

Shamley Green Environment Group Food Waste - Taking it seriously

A report by the UN Environment Programme in 2021 found that 8-10% of man-made greenhouse gas emissions are generated from food waste. In fact if you were to count global food waste as a country, it would be the third largest emitter behind the US and China! And in the UK, according to the charity Wrap, if we all stopped just wasting bread for a year, it would do the same for greenhouse gas emissions as planting 5.3 million trees!



UK Supermarkets throw away the equivalent of 190 million meals every year. Many are now addressing the problem by donating perfectly good food about to be thrown away to FareShare, (which redistributes surplus food to community groups and charities), or to the Community Fridges scheme coordinated by the charity Hubbub, for redistribution to anyone who can use it.

Just recently Zero Carbon Guildford installed a Community Fridge at the bottom of High Street and Friary Street, open Tuesdays and Thursdays for people to come and take what they need – not only helping our community but also reducing the amount of food waste going to landfill.

What can we as individuals do? For ideas about reducing food waste see links to food waste charities on our website shamleygreenenvironment.co.uk.

Here are some of their ideas:

- Love that wonky carrot – don't give stockists excuses to bin perfectly good vegetables

- Trust our senses - the 'best before' date is about quality - you can eat food after this date, but it may not be at its best, so smell it and see before throwing it out. Many stockists are now changing their labelling e.g. "best consumed within 4 days but may still be great after this date"
- Plan meals and use a shopping list – so you only buy food you know will get eaten!
- Be inventive with leftovers – hubbub.org.uk has great ideas
- Freeze leftover meals for those days when you are short of time
- Put compostable scraps and peelings in the compost.

The good thing about food waste is that we can all do something about it. We can all help – if we only take it seriously.

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