

Food: Too Good to Waste!



By Dr. Rosana Salvaterra,
Medical Officer of Public
Health, Peterborough

My eyes are usually much bigger than my stomach. I can easily buy much more than my family can eat.

Hence, I have been engaged in a lifelong battle with my vegetable crisper – disciplining myself to plan meals and buy only what I need, and then managing the perishables so that they are not forgotten. I constantly look to learn new ways to lengthen the storage lives of herbs and leafy greens once they come home with me. And I am not alone. In Canada, 47% of food produced is thrown out at home...uneaten leftovers, untouched fruits and vegetables, food that's "bought and forgot."

There's a public health side to reducing food waste. Having a plan to purchase fruits and vegetables so that meals are prepared at home, from nutritious ingredients, reduces the amount of quick-serve meals, frozen dinners and take-out consumed. This ensures you and your family are getting more vitamins, minerals, fibre, protein and healthy fats and less fried foods, added sugar and salt. Prepared foods are still the leading source for sodium in our diets. What's more, read the ingredients and learn a whole litany of names for sugar! Eating meals together, and including children in the planning and preparation of those meals is mental health promotion, as well as great preparations for the next generation to learn important life and food literacy skills. Preparing our own meals at home also costs less.

Food waste is bad for the health of our planet as well. There are serious environmental consequences to sending food (and also organic materials) to landfill because they directly contribute to climate change by producing methane gas. In the parts of Peterborough where farm animals can be kept, table scraps can be a welcome part of their diet. Home composting is a great alternative to throwing food in the garbage. A compost pile undergoes aerobic decomposition and requires oxygen for the process to work so that carbon dioxide is produced instead of methane. Carbon Dioxide is a much less powerful greenhouse gas. Compost adds rich organic material to garden soil. Municipal strategies such as green bin pick-ups for organics, and the switch to using clear garbage bags are building blocks towards a longer term strategy of redirecting food and organics away from landfill sites. Peterborough Public Health is working with other partners like the City and County Waste Management team, Green Up, Sustainable Peterborough, Nourish, Curve Lake, and Fleming



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College Sustainable Waste Department to raise awareness on how to reduce wasted food at home, including menu planning, shopping tips, food skills and nutrition education. You can check out the content that has been created, shared and promoted on www.foodinpeeterborough.ca. Up until last week, the City of Peterborough was working towards a new municipal curbside composting system with a new facility to be built at the Bensfort County-City landfill site but now that seems to have been seriously threatened with the *news that the \$7.4 million provincial grant is being clawed back.*

On Thursday, September 27, 2018, at 7pm at Peterborough Public Health, the local partnership will be hosting a free community event with the help of guest speakers Trevor Barton and Laurie Westaway to look more closely at the infrastructure, staffing and dollars currently tied up in dealing with wasted food and strategies that might be effective at the community level.

Our food system has a large environmental footprint, from production to processing to transport to waste. It consumes water and energy, and produces greenhouse gases, air pollution and other contaminants. There are ways that every household can make a difference: reduce the amount of packaging by buying bulk, reusing bags and not buying single serving sizes (whether it is water bottles or snacks). Once perishables have been purchased, we all have a responsibility to store it properly and to use it to fuel our bodies with a healthy diet rather than it going to waste.

C.I.B.C. RUN FOR THE CURE

Sunday, September 30th, is the date scheduled for the C.I.B.C. Walk/Run for the Cure for Breast Cancer.

The "Women of Apsley" have been doing this walk as a team since 2001 but this year I, **Alice Liberty** have entered as an "individual". I will be raising money and taking donations as usual and hope when asked for a donation you will give from your heart. Maria at the "Heart of Apsley" (the ice cream store) will accept envelopes with your donations. Please make your cheques out to Alice Liberty and they will be processed online and please make sure that your full name and address is given in order to receive a receipt for income tax.

We all know of SURVIVORS of breast cancer, but we must think and remember all of the loved ones who have LOST THEIR FIGHT TO THIS DREADED DISEASE.

**ONE DAY SOON WE HOPE TO HAVE
A FUTURE WITHOUT BREAST CANCER.**