



THINK



EAT



SAVE



UNEP



THINK·EAT·SAVE

**WORLD ENVIRONMENT
DAY 5 JUNE**

REDUCE YOUR FOOTPRINT



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www.unep.org/wed

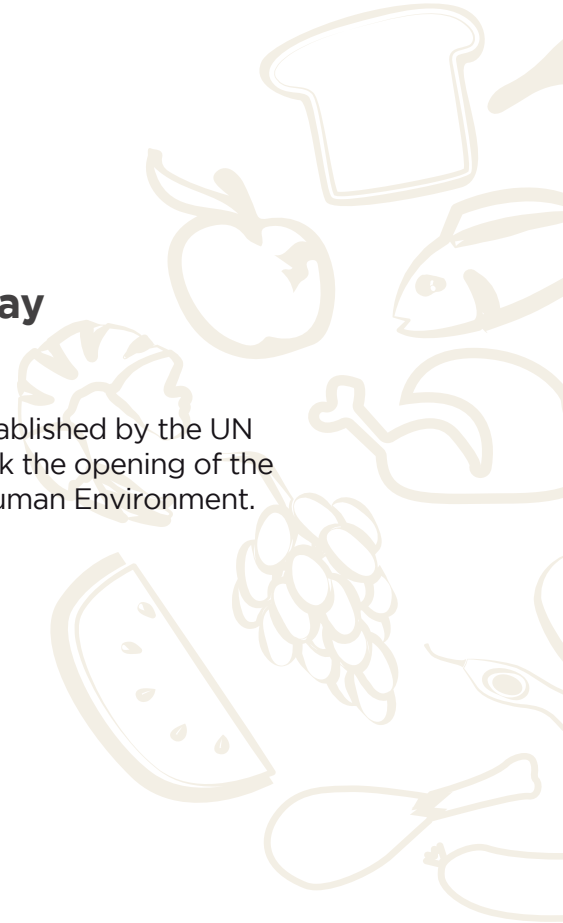




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World Environment Day

World Environment Day was established by the UN General Assembly in 1972 to mark the opening of the Stockholm Conference on the Human Environment.





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Every year, every where, everyone!

The World Environment Day celebration began in 1972 and has grown to become one of the main vehicles through which the United Nations stimulates worldwide awareness of the environment and encourages political attention and action. It is also a day for people from all walks of life to come together to ensure a cleaner, greener and brighter outlook for themselves and future generations.

The theme for this year's World Environment Day celebration is **Think.Eat.Save. Reduce Your Foodprint.** The Think.Eat.Save campaign of the Save Food Initiative is a partnership between UNEP, FAO and Messe Düsseldorf, and supports the UN Secretary-General's Zero Hunger Challenge.

It seeks to add its authority and voice to these efforts in order to galvanize widespread global, regional and national actions and catalyze more sectors of society to be aware of and to act on the growing scandal of food waste.

World Environment Day is an annual event that is aimed at being the biggest and most widely celebrated global day for positive environmental action. World Environment Day activities take place all year round and culminate on 5 June annually.

While the planet is struggling to provide enough resources to sustain its 7 billion people (growing to 9 billion by 2050), FAO estimates that a third of global food production is either wasted or lost, and this is occurring as one in seven people in the world go to bed hungry and more than 20,000 children under the age of five die daily from hunger.

Given this enormous imbalance in lifestyles and the devastating effects on the environment, this year's theme encourages each of us to become more aware of the environmental impact of the food choices we make and empowers us to make informed decisions. Food waste is an enormous drain on natural resources and a contributor to negative environmental, economic and humanitarian impacts.

This year's campaign rallies each of us to take action in our homes and businesses and to then witness the power of collective decisions to reduce food waste, save money, minimize the environmental impact of food production and

consumption, and encourage food production processes to become more efficient. Where food is wasted, so too are the valuable resources used for its production.

WED 2013 is being hosted by Mongolia, a country that has been prioritizing a Green Economy shift across its big economic sectors such as mining and promoting environmental awareness among youth. Its government is determined to meet these challenges and seize the opportunities of a less-polluting and more-sustainable future.

WED 2013 is aimed to be the biggest and most widely celebrated global day for positive environmental action. Through WED, the UN enables people not only to realize their individual responsibility, but also their power to become agents for change in support of sustainable and equitable development. Every action counts, and when multiplied by a global chorus, becomes exponential in its impact.





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Message of the United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon

We live in a world of plenty, where food production outstrips demand, yet 870 million people are undernourished and childhood stunting is a silent pandemic. To create the future we want, we must correct this inequity.

We must ensure access to adequate nutrition for all, double the productivity of smallholder farmers who grow the bulk of food in the developing world, and make food systems sustainable in the face of environmental and economic shocks. This is the vision of my Zero Hunger Challenge, launched last year at the Rio+20 UN Conference on Sustainable Development.





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One way to narrow the hunger gap and improve the well-being of the most vulnerable is to address the massive loss and waste inherent in today's food systems. Currently at least one third of all food produced fails to make it from farm to table. This is foremost an affront to the hungry, but it also represents a massive environmental cost in terms of energy, land and water.

In developing countries, pests, inadequate storage facilities and inefficient supply chains are major contributors to food loss.

Those who grow for export are also often at the mercy of over-stringent expectations of buyers who place a premium on cosmetic perfection. In developed nations, food thrown away by households

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and the retail and catering industries rots in landfills, releasing significant quantities of methane, a powerful greenhouse gas.

Food loss and waste is something we can all address. That is why the United Nations Environment Programme, the UN Food and Agricultural Organization and public and private sector partners have launched the **Think.Eat.Save. Reduce Your Foodprint** campaign to raise global awareness and showcase solutions relevant to developed and developing countries alike.

Infrastructure and technology can reduce the amount of food that perishes after it is harvested and before it reaches the market. Developing country governments can work to improve essential infrastructure and maximize trade opportunities with neighbours; developed nations can support fair trade and rationalize sell-by dates and other labelling systems; businesses

can revise their criteria for rejecting produce; and consumers can minimize waste by buying only what they need and re-using left-over food.

On this World Environment Day, I urge all actors in the global food chain to take responsibility for environmentally sustainable and socially equitable food systems. The current global population of 7 billion is expected to grow to 9 billion by 2050. But the number of hungry people need not increase.

By reducing food waste, we can save money and resources, minimize environmental impacts and, most importantly, move towards a world where everyone has enough to eat.





Message of the UN Under-Secretary General and UNEP Executive Director, Achim Steiner

Every year on June 5th, people across the planet celebrate the United Nations World Environment Day. It is a day for action where hundreds of thousands of activities take place in virtually every country in the world to improve the environment now and for the future.



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This year's theme focuses on food waste and food loss. **Think.Eat. Save. Reduce Your Foodprint** is the new campaign that UNEP and the Food and Agricultural Organization of the UN, in conjunction with a rapidly growing list of partners from the public and private sector, launched earlier this year. It draws attention both to the issue and the absurdity that high volumes of perfectly edible produce are never making it from the farm to the fork.

Indeed, at least a third of everything we grow on this planet is lost between the field and the consumer. It is an ethical, economic and environmental issue given the enormous waste of energy, water, fertilizers and other inputs as a result of food that is produced but never eaten. Each one of us can do something about this and that's why, through the **Think.Eat.Save. Reduce Your Foodprint** campaign, we invite people across the world to join us in an effort to both raise awareness and to take practical actions whether in your home, on your farm, in the supermarket, in a canteen, in a hotel or anywhere else where food is prepared and consumed.

This year's global host for WED 2013 is Mongolia, one of the fastest growing economies in the world and one that is aiming for a transition to a green economy and a green civilization. It is not a big waster or loser of food, but the traditional and nomadic life of many of its people does have some ancient answers to the modern-day challenge of food waste.

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The Mongol General Chinggis Khan and his troops utilized a traditional food called borts to gallop across Asia without depending on elaborate supply chains. Borts is basically concentrated beef equal to the protein of an entire cow but condensed and ground down to the size of a human fist. This remarkable method of food preservation, without refrigeration, meant a meal equivalent to several steaks when the protein was shaved into hot water to make soup.

And the Mongolians have other secrets to share that may contribute to preserving and thus not wasting food — the aaruul, for instance, is a form of dried curds that can last as a perfectly healthy dish or snack for years, again without refrigeration.

UNEP has, in advance of WED 2013, been compiling similar examples of traditional and indigenous knowledge from familiar

techniques such as pickling or salting fish to the smoking of meat, the drying of fruit and other techniques employed by the Inuits to preserve seabirds which are served later at feasts and weddings.

Mongolia is also aiming to green not only its mining sector but its energy and agricultural systems while developing its landscapes and national parks — home to such rare and iconic species as the przewalskii horse — for eco-tourism.

Join us on June 5th in Mongolia or wherever you are in the world and organize an event. It can be in your home, your school, your company and your community. Share what you are up to including photographs via the dedicated website — www.unep.org/wed And above all, **Think.Eat.Save. Reduce Your Foodprint.**





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Message by H.E. Tsakhiagiin Elbegdorj, President of Mongolia

Our blue planet is only one for all of us. Yet, our home Earth is visibly losing its vitality and pristineness due to the reckless policies and ruinous acts of its children, the human beings. Its resources are being exhausted and the safe livelihood of the humankind is gravely endangered.





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Alarming environmental changes and disasters, unprecedented and unheard of before, occur at a greater rate. Climate change with ensuing water shortage, desertification, soil and vegetation degradation lead not only to depletion of natural resources, but also threaten the social and economic development of the entire world.

Environmental protection is not a single-day campaign. This is a life-long cause of day-to-day efforts of every citizen of the world. It is indeed timely sobering to draw the global public attention to food security, supply and conservation under a theme “Think-Eat-Save: Reduce Your Footprint” for WED 2013.

I was honored to have been awarded the 2012 Champion of the Earth Award by the United Nations. At the Award Ceremony the United Nations Environment Programme, UNEP, proposed Mongolia to host the WED 2013 in Mongolia. Mongolia is proud to be at the center of the international transition to a Green Economy by hosting the United Nations World Environment Day (WED) celebrations on and around 5 June 2013. This is a great honor for us, as well as a responsibility.

Mongolia keenly cares for the environment. As a testament to our resolute commitment, the Cabinet formed last summer after the Parliamentary election, re-organized a formerly line Ministry of Environment and Tourism into a core-line Ministry of Environment and Green Development.

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As one of the most-threatened by climate change countries, Mongolia has already suspended new mining concessions pending environmental safeguards and is working with partners in the UN and beyond to bring Green Development across the economy.

We have also established Natural Resources National Parks to curb desertification. Our national parks and specially protected areas can be the backbone of ecotourism that would generate conservation income and green jobs.

Our vision includes targets for the uptake of solar and wind power that can fuel our economic growth, while exporting surpluses via an Asian super-grid.

Since millennia ago, Mongolians have lived in a genuine harmony with nature, just like a mother and child. Especially, our culture of treating water, the source of life on earth, is truly unique. The simplest but a very telling example is that the herders never use the same ladle for water and milk.

Climate change has led to drying up of many rivers and lakes in Mongolia, thus necessitating us to draw concerted attention on water resources. This is a common problem for many countries, and especially for the low-income nations. At many international and global fora I have repeatedly proposed to establish a special UN body on water. I do believe that this initiative will be supported by the global community.

The reasons cannot be more compelling for us to start immediate and concrete actions to save our planet and our future. And we must succeed on this sacred responsibility.

I welcome you to Mongolia to join us for WED 2013 to see how Mongolia is planning the transition to a low-carbon, resource-efficient economy. I am sure, Mongolia will serve as a source of inspiration for the global act for Nature.

May all good deeds prosper.



Mongolia is the global host-country of World Environment Day 2013

Mongolia, which is prioritizing a Green Economy shift across its big economic sectors such as mining and promoting environmental awareness among youth, is to host this year's World Environment Day (WED) global celebrations on June 5.

Mongolia's President Tsakhia Elbegdorj was named as one of six recipients of UNEP's **Champions of the Earth 2012 award** for leadership that had a positive impact on the environment.

Mongolia is facing challenges including growing pressure on food security, traditional nomadic herding and water supplies as a result of the impacts of climate change. It is estimated that annual mean temperature has increased by over 2°C during the last 70 years.

Precipitation has decreased in most regions, except the western part of the country, indicating that Mongolia is among the most vulnerable nations in the world to global warming.

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Yet its government is also determined to meet these challenges and seize the opportunities of a less-polluting and more-sustainable future – from a moratorium on new mining pending improved environmental regulations to plans to

become a renewable energy power-house and exporter of clean energy regionally.

Mongolia's transition is already underway. It has passed a law on decreasing the air pollution that was triggered by a growing population and coal usage in the capital Ulaanbaatar. It is planning to establish a satellite-city near the capital for the purposes of limiting coal-burning in the capital, transferring energy-saving technology, and imposing air-pollution tax in some regions of Ulaanbaatar.

Since 2010, Mongolia has suspended the issuance of all new mining licenses until fresh regulations are drawn up, citing the protection of the mineral-rich Asian country's environment and herdsman's livelihoods as well as promotion of green development with consideration of water shortage and land degradation.

Projects that enhance youth understanding of environmental protection have been set up, and national tree planting days to combat desertification and water scarcity have seen over two million trees planted across Mongolia's vast desert regions since 2011. Mongolia also has huge solar power potential, particularly in the sparsely populated Gobi region, and is looking for ways to exploit this.



2013 - Year of Protecting Mazaalai

The Gobi Bear

The Ministry of Environment and Green Development of Mongolia designated the year 2013 as the **“Year of Protecting Mazaalai - Gobi Bear.”** The very rare Mazaalai, or Gobi Bear, is found in the Gobi Desert of Mongolia. The small population of Gobi Bears is estimated to be made up of only 22 individuals (8 female and 14 male), which puts them at high risk of extinction.

This endangered species lives among rocky mountains in the most remote parts of the Gobi Desert, wandering near oases and mountain ranges with water sources where they can

survive through harsh and extreme desert climate. The Mazaalai survives mostly by eating leaves, berries, grass roots and occasionally catching lizards or mice.

The Ministry has unveiled a series of protective measures, which includes establishing a nature reserve to restore a safe habitat for these rare wild species, opening a zoo, setting up a working group to explore ways of increasing their population, involving foreign expertise on wild animal protection and reproduction, and setting up a fund for protecting the Mazaalai.





Think.Eat.Save

Reduce Your Foodprint

What's it all about?

THINK

Do you consider yourself a conscious consumer? Do you try to conserve water when possible, turn out the lights when not in use, drive to maximize your fuel efficiency and avoid making choices that are wasteful? Do you take pride in having a responsible organization or business, or fancy yourself a progressive city planner or inhabitant of a progressive city? If so, you might be surprised to learn that you may inadvertently be contributing to a global waste epidemic in which nearly one third of all the food you buy or serve is thrown out before being used; food too good to waste. But don't despair, you are not alone and small actions have a big impact. Just **THINK** about it!

EAT

It goes without saying that for each and every one of us, eating is a crucial part of our daily lives. For some, the act of eating represents pure sustenance; for others, the art of eating is a ritual of culinary delights. But whatever your relationship to food, we can all be smarter — about the way we eat it, serve

it, shop for it and dispose of it. We hope you will find all of the necessary tools and resources you need to reduce your foodprint here. So **EAT** up... but do so mindfully.

SAVE

In food-secure areas around the globe, the very act of food shopping, cooking, eating and trashing can be a mindless activity. Little, if any, attention is paid to the way the food arrives on our grocer's shelves, let alone the acts of harvesting, manufacturing, packaging, shipping and merchandising the food that sustains our daily lives.

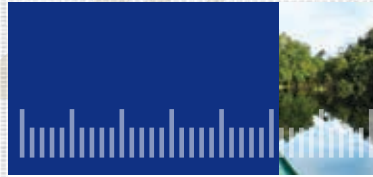
It is therefore not surprising that there is little awareness of the amount of food that is lost and wasted along the entire food supply chain during production, distribution, consumption and disposal. Yet the economic, social and environmental implications of this enormous food loss and waste are staggering, and are continuing to grow as a real threat. It's time to **SAVE**... for People, Personal Health, Planet & Pocket.



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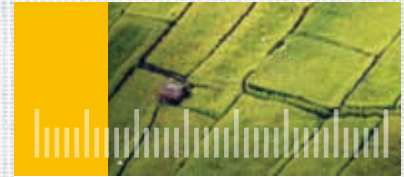
DID YOU KNOW?

The **GLOBAL FOOD SYSTEM** has profound implications on the environment, and producing more food than is consumed only exacerbates the pressures, some of which follow:



Globally, 9 per cent of the freshwater resources are withdrawn,

70%
of this by irrigated agriculture



Agriculture and land use changes like deforestation contribute to more than

30%
of total global greenhouse gas emissions



More than 20 per cent of all cultivated land,

30%
of forests and 10 per cent of grasslands are undergoing degradation

Globally, the agri-food system accounts for nearly

30%
of end-user available energy



Overfishing and poor management contribute to declining numbers of fish, some

30%
of marine fish stocks are now considered overexploited





THINK•EAT•SAVE
REDUCE YOUR FOOTPRINT

**GLOBAL QUANTITATIVE
FOOD WASTE PER YEAR
IS ROUGHLY 30 PER CENT FOR
CEREALS, 40-50 PER CENT FOR ROOT
CROPS, FRUIT AND VEGETABLES,
20 PER CENT FOR OIL SEEDS,
MEAT AND DAIRY, PLUS
30 PER CENT FOR FISH**

www.thinkeatsave.org



THINK•EAT•SAVE
REDUCE YOUR FOOTPRINT

**AT RETAIL LEVEL, LARGE
QUANTITIES OF FOOD ARE
WASTED DUE TO
QUALITY STANDARDS
THAT OVER-EMPHASIZE
APPEARANCE**

www.thinkeatsave.org



THINK•EAT•SAVE
REDUCE YOUR FOOTPRINT

**IN MANY AFRICAN
COUNTRIES, THE
POST-HARVEST
LOSSES OF FOOD
CEREALS ARE
ESTIMATED AT
25%
OF THE TOTAL
CROP
HARVESTED**

www.thinkeatsave.org



THINK•EAT•SAVE
WORLD ENVIRONMENT
DAY 5 JUNE

There's plenty you can do and it starts at home!

ACT NOW. Make the decision to become more aware of issues related to food waste.

ADOPT as many eco-friendly lifestyle choices as you can and make them habits for WED!

ADD IT UP. Our impact is exponential when the global chorus sings together.

CHOOSE naturally grown foods. They have less of an environmental impact and are much healthier.

COMPOST—composting food scraps can reduce their climate impact while also recycling their nutrients. Food makes up almost 13 percent of the U.S. waste stream, but a much higher percent of landfill-caused methane. Encourage your city to start curb side composting programs.

BUY LOCALLY! Flying food across continents increases global transportation emissions.

BUY FUNNY FRUIT—many fruits and vegetables are thrown out because their size, shape, or colour are not 'right'. Buying these perfectly good funny fruit, at the farmer's market or elsewhere, utilizes food that might otherwise go to waste.

BRING A CLOTH BAG to do all your grocery shopping. A reusable bag will last for years and only needs to be used 5 times to have a lower environmental impact than a plastic bag.

d

DON'T buy more food than you really need.

DONATE—non-perishable and unspoiled perishable food can be donated to local food banks, soup kitchens, pantries, and shelters. Local and national programs frequently offer free pick-up and provide reusable containers to donors. There is even a Good Samaritan Act that protects businesses that give food from litigation.

FORM a group of peers or colleagues to oversee the food waste at your school, neighborhood or workplace.

FREEZE IT!—frozen foods remain safe indefinitely. Freeze fresh produce and leftovers if you won't have the chance to eat them before they go bad.

f

g

GROW an organic garden and your own delicious food.

GET SMART about less waste, great taste — plan meals, use shopping lists, buy from bulk bins, and avoid impulse buys. Don't succumb to marketing tricks that lead you to buy more food than you need, particularly for perishable items. Though these may be less expensive per ounce, they can be more expensive overall if much of that food is discarded.

HAVE a vegan (no animal products) dinner party!

HOST a World Environment Day celebration.

h

JOIN a local environmental or conservation group. You can team up with those around you and make a real difference for your community.

e

EAT ORGANIC and locally grown foods and help reduce the clearing of forests for agricultural land.

EDUCATE your friends on how individual actions can have an exponential impact and motivate action for WED.

EAT DOWN YOUR FRIDGE—Websites such as www.lovefoodhatewaste.com can help you get creative with recipes to use up anything that might go bad soon. Manage your fridge so that you have a no waste policy—nothing gets thrown out.

i

INVENT new recipes for using left-overs. Go on the internet and learn more about the many ways we can be creative with left-overs and also for storing to food that will keep them fresh longer.

j

k

KICK THE HABIT!
Don't buy just because it's on sale – plan your meals.

l

LEARN more about the environment impact of food production. Did you know that it takes 1,000 litres of water to produce 1 litre of milk?

LOVE YOUR LEFTOVERS—ask your restaurant to pack up your extras so you can eat them later. Freeze them if you don't want to eat immediately. Only about half of Americans take leftovers home from restaurants.

LEARN THE LABELS—“Sell-by” and “use-by” dates are not federally regulated and do not indicate safety, except on certain baby foods. Rather, they are manufacturer suggestions for peak quality. Most foods can be safely consumed well after their use-by dates.

n

NOTIFY your friends on how their action against food waste could have a huge impact. Even if just one-fourth of the food currently lost or wasted globally could be saved, it would be enough to feed 870 million hungry people in the world.

o

ORDER small food portions first. Better to add on than waste.

q

QUANTIFY how much money you could save if you don't waste food. As much as 50 per cent of the groceries we buy could end up in the bin.

p

PLAN in advance. Know what you will need before you go grocery shopping so not to end up buying more food than what will be consumed in your household.

PILE UP! Lay the grounds for a compost pile and start sorting your garbage.

PLEDGE to a FoodWaste-Free Wednesday!

r

REQUEST smaller Portions. Restaurants will often provide half-portions upon request at reduced prices.

REGISTER a WED activity at www.unep.org/wed/

SACRIFICE something small each month – eat locally grown vegetables instead of imported vegetables; do without steak as cattle ranching is high impact!; carpool with co-workers; take your bike to work etc.

SAVE! Every year, consumers in rich countries waste almost as much food (222 million tonnes) as the entire net food production of sub-Saharan Africa (230 million tonnes).

u

UNDERSTAND your options. Learn about the small ways you, as an individual, can make a positive impact on the environment.

w

WASTE NOT, WANT NOT. 1 in every 7 people in the world go to bed hungry and more than 20,000 children under the age of 5 die daily from hunger.

v

VISIT the WED website regularly and see how you can get involved!

x

X-PLORE the World Environment Day website. Find out more about food waste.

t

TELL your friends about the enormous amounts of food waste we are creating. A third of global food production is either wasted or lost.

THINK before you buy food. What is the environmental impact of your choice?

TWEET about #WED and spread food waste tips to the world!

y

YOU can make a difference – individual actions, when multiplied, can make an exponential difference to the planet!

z

Go for **ZERO WASTE** – support the UN Secretary General's Zero Hunger Challenge where one of the goals is zero food loss and waste.



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Traditional and Indigenous Ways of Preserving Food

The Incas historically introduced the production of **chufios** to South America. It was a way to preserve potatoes by exposing a frost-resistant potato variety to the very low night temperatures of the Andean Altiplano, freezing them, and subsequently exposing them to the intense sunlight of the day.

Kiviak is a traditional wintertime Inuit food from Greenland that is made of auks (seabirds) preserved in the hollowed-out body of a seal and which are served at feasts or weddings.

North American tribes were the first ones to eat **pemmican**, a mixture of dried meat and tallow. It was widely adopted as a high-energy food by Arctic and Antarctic explorers as it is a concentrated mixture of fat and protein.

In Brazil, indigenous groups use the fermentation and maturation of **yuca** (cassava) to develop their farinha, which then became a highly popular Brazilian staple food. Traditional communities also used to cook their prey and leave it immersed in fat for meat preservation.



In Nigeria and several other western African countries, cassava tubers are peeled, washed and grated to produce a mash. The mash is placed in a porous bag and allowed to ferment for a couple of days while weights are placed on the bag to press the water out. It is then sieved and roasted, resulting in a dry granular foodstuff called **garri**, which can be stored for long periods.

Bedouins and other desert populations produce ghee, a type of butter that has a long shelf-life and needs no refrigeration, prepared by boiling butter and removing the residue.

Bakkwa, a Chinese salty-sweet dried meat, was traditionally made with the leftover meats from festivals and banquets. The meat from these celebrations is trimmed of the fat, sliced, marinated and then smoked.

The Turkish horsemen of Central Asia used to preserve meat by placing slabs of it in pockets on the sides of their saddles where it would be pressed by their legs as they rode. This pressed meat was the forerunner of today's **pastirma**, a term which literally means 'being pressed' in Turkish, and is the origin of the Italian pastrami.

Cheese is an ancient food whose origin, predating recorded history, is assumed to lie in the practice of transporting milk in bladders made of ruminants' stomachs, with their inherent supply of rennet.

Mongol Empire troops used to condense or shrink the meat of a whole cow down to the size of a human fist—this explains why their armies could travel huge distances seemingly without supplies. Tiny amounts of the concentrated beef protein (known as **“borts”**) could be sliced off into hot water to make a highly nutritious soup. This is just one of the traditional ways in which nomads and herders in Mongolia have preserved food without refrigeration for centuries.

Mongolians also have the everlasting **aaruuls**, which is curdled milk, dehydrated and thoroughly dried in the air and sun.

The Kenyan Turkana people preserved milk by turning it into milk powder which is done by sun drying the clotted fermented milk on flat rocks or hides.

The World Environment Day Big Blog Off!

From February to April this year, UNEP and its partner TreeHugger invited green bloggers across the world to write articles for the 2013 World Environment Day Blogging Competition. The prize: a fully paid round trip to Mongolia to blog live for World Environment Day on 5 June 2013!

After a UNEP-TreeHugger jury selected 10 out of over 100 blog entries, the top 10 bloggers battled in an exciting online showdown in which WED participants got to vote for their favorite blogger! Now the votes are in and everyone can stay tuned to this year's global World Environment Day events by following the live coverage by their blog winner, Charles Immanuel Akhimien.



Waste Not

Think.Eat.Save

Reduce your foodprint!

By Charles Immanuel Akhimien

Food is many things to different people - a necessity, even a religious experience. One thing is common to everyone though, we cannot live without food. As B.W. Richardson puts it: *"Preserve and treat food as you would your body, remembering that in time food will be your body."*

I consider myself a gourmet. I love food. Food to me is one of life's greatest pleasures.

Living in Nigeria, poverty is apparent, which makes the level of food wastage all the more paradoxical. According to the Nigerian Ministry of Agriculture, the average Nigerian household wastes 150 kilograms of food per week.





© UNEP

As poor as sub-Saharan Africa seems, it wastes an obscene amount of food. More than a quarter of the food produced in Africa spoils before it is eaten. Farmers battle post-harvest losses caused by severe weather, pests, poor harvesting and storage. These losses amount to some 100 million tons or \$48 million worth of food. In sub-Saharan Africa, at least 265 million people are hungry, thus making food wastage ridiculous.

In a world of so much starvation, food wastage is a crime.

Discarded food is usually deposited in landfills which generate methane, a greenhouse gas 23 times more potent than carbon dioxide. These landfills account for 34 percent of all methane emissions; meaning that the sandwich you made and then didn't eat yesterday is increasing your personal and our collective carbon footprint. Quite simply, your wasted food is killing our planet!

Various countries in Africa, most prominently Kenya, are taking steps to reduce their food waste. By far the most daring step I have heard till date is that being undertaken by a Nigerian

restaurant in East London, Obalende Suya Express, which charges a £2.50 fee if you don't finish your meal. Most people are aware of food waste on some level. You may have heard the phrase "clean your plate." This awareness, though, doesn't necessarily translate into action. So how does one go about reducing one's foodprint? Here are a few tips that I have put in practice over the last year:

Think and make a list. By using a list I only buy the food items I really need.

Grow your own food. I have a vegetable garden and I hardly waste my own produce, due to the thought of all that effort I put in going to waste.

Don't shop on an empty stomach. From personal experience, you buy more food when you are hungry, and usually it is food that you don't need.

Plan each meal. This helps you to utilise the food you have at hand.

Prepare the appropriate quantity. Even if you're a "foodie" like I am, you still have a limit to what your stomach can accommodate.

Eat food while it is still fresh.

Consume leftovers first.

Save your leftovers; don't discard them. I put mine into the freezer for snacks later or use them in other meals. As a last resort, your pets can enjoy a good feed, or maybe even the chickens can have a nosh up if you keep them. Nothing goes to waste at my house. If the dog won't eat it, the chickens will. The only food items I throw into the landfill bin are small bones!

Using these methods will help you remarkably reduce your food waste. You would be ensuring that this year's World Environment Day theme (<http://www.unep.org/wed/>) is a reality by putting William Osler to shame who said "*We are all dietetic sinners; only a small percent of what we eat nourishes us; the balance goes to waste and loss of energy*". Therefore, *waste not!*







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