



# NetWaste Community News

**NetWaste**  
A COLLABORATIVE APPROACH

*A Collaborative Approach*

## DID YOU KNOW...?

When you recycle the items are reprocessed and made into new products. This reduces the amount of natural resources such as water, coal, oil, sand and metal ore used to manufacture new products. When you recycle 1000 tonnes of recycling you save:



**6** Olympic swimming pools of water



Greenhouse gas savings equal to removing **121** cars off the road



Energy savings equal to the annual electricity needs of **71** households

## ARE YOU WATCHING YOUR WASTE LINE?

*Do you love food but hate waste?* In the days of economic belt tightening, saving waste can help to save us money. Every time you throw out food you throw out money, not just the money food costs but the Council rates paid for its disposal.

According to a report from the Australia Institute called *What a Waste*, Australian households are throwing out more than \$5 billion dollars worth of food every year.

- ◆ Fresh fruit and vegetables are the most likely item to be thrown in the bin, with a national average of \$1.1 billion discarded uneaten.
- ◆ Restaurant and take-away food comes in second at just under \$1 billion dollars.
- ◆ Australian households also throw out \$872.5 million worth of meat and fish, every year.

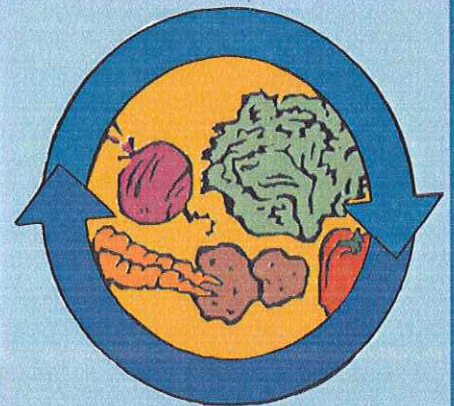
In total this is more than the Australian government spends on its annual military budget (\$4.8 billion)!

*Are we running a war on food?* If food was our ammunition for saving, an average household could save about \$616 worth of food a year or \$239 per person, from what would otherwise go to waste.

*How do these figures compare with your electricity bill?* Perhaps we can make a household saving by reducing food waste in the same way that we make a household saving by becoming more energy efficient. In which ever way we look at our household expenses, if we waste less, we save more in a way that helps the environment as well.

### FACT:

On average over 50% of household garbage is organic food waste that is sent to landfill, and could otherwise be recycled into a rich compost.



The environmental impacts of food wastage are substantial: water used to irrigate crops; greenhouse gas emitted from burning energy when harvesting; transport; processing and refrigeration of our food. When food is wasted so are the resources that go into moving it from the fields to our forks.

When food waste in our red lidded garbage bin is sent to landfill it produces methane gas as it breaks down. Methane is a greenhouse gas 21 times more potent than carbon dioxide. Carbon dioxide is the gas that is measured when calculating the environmental costs of food miles (transporting foods) and the burning of coal for electricity.

By composting, worm farming or keeping chooks in your backyard our food scraps can be recycled into a rich fertiliser that becomes food for nature. These climate friendly actions at home are classic ways to reduce your environmental imprint and individual contribution to climate change.



**Waste Hotline 1300 725 415**

**Community Waste Education Program. For enquiries please contact:  
Sue Clarke, NetWaste Environmental Learning Advisor, on 6393 8772.**







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**Deciding between starting a composting or a worm farm? Each have their own pros and cons. Generally composting requires more space and effort than worm farming which can be isolated to small balconies. Composting is great for larger quantities of food waste but generally worm castings provide a richer fertiliser than compost.**



**FOLLOWING  
THE WASTE  
HIERARCHY.  
AVOIDANCE  
IS BEST!**

## Five ways to avoid and reduce food waste.

By knowing about proper storage techniques you can maximise your grocery budget and avoid food wastage at home. Following are some handy tips.

### 1. Check the temperature of your refrigerator.

Is it correctly set at 1.5 degrees Celsius? Don't just assume because it feels cold, or that there is ice in the fridge it is the right temperature to keep your groceries lasting as long as they could be.

### 2. Grow your own food, even in winter.

Using compost you made yourself or worm 'tea' from a worm farm you can keep your vegetable crops healthy and strong with an added bit of natural fertiliser.

### 3. Store vegetables and fruits separately.

Vegetables and fruits share ethylene: a gas that speeds up the ripening process when stored together.

### 4. Store fresh garlic in oil.

Keep garlic fresh for longer by peeling and storing in a jar with olive oil. This can also be done with chillies and other fresh herbs like rosemary.

### 5. Plan a left over meal.

Once or twice a week use up odds and ends in the fridge and pantry. What was good yesterday could be even better today!

Here's an idea for cooking with left overs that can add a bit of creativity to the kitchen.

### PAN-FRIED CHEESE AND RICE BALLS

#### Rice Croquettes

1. Mix 200g left over rice or risotto, 100g mince and 60g cheese into a bowl

2. Separate two eggs and add the yolks to the rice mixture. Save the egg whites in a bowl for the coating

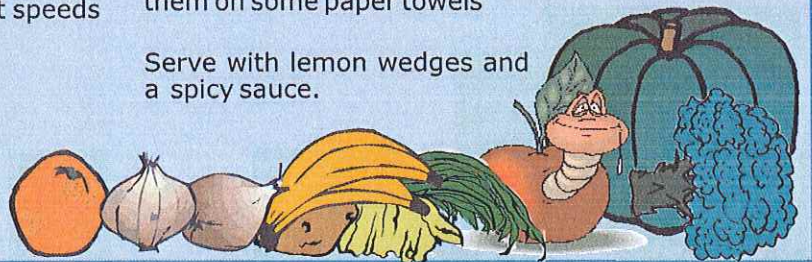
3. Form rice mixture into little balls with your hands

4. Dip each ball first into the egg white then the 200 g of bread crumbs

5. Fry the croquettes in hot oil for 3-5 minutes. Lift them out of the oil with a slotted spoon and drain them on some paper towels

Serve with lemon wedges and a spicy sauce.

You can also use mashed potato instead of rice. Add your favorite extra ingredients and herbs to the mixture.



## Compost and Worm Farming Tips.

- ✓ Turn compost regularly to keep it aerated so it doesn't smell, and to speed up the composting process.
- ✓ Add a half a kilo of lime to compost if there are maggots, fruit flies or other larvae hatching.
- ✓ Keep dairy, meat and bread products out of compost and worm farms to avoid attracting vermin.
- ✓ A healthy worm farm gives off no odor.

## WebLink of interest

*Did you know?* A movement of educated professionals most of who are financially secure scavenge from commercial waste bins. This practice is known as 'urban gleaning' which is about making use of excessive commercial and industrial waste.

Search The Australia Institute website for 'Skip Dipping in Australia' an interesting article on 'urban gleaning' [www.tai.org.au](http://www.tai.org.au)

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