

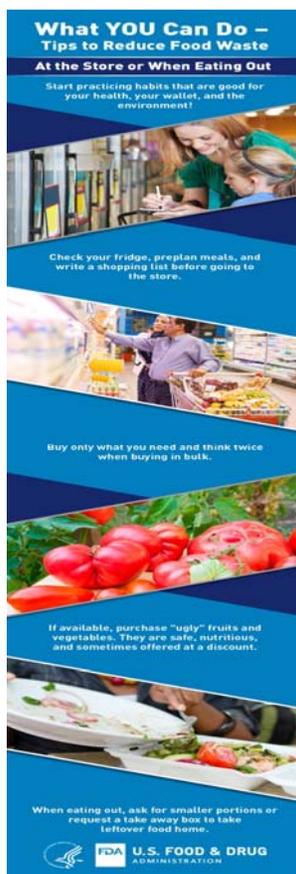
April, 2021



## Nutrition News for the Central Sierra

A monthly newsletter about food, nutrition, and healthy living in the Central Sierra.

### Prevent Food Waste



By most estimates, 30-40% of all food in America is never eaten. Instead, it's wasted somewhere along the way from production to our plates. While waste happens at every step along the way, the most significant amount of food is **typically wasted by consumers**. Maybe we over-buy at the grocery store and can't use an item before it goes bad, or maybe we order a large meal in a restaurant and can't finish it. Whatever the reason, food waste has negative consequences for us all. The average American loses **around \$375 in wasted food each year**, and collectively we pay the environmental costs to produce, ship, store and cook all of that food. Investing significant energy, water and other resources into what ultimately ends up in our trash doesn't make sense, either economically or environmentally.

The good news is there are many things we can do to prevent food waste. Knowing how to **safely store and handle food** can help prevent spoilage. Understanding what the **many different "expiration" dates** on various products mean can also help keep us from throwing away perfectly good food. Other strategies, like **freezing or preserving** bulk quantities of foods, shopping strategically, meal planning, and managing our food portions can also help prevent food waste. Many of these strategies can also help us eat healthier overall, improving our individual health as well as our collective environmental health.

Explore the sources below to learn more about the problem of food waste and choose techniques to prevent food waste in your life.

Comprehensive information from the National Resources Defense Council:

### [SavetheFood.com](http://SavetheFood.com)

A fact sheet for individuals and community champions from UC Agriculture and Natural Resources:

### [Food Waste Prevention Guide](#)

Tips and informational videos from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, including a focus on food safety:

### [Tips to Reduce Food Waste](#)

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## April's Harvest of the Month



Onions are one of the most common vegetables in the world. Readily available year-round, onions are often the supporting flavor in a dish, not usually the main event. In Spring, however, when the first fresh onions of the year begin appearing in gardens and local markets, we have the opportunity to appreciate onions as the juicy, naturally sweet and savory vegetables they are. While there are a few different types of onions commonly sold in stores, in fact there are many different varieties that all have subtly different flavors. “Green” onions, also known as scallions or Spring onions, are young onion plants harvested with their green tops. Green onions and other types of fresh onions that are sold with their tops still attached should be eaten quickly and stored in the refrigerator. Onions with no tops and paper-like skins have been cured, or dried once mature, so that they can be stored for longer periods of time. This kind of onion should be kept in a cool, dry place with good air flow, such as in a paper bag in a pantry. Refrigerators are too moist to store cured onions for long, as the wet environment can cause them to sprout. However, once a cured onion is cut any remaining pieces should be stored in the refrigerator if the whole onion is not used immediately. Nutritionally, onions are a good source of Vitamin C, and also contain fiber, Vitamin B6, and potassium. See below for healthy recipe ideas starring onions, or learn more about onions and view their nutrition facts at the USDA’s [Seasonal Produce Guide](#).

#### Recipe Ideas:

- [Quick Pickled Onions](#)
- [Mujaddara](#)

- [French Onion Soup](#)
  - [Scallion Pancakes](#)
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## New & Noteworthy

Visit these links for a round-up of recent health and nutrition news, information, and events. For general healthy eating information based on an expert analysis of nutrition research, visit [ChooseMyPlate.gov](http://ChooseMyPlate.gov). For individual questions, consult a registered dietitian or medical provider.

**[New research brief on removing chocolate milk from school cafeterias' positive impact on student population nutrition](#)**. Read about new research from UC ANR's Nutrition Policy Institute aimed at helping to improve the health of school meals.

**[USDA is letting schools serve free meals during the pandemic. Officials fear an unintended funding gap](#)**. A possible unintended consequence of increasing free meal access in schools.

**[Are Junk Food Companies Using TikTok Influencers to Target Kids?](#)** As traditional food product marketing to children faces increasing scrutiny, non-traditional methods of advertising may be playing an increasing role.

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## COVID-19 Community Resources

During the COVID-19 pandemic, you can help spread the word about Central Sierra resources to make sure everyone has enough to eat. **If your family, your neighbors, or anyone you know is in need of food, assistance is available!**

Links to information about Central Sierra food banks, WIC agencies, school meal sites, senior meals, how to [sign up for CalFresh/food stamps](#), and more are available on the following webpage:

**[http://cecentralsierra.ucanr.edu/CentralSierraNutrition/Community\\_Resources/](http://cecentralsierra.ucanr.edu/CentralSierraNutrition/Community_Resources/)**

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## About Us

*As the State of California has issued a shelter-in-place order to reduce the spread of COVID-19, UC Cooperative Extension in the Central Sierra is now working remotely. We are still here to answer your questions and address needs during this unprecedented situation.*

Nutrition, Family and Consumers Sciences (NFCS) in the Central Sierra conducts education, outreach, and applied research to support nutrition, food security, and public health in Calaveras, Tuolumne, Amador, and El Dorado Counties. NFCS includes the CalFresh Healthy Living-UC program, which teaches free classes in local schools, community centers, libraries, and other public places. Our classes show people how to choose, grow, cook, and enjoy affordable healthy foods, and how to make physical activity a regular and fun part of life. We also work to create environments where it's easier for people to make healthy choices by

supporting wellness policies, community and school gardens, walking clubs, and more. For more information or to participate in the NFCS program, visit our [website](#), [Facebook](#), or [Twitter](#), or email NFCS advisor Katie Johnson at [ckrjohnson@ucanr.edu](mailto:ckrjohnson@ucanr.edu).



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