

The Gainesville Zero Waste News

5 Ways to Reduce Food Waste This Thanksgiving

Thanksgiving is all about gathering with loved ones, sharing gratitude, and, of course, enjoying a delicious feast. But with all the hearty portions and abundant side dishes, food waste often becomes an unfortunate part of the celebration.

Here are some practical tips for reducing food waste this Thanksgiving, so you can enjoy the holiday without guilt and help the planet in the process!



- 1. Plan & Portion Thoughtfully** - It's easy to get carried away with menu planning, but a thoughtful approach to portioning can prevent excess leftovers. Plan for about 1 to 1.5 pounds of food per person, including all the main and side dishes.
- 2. Shop Strategically** - Avoid food waste before it even hits the kitchen by being mindful about your shopping. A grocery list prevents impulse buys and ensures you get only what you need. Buy seasonal produce as it is more eco-friendly and affordable.
- 3. Get Creative with Leftovers** - Leftovers are practically synonymous with Thanksgiving, but there are ways to make them feel just as special as the main meal. Repurpose dishes into soups, sandwiches, or casseroles.
- 4. Compost What You Don't Use** - If you end up with unavoidable waste, composting is a great way to return nutrients to the soil and reduce landfill waste.
- 5. Offer Guests Take-Home Options** - Sharing leftovers with guests is a great way to reduce food waste. Have a supply of reusable containers on hand and encourage guests to take a plate home with them or ask guests ahead of time to bring their own reusable storage containers with them.

Reducing food waste is a meaningful way to honor the Thanksgiving spirit of gratitude and sharing. A little planning and creativity can make a big difference, helping you host a celebration that's as kind to the earth as it is delicious.

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