

Food Waste Avoidance Benchmark Study

At a glance – Buy it

LOVE
FOOD
hate waste

Only one in three households in NSW plan meals in advance. Planning and shopping to a list will help ensure you buy only what you need and reduce food waste.



We buy too much food when we:

- do not check the cupboard and fridge before shopping
- like to have more food on hand than we need
- do not plan our meals
- do not shop to a list.

We can reduce food waste by:

- **planning** meals
- **writing** a shopping list
- **shopping** to a list
- **buying** only what we need.

Background

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 2009*. This study is the start of a series of analyses to monitor food waste related knowledge, attitudes and behaviours of the NSW community over three years.

At a glance – Buy It highlights findings from the social research about meal planning and food purchasing behaviours in NSW.

Our attitudes towards buying food can influence the way we shop and how much food we waste at home

- 69 per cent of respondents think carefully about how much food they will use prior to purchase
- 57 per cent buy the amount of food that they know will get used
- 70 per cent buy the amount of fruit and vegetables that they need
- 15 per cent buy the best value fruit and vegetables even if it is more than they need
- 72 per cent indicated they feel guilty when they waste food.

When shopping, 55 per cent of respondents are more likely to do one large shop, rather than buying small amounts of food regularly.

Single person households are more likely to do smaller shops and to decide what they need in store. 18–24 year olds are more likely to shop for fresh food based on value than other age groups.

Buying too much food contributes to food waste

We buy too much food:

- because we think we need more than we actually do
- we are tempted by special deals such as ‘two for one’ or ‘buy one get one free’
- we don’t plan meals and shop to a list.

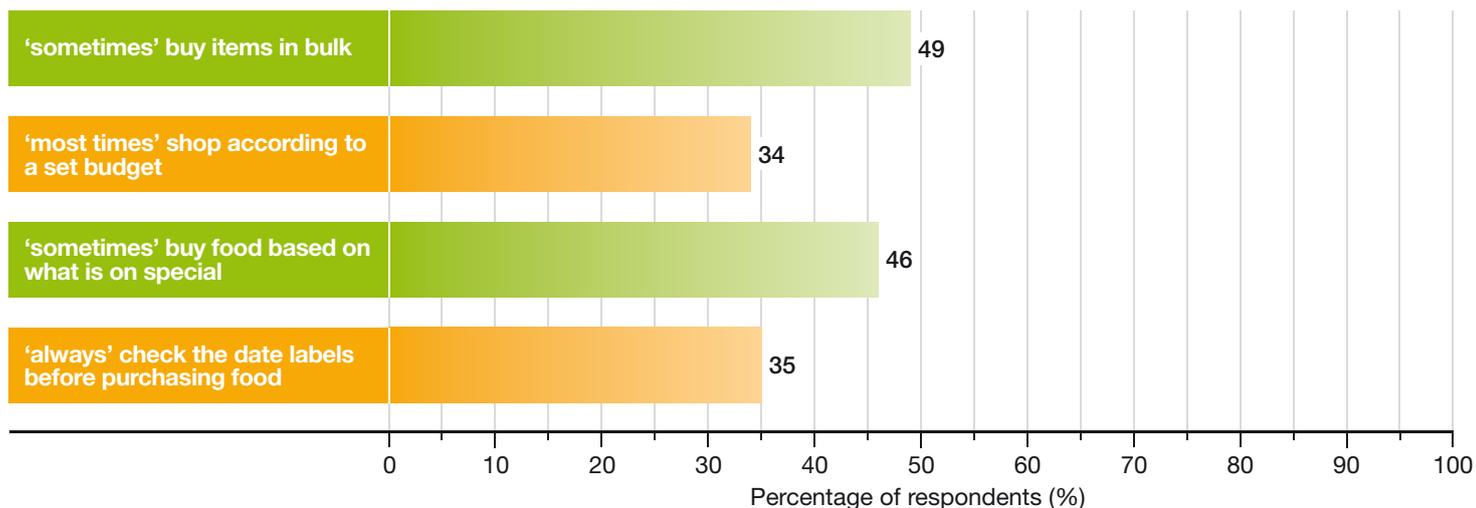
Special deals can be great value, provided all items can be used. Take advantage of specials by making twice as many portions and freezing extra serves and leftovers.



Common shopping behaviours

Our behaviour while shopping can influence the amount of food that we buy.

Most common responses when asked about shopping behaviours:



Planning meals and writing a list prior to shopping can help reduce food waste

Planning meals, writing a list and checking what is already in the fridge and cupboard are the first steps in buying only what we need.

The research showed that 66 per cent of respondents check what food is already in the house before going shopping and 53 per cent shop to a list.

It also revealed that respondents aged 18–39 years are less likely to plan their menus and write lists.

People are prepared to change the way they shop and buy food to avoid food waste

The way we shop influences how much food we waste at home. Smart shoppers think carefully about the food they buy and how it will be used.

We are more likely to buy more than we need if we don't plan our meals and shop to a list.

Menu planning is an activity that few respondents currently do each week, though almost half the respondents said they are willing to start menu planning.

More than a third of respondents already use a shopping list and just under half are willing to use one in the future. In particular consumers 18–24 years are willing to start using a shopping list to avoid food waste.

Generally respondents were most willing to simply buy less food to change their buying behaviour.

Love Food Hate Waste

To tackle household food waste, the NSW Government has developed the *Love Food Hate Waste* program. The program aims to raise awareness about the environmental and financial impacts of food waste in NSW and to reduce the amount of food being sent to landfill. By promoting easy and practical solutions for buying, cooking and storing food, *Love Food Hate Waste* will help the NSW community to reduce food waste, save money and our environment.

For more information, please visit
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