw prior to 30 June, you will not receive the $20.

To cancel, please use the cancellation form on the *Halve Our Waste* page on Council’s website. Alternatively, call Council on 1300 322 322. We will need to know your name and address and also your reasons for withdrawing in order to help us improve the program into the future.

How can others join the *Halve Our Waste* program?

There is a registration link on the *Halve Our Waste* page of Council’s website. Interested households can register their interest through this form. If there are places available, and if they are eligible, Council will notify them regarding continuing the registration process.

Council currently has funding to run the Halve Our Waste program with 1000 households, as well as the 1000 households on the original Halve Garbage Waste pilot program. As the underlying aim of the program is to reduce waste to landfill and to foster a waste wise community, our target audience is families and households that put out a full or nearly full rubbish bin each week.
Do I have to have a composting or worm farming fence sign?

No, but we really encourage you to do so. Research shows that people are more likely to change behaviour if they see others are doing it too. As composting is not a very public behaviour, we have made up these signs in order to make composting more ‘public’ and to provide a talking point for neighbours and passers by to comment on. The aim is to get others excited about composting and worm farming, and hopefully inspire them to start composting or worm farming too. The more people publically proclaiming their composting/worm farming efforts the better (please make sure you actually attach your sign to your fence or letter box rather than let it languish in your bottom drawer – they are only effective if others can see them!). If you decide not to use a fence sign, please give it to someone else who does, or return it to one of Council’s customer service centres.

How do I register for a workshop?

Council will be running a range of different workshops to further support residents’ waste avoidance goals. We will inform you of upcoming workshops in our email newsletter, as well as promoting them on Council’s website and in the local newspaper. To register, please use the workshop registration link provided (preferred), or email environment@frankston.vic.gov.au, or call 1300 322 322.

What if I am having problems with my worm farm/ compost bin?

Council runs workshops on composting and worm farming each year. We strongly encourage you to attend – they are a great way to learn more about composting and worm farming, as well as meet others and share information in the community. If you do not have time to attend a workshop, there are numerous online resources to help you on your way, including video tutorials and FAQs. Here are a few good sites:

- [www.reducelandfill.org](http://www.reducelandfill.org) – please use login details: Username: Frankston City Password: Frankston
- [www.sgaonline.org.au](http://www.sgaonline.org.au)

For worm farm issues, you can contact Wyndywood Worm Farm on 03 5781 0351, 0400 223 758 or smr.wwf@gmail.com for ongoing support. [www.wyndywoodwormfarm.com](http://www.wyndywoodwormfarm.com)

When I get my rates notice, it says that I have a 40L or 60L bin – but my bin is the same size as my neighbour’s. Why?

If you are a HOW participant with a 120L bin it will now be listed on your rates notice as a 60L bin. If you have an 80L bin it will be listed as a 40L bin. You do not actually have a smaller bin, it is just how our software system records that you are part of the program.
I have a 120L bin, but I hardly fill it each fortnight. Can I change it?

Yes! There is no cost to change your bin from a 120L to an 80L, and the 80L bin is cheaper too. The $20 reward will still apply. So if you changed from a 120L to an 80L and stayed on the program, you would save approximately $70* per year (*please note that costs change each year).

There is a $60 administration fee plus a pro-rata service fee increase charge to change from an 80L bin to a 120L bin.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Options</th>
<th>Cost</th>
<th>Including Halve Our Waste reward – $20</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>120L Rubbish Bin + 240L Recycling Bin</td>
<td>$257.50</td>
<td>$237.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80L Rubbish Bin + 240L Recycling Bin</td>
<td>$205</td>
<td>$185</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Additional Options

- Garden Waste Bin (fortnightly collection) = $119.30
- Additional Recycling Bin = $50
- Additional Compost Bin = $35
- Additional Worm Farm = $70

Please note that costs and charges change each year and are subject to Council approval.

My rubbish bin is nearly empty each fortnight, but I have a lot of recyclables

Additional recycling bins are available for a small charge. Please visit the Recycling page on Council’s website or talk to Council’s Customer Service Staff for details.

Additional recycling bins are also available free of charge for households with five or more occupants who are making a concerted effort to reduce their waste generation; and/or residents who may have a medical condition that requires them to have an excessive amount of recyclables. While recycling is very beneficial for the environment, it is better to Reduce, Reuse and only then Recycle.

If you are eligible for a free additional recycling bin, please visit the Recycling page on Council’s website or one of our Customer Service Centres for an application form.

I have a lot of garden waste – what can I do?

Large compost bins can handle quite a large quantity of garden waste, so long as they aren’t large branches, and the smaller branches are chopped up (one participant recommends running the lawn mower over a pile of small branches to help break them up). While small branches may take longer to break down, they also assist with aeration. If they are all that is left when your compost has mostly broken down, just pull them out and add them to your next batch.

For leaves and grass clippings, you could keep a pile next to your compost bin to dry out – they are a great source of carbon – and add them to your compost over time. Garden waste reduces volume in a compost bin quite quickly, so if you fill it up and leave it sit for a week or two you will soon have space to add more.

Otherwise, you could order a garden waste bin, available for a reasonable price. Visit Council’s website or a Customer Service Centre for details.

Please note that costs and charges change each year and are subject to Council approval.
How do I remember which week to put my rubbish bin out in?

Put your rubbish bin out on the same week as your recycling bin. If you are unsure what week this is, visit Council’s website www.frankston.vic.gov.au and click the ‘My Address’ link for rubbish collection dates.

Red lidded bins will not be collected on a non-recycling bin collection week, excluding during the December – January period.

How do I receive my $20 reward?

The $20 reward will be deducted from your rates each year. This is the most effective way for Council to distribute this reward. You will need to remain on the program for a year in order to qualify for the reward. If you withdraw prior to 30 June, you will not receive the $20.

Please note, if you are a tenant, you will need to negotiate directly with your landlord. Perhaps you could organise for them to deduct it from your rent each year. Council will not provide a cheque or other form of payment.

Why only $20? Given that my bin is only being collected fortnightly, shouldn’t it be half price?

Originally, the $20 reward was not part of the program – it was an incentive for returning the final evaluation form at the end of the pilot program in 2007. As many people believed that it would be an ongoing reward, Council decided to incorporate it into the program.

Council does not actually receive any discounts from Solo – our waste contractor – for fortnightly collections. We pay per bin rather than for each collection. A bin that is collected weekly costs Council the same amount as a bin collected fortnightly. Included in the garbage charge is the rubbish collection (including collection, transportation and disposal), the recycling collection (including collection and transportation), the litter and dog waste bins across the municipality (including maintenance, collection, transportation, sorting and disposal), the annual and at call hard waste collections (including collection, transportation, sorting, recycling and disposal), general bin maintenance and inspections, street sweeping, pit cleaning and many other waste related expenses.

Therefore, simply halving the cost of the garbage charge for HOW participants is not an option as it would reduce the funds available for all these other essential services.

Where Council could potentially make savings on the Halve Our Waste program is the reduction in waste to landfill. If we assume that HOW participants send half the amount of waste to landfill as non-HOW participants (in reality it is more like 35% less, based on waste audit findings), and multiply that amount by what Council is charged per tonne of waste disposed in landfill, we get a saving of approximately $20. While we acknowledge that each household generates differing amounts of waste, it is not viable to calculate savings on a household by household basis.

Do I need to own my own home or can I participate if I rent?

The program is available to both home owners and renters, however, renters will need to discuss participation with their landlord/Estate Agent for approval before applying. Additionally, the $20 reward will be deducted from the rates notice (we don’t send out cheques). If you are a renter, you will need to negotiate with your landlord regarding how to get your $20. Council will not negotiate on your behalf.

Can I get a copy of this toolkit for a friend?

Due to printing costs, we have only printed enough for HOW participants. A PDF version is available on the Halve Our Waste page of Council’s website however, and everyone is encouraged to use it.

Any more questions?

Please contact Council’s Environment Department on 9784 1747 or environment@frankston.vic.gov.au
Further reading

Need a bit of inspiration?

People around Australia and the world have taken on similar challenges. If you’d like to know how others have reduced their waste or need further advice and tips then please visit the following websites:

**Passionate about food and food security?**
Join FFAN – the Frankston Food Access Network. Like them on Facebook www.facebook.com/FrankstonFoodAccessNetwork email communitydevelopment@frankston.vic.gov.au or call 1300 322 322 and ask for Community Development.

**Recycling Near You**
www.recyclingnearyou.com.au

**The Greening of Gavin – blog**
www.Greeningofgavin.com

**The New Joneses**
www.facebook.com/TheNewJoneses

**The Secret Life of Things**
www.thesecretlifeofthings.com

**The Sharehood**
www.thesharehood.org

**The Story of Stuff**
www.storyofstuff.com

**Zeros Waste Wee Challenge**

**Affluenza**
Affluenza, n. a painful, contagious, socially transmitted condition of overload, debt, anxiety and waste resulting from the dogged pursuit of more.[1]

Affluenza, n. 1. The bloated, sluggish and unfulfilled feeling that results from efforts to keep up with the Joneses. 2. An epidemic of stress, overwork, waste and indebtedness caused by the pursuit of the American Dream. 3. An unsustainable addiction to economic growth.

**Interested to read more?**
http://www.clivehamilton.com/books/affluenza/

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**Buy Nothing New**
www.buynothingnew.com.au

**Cambridge Zero Waste Challenge**
www.Zerowastechallenge.blogspot.com

**Collaborative Consumption**
www.collaborativeconsumption.com

**Do Something!**
www.dosomething.net.au

**Frugavore – Arabella Forge**
www.frugavore.com

**Green Girls Global**
www.greengirlsglobal.com/blog/zero-waste-week-are-you-up-for-the-challenge

**GROW: Food. Life. Planet**
www.oxfam.org.au/grow

**My Zero Waste**
www.myzerowaste.com

**No Impact Man – blog**
www.Noimpactman.typepad.com