

DO SOMETHING!

Christmas Eve December 24, 2012

Australians now throwing out \$8 billion of edible food every year

The advocacy group Do Something! have released new statistics which show that Australian households are throwing out \$8 billion of edible food every year. This is \$200 million higher than the previous figure.

The new stats have been released ahead of National Leftovers Day, which takes place on Boxing Day. It's the day of the year when Australians have the highest levels of leftover food in their fridges - much of it will sadly be wasted.

"Our new statistics reflect the findings of figures from the NSW Government's Love Food Hate Waste campaign," said Jon Dee the Founder of Do Something!.

"Together they indicate that Australians will waste hundreds of millions of dollars of food over the extended Christmas period."

How much do we waste?

- 1) Up to 40% of the average household garbage bin is food waste**
- 2) The average Australian household throws out \$1,036 of food every year*:**
That's enough to feed the average household for a whole month.
For many Australians it's enough to pay the electricity bill for 6 months.
- 3) Australian households and businesses are throwing away an estimated 4 million tonnes of food every year:**
That's enough to fill 450,000 garbage trucks with wasted food.
The average household wastes 345kg of food every year.

"If we halved our food waste, each household could save at least \$500 a year," said Jon Dee. "It's simple. Saving food saves money and it helps the environment too."

Jon Dee is available for interview via 0414 971 900

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Saving money without being a Scrooge!

When it comes to last minute Christmas food shopping, Do Something's National Leftovers Day has some simple money saving tips:

1. Buy only what you need – draw up a shopping list and stick to it.
2. Avoid the panic buy – by planning your Christmas meals you can save money.
3. Try not to cook more than you need – get your portions right!
4. If you have leftovers, put them in air-tight containers and freeze them for another day. Reheating them can save you having to cook a meal.
5. Be sure to reuse Christmas staples. Turkey, ham, chicken and vegetables can be reused in sandwiches, quiches, omelettes and salads. What you don't eat over the Christmas period can be frozen and eaten later.

Masterchef's Alice Zaslavsky features in Do Something! videos and recipes on FoodWise.com.au that show people how to use up their Christmas leftovers.

Food Waste Infographic

The latest national food waste stats from Do Something! have been put into an extremely innovative infographic by lunchalot.com. This food waste infographic can be viewed at [FoodWise.com.au/foodwaste](https://www.foodwise.com.au/foodwaste).

This infographic has been kindly donated to Do Something! by lunchalot.com - a new last minute online restaurant table booking service which helps restaurants to minimise wasted food. A URL for embedding this infographic in to your website is at the end of this media release.

For interviews and more information:

Please contact Jon Dee, the Founder of Do Something! on 0414 971 900

Food Waste Infographic

To embed the food waste infographic on to your website, simply copy and paste the following code in to your webpage.

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<a href="https://www.lunchalot.com/foodwaste.php"></a><p style="margin:6px 0 12px; text-align:center; width:650px; font-family:Arial, sans-serif; font-size:10px;">Do Something About Food Waste infographic by <a href="https://www.lunchalot.com/">lunchalot</a></p>
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MEDIA RELEASE FOOTNOTES:

*** The following data was used by Do Something! to calculate the new national food waste figure of \$8 billion:**

To better understand community knowledge, attitudes and behaviours about household food waste, 1,200 NSW households were surveyed as part of the 'Food Waste Avoidance Benchmark Study'.

This NSW Government study was the most comprehensive analysis of community knowledge, attitudes and behaviours yet conducted in Australia about food waste.

As a result of this study, NSW Government stats from 'Love Food Hate Waste' estimate that the average NSW household throws out \$1,036 of food every year:

<http://www.lovefoodhatewaste.nsw.gov.au/resources/fact-sheets.aspx>

Do Something! found that this \$1,036 figure was less than unpublished food waste research from a Government department in another state.

In NSW, food waste also makes up to 38% of the total rubbish in household garbage bins. Garbage bin analysis in other states reveals a similar percentage of food waste in household garbage bins (up to 41%).

Given the national consistency that we found on food waste levels across Australia, we arrived at the \$8 billion figure by extrapolation. The \$1,036 figure was multiplied by the number of households across Australia. The recently released ABS 2011 Census stats says there were 7,760,320 populated households: http://www.censusdata.abs.gov.au/census_services/getproduct/census/2011/quickstat/0

7,760,320 populated households multiplied by \$1,036 is \$8.04 billion.

The following Government data was used to calculate the 4 million tonnes of food waste figure

The National Waste Report 2010 by the Department of Environment, Water, Heritage, and the Arts estimated that 35% of municipal waste is food (equivalent to 2.675 million tonnes of household food waste). This is equivalent to 354kg of food waste per household.

www.ephc.gov.au/sites/default/files/WasteMgt_Nat_Waste_Report_FINAL_20_FullReport_201005_0.pdf

The National Waste Report also estimates that 21.5% of commercial and industrial waste is food. This is equivalent to 1.388 million tonnes.

Adding these figures together, Australia discards an estimated 4.06 million tonnes of food every year. This is equivalent to 523kg per household.

Jon Dee is available for interview via 0414 971 900

About Do Something!

Do Something! is a not-for-profit action group that seeks to create social and environmental change. For more information, visit DoSomethingNearYou.com.au and FoodWise.com.au