

Reduce holiday kitchen waste



Environmental Services

Capital Regional District | December 2021

'Tis the season to reduce the amount of waste produced in your kitchen!

From potlucks to dinner parties, kitchens are often the gathering place when families and friends celebrate and make memories over the holidays. As a result, kitchens are responsible for generating a lot of waste during the holiday season. Following the principles of the '3R pollution prevention hierarchy'—reduce first, reuse second and recycle third—can help to reduce the environmental impact of kitchen waste this holiday season.

Here are some simple ways to create a holiday that's memorable and reduce your kitchen waste!

1. **Right-size your dinner plans:** Reduce food waste by planning portions appropriately and preparing only what you and your guests will eat. Consider buying a smaller bird or forgoing those less popular dishes.
2. **Eat "family style":** Encourage guests to serve themselves. They'll be able to choose what they want to eat and how much, which makes it less likely that you'll have to dispose of served but un-eaten food.
3. **Reuse leftovers:** Save leftovers in reusable containers or deliver them to a friend. Going to a family or friend's house for dinner? Bring your own container with you and if there's leftover offer to take some.
4. **Avoid single use items:** Keep your holiday dinner green by using reusable items. Swap out disposable linens, dishes and cutlery for the real deal. Do not be afraid to mix and match or borrow.
5. **Compost unavoidable food waste:** Bones, fruit and vegetable peels, carrot tops, egg shells, tea bags, paper plates belong in your green bin, not your garbage.
6. **Be waterwise:** Thaw your turkey in the fridge instead of using running water or reuse the water from cooking vegetables in soups gravies, sauces or for watering the plants.
7. **Keep your sink fat-free:** Holiday cooking means more fats, oils and greases—save and store fats for use in future recipes or dispose of them in your green bin. Whichever you decide, be sure they don't end up down the drain where they don't belong.
8. **Recycle your containers:** After dinner, recycle your aluminum trays, whipped cream cans, egg nog cartons and deli trays in your blue box.
9. **Host a cookie swap:** If you find yourself with too much holiday baking or want an excuse to bake more, but worry it might go to waste if you do, invite a few friends and family over for a cookie swap.
10. **DIY your holiday centerpiece:** You'll find many decorations right in your own backyard: pinecones, cedar boughs and sprigs of holly look beautiful as a centrepiece for your holiday dinner. The added bonus? They smell amazing!

It's that easy! Learn more about how to make memories and not waste at www.crd.bc.ca/memories.