Household Food Waste Tracker

Instructions:

1. Set up a bag or bucket for discarded food, separate from your normal trash container.

2. Collect all discarded food (**FOOD ONLY** - no paper, wrap or packaging) into this separate food waste container.

3. Weigh your discarded food on a food scale each week. If you want to get more precise data, weigh it each day!

If you don't have a food scale, good news: you can use your home bathroom scale. Just weigh yourself holding your **empty** food waste container; this is your _Base Weight_. Then each week, weigh yourself holding your **full** food waste container; this is your _Full Weight_. Subtract your _Base Weight_ from your _Full Weight_ to calculate your Food Waste Weight. .

Food Waste Weight = Full Weight - Base Weight

3. Record your Food Waste Weight on the tracker. For example, this is what week one might look like if there was a total of 5 lbs of wasted food, with much of it being overbought bread:

Week	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Total/Notes
Week 1	1.5	0	2	1	.5	0	0	5 lbs, unused bread!

4. Note the causes of your weekly food waste, and try to change your shopping, storage or cooking practices the following week to reduce your waste (see Food Waste Tips on pg. 3)

For example, if you notice that you have 1 pound of bread wasted every Friday, purchase less bread each week.

5. Continue reducing your food waste to help Maine's economy and environment!

Food Waste Tracker (lbs.)

Week	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Total/Notes
Week 1								
Week 2								
Week 3								
Week 4								
Week 5								
Week 6								
Week 7								
Week 8								
Week 9								
Week 10								
Week 11								
Week 12								

The Tracker is divided into months by color.
Try to reduce your food waste each month!

Food waste reduction tips:

Stick to your grocery list! Try to avoid unplanned food purchases.

"Shop" your pantry or refrigerator before you go to the store to be sure that you don't already have the food at home.

Use your freezer! Freezing food is a great way of storing food until you are ready to eat it.

Have a special easy-to-see location in your refrigerator for leftovers or fresh foods that need to be eaten first. Eat or use food from this location for meal planning first.

Consider donating or sharing your food if you cooked or bought too much. This not only prevents food waste, it feels good, too!

Plan your meals ahead of time - it's much harder to have spoiled food if each item has a day assigned to it.

Try a weekly cooking challenge - create a tasty meal using leftovers and not-so-fresh produce items in your fridge...soups, scrambles, or casseroles are just a few ideas.

Label your food with the date you bought it, so that you can more easily plan when you need to eat it.

Reduce your serving sizes; you can always get seconds and you risk less food waste.