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MITRE/Gallup Food Waste Survey

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# Introduction

Intro. Thank you for participating in the Food Waste Survey! For this survey, please think about all food that gets thrown away or disposed of at your home by going in the trash bin, in the compost, or down the sink drain. This includes food wasted by all members currently residing in your household and any foods you purchased from a store, market or a restaurant, obtained at a food bank or pantry, received as a gift, or grew or raised yourself.

# Block 1 – Food Waste Amount

Q1. Did you OR other members of your household dispose of any of the following types of food in the past 7 days? (*When thinking about other members of your household, please estimate their food waste to the best of your ability*).

1. Fruit (Fresh, jarred, canned, dried or frozen fruit, including berries, melons, whole fruits, and fruit juice.)
2. Vegetables (Fresh, jarred, canned or frozen vegetables, including leafy greens, red & orange vegetables, legumes, and starchy vegetables.)
3. Grains (Grain-based foods such as bread & wraps, pasta, cereal, rice, cookies, cakes, and snacks)
4. Protein (Light and dark meats, seafood, eggs, nuts, seeds, and soy products)
5. Dairy (Dairy products including milk and milk based desserts, yogurt, and cheese.)
6. Mixed (Dishes with a blend of food types, such as casseroles and stews)
7. Scraps (Inedible food scraps, including peels, rinds, bones, and shells)
8. Oils, Fats, and Sugars (Oils such as canola oil, olive oil, and vegetable oil, fats like butter, margarine, and coconut oil, and sugars including white and brown sugar, maple syrup, honey, soda/soft drinks, sports drinks, and candy.)
9. Yes
10. No

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Intro\_2. In the next section, you will see questions about the different types of food products your household disposed of in the past 7 days. We ask how much of a certain product your household disposed of in the past week. Please use the following guide to help you visually estimate your household’s food waste and try to be as accurate as possible!. (*When thinking about other members of your household, estimate food waste to the best of your ability).*

A picture containing company name

Description automatically generated

[Ask if Q1A = 1]

Q2. **Fruit**

How much fruit did your household dispose of in the past 7 days? *( include fresh, jarred, canned, dried or frozen fruit, including berries, melons, whole fruits, and fruit juice)*

Please do not include peels or rinds in this estimate.

ALT: Approximately \_\_\_\_\_ [cup(s)] PLUS \_\_\_\_ tablespoons of fruit [drop-down: 0, 1, 2, 3, 4 (or a quarter cup), 5, 6, 7, 8 (or a half cup), 9, 10, 11, 12 (or three quarters cup), 13, 14, 15]

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[Ask if Q1B = 1]

Q3. **Vegetables**

1. How much vegetables did your household dispose of in the past 7 days? (*include* *fresh, jarred, canned or frozen vegetables, including leafy greens, red & orange vegetables, legumes, and starchy vegetables*)

Please do not include peels or rinds in this estimate.

ALT: Approximately \_\_\_\_\_ [cup(s)] PLUS \_\_\_\_ tablespoons of vegetables [drop-down: 0, 1, 2, 3, 4 (or a quarter cup), 5, 6, 7, 8 (or a half cup), 9, 10, 11, 12 (or three quarters cup), 13, 14, 15]

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[Ask if Q1C = 1]

Q4. **Grains**

How much grains did your household dispose of in the past 7 days? (*include grain-based foods such as bread & wraps, pasta, cereal, rice, and snacks*)

ALT: Approximately \_\_\_\_\_ [cup(s)] PLUS \_\_\_\_ tablespoons of grains [drop-down: 0, 1, 2, 3, 4 (or a quarter cup), 5, 6, 7, 8 (or a half cup), 9, 10, 11, 12 (or three quarters cup), 13, 14, 15]

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[Ask if Q1D = 1]

Q5. **Protein**

How much protein did your household dispose of in the past 7 days? (*include light and dark meats, seafood, eggs, nuts, seeds, and soy products*)

ALT: Approximately \_\_\_\_\_ [cup(s)] PLUS \_\_\_\_ tablespoons of protein [drop-down: 0, 1, 2, 3, 4 (or a quarter cup), 5, 6, 7, 8 (or a half cup), 9, 10, 11, 12 (or three quarters cup), 13, 14, 15]

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[Ask if Q1E = 1]

Q6. **Dairy**

How much dairy did your household dispose of in the past 7 days? (*include milk and milk-based desserts, yogurt, and cheese*)

ALT: Approximately \_\_\_\_\_ [cup(s)] PLUS \_\_\_\_ tablespoons of dairy [drop-down: 0, 1, 2, 3, 4 (or a quarter cup), 5, 6, 7, 8 (or a half cup), 9, 10, 11, 12 (or three quarters cup), 13, 14, 15]

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[Ask if Q1F = 1]

Q7. **Mixed foods**

How much mixed food (dishes with a blend of food types, such as casseroles and stews) did your household dispose of in the past 7 days?

ALT: Approximately \_\_\_\_\_ [cup(s)] PLUS \_\_\_\_ tablespoons of mixed foods [drop-down: 0, 1, 2, 3, 4 (or a quarter cup), 5, 6, 7, 8 (or a half cup), 9, 10, 11, 12 (or three quarters cup), 13, 14, 15]

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[Ask if Q1G = 1]

Q8. **Scraps**

How much scraps (inedible food scraps, including peels, rinds, bones, and shells) did your household dispose of in the past week?

ALT: Approximately \_\_\_\_\_ [cup(s)] PLUS \_\_\_\_ tablespoons of scraps [drop-down: 0, 1, 2, 3, 4 (or a quarter cup), 5, 6, 7, 8 (or a half cup), 9, 10, 11, 12 (or three quarters cup), 13, 14, 15]

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[Ask if Q1H = 1]

Q9. **Oils, Fats, and Sugars**

How much oils (*such as canola oil, olive oil, and vegetable oil*), fats (*butter, margarine, and coconut oil*) and sugars (*including white and brown sugar, maple syrup, honey, soda/soft drinks, sports drinks, and candy*) did your household dispose of in the past week?

ALT: Approximately \_\_\_\_\_ [cup(s)] PLUS \_\_\_\_ tablespoons of oils, fats, and sugars [drop-down: 0, 1, 2, 3, 4 (or a quarter cup), 5, 6, 7, 8 (or a half cup), 9, 10, 11, 12 (or three quarters cup), 13, 14, 15]

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Q10. Did the amount of food waste in your household over the past week match your typical food waste levels?

1. Yes, it was about the same as usual
2. No, there was more food waste than usual
3. No, there was less food waste than usual
4. Not sure

Q11. There are many reasons for producing or avoiding food waste. Which of the following factors affected your waste over the past week? *Please select all that apply.*

1. Cleaned out the refrigerator
2. Cleaned out food from the cabinets/pantry
3. Fasted or abstained from eating for religious or personal reasons
4. Spent one or more nights/days away from home
5. Reduced waste because I was more aware of my household’s food waste
6. Household member(s)’ schedules in flux
7. Produce had shorter shelf-life than expected
8. Hosted a meal or party with food
9. Ate at restaurants/ordered take-out/delivery more frequently than usual
10. Ate at restaurants/ordered take-out/delivery less frequently than usual
11. Purchased more groceries than usual
12. Purchased fewer groceries than usual
13. Cooked at home more often than usual
14. Cooked at home less often than usual
15. Other (specify)

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# Block 2 – Food Waste Behaviors

In this next section, we ask about your household’s food waste behaviors more generally.

Q12. Who is primarily responsible for purchasing or getting the food for your household?

1. I am always or usually responsible
2. Someone else in the household is always or usually responsible
3. I share the responsibility about equally with someone else in the household

Q13. Who is primarily responsible for cooking food in your household?

1. I am always or usually responsible.
2. Someone else in the household is always or usually responsible.
3. I share the responsibility about equally with someone else in the household.
4. Other (please specify).

Q14. Please indicate how frequently your household obtains food using the following places:

1. In-person shopping at a physical grocery store (including supermarket, wholesale, and big box stores)
2. In-person shopping from different stores/markets (such as a small shop or farmers market)
3. Online shopping for delivery
4. Online shopping for pick-up
5. Food bank/food pantry
6. Eating out at a restaurant
7. Take-out from a restaurant
8. Delivery from a restaurant
9. Daily
10. 2-3 times per week
11. Weekly
12. A few times a month
13. Once a month or less

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Q15. How often do you check how much food (including leftovers) you have at home prior to obtaining food? By check, please consider either a mental or physical inventory or asking household members for input.

1. Never
2. Rarely
3. Sometimes
4. Often
5. Always

Q16. How often do you make a list of the food you want or need prior to obtaining food?

1. Never
2. Rarely
3. Sometimes
4. Often
5. Always

[Ask Q17 if Q16 = 2-5]

Q17. To what extent do you stick to your shopping list when obtaining food?

1. Never
2. Rarely
3. Sometimes
4. Often
5. Always

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Q18. I try to save money or limit my spending when I shop for food.

1. Strongly disagree
2. Disagree
3. Neither agree nor disagree
4. Agree
5. Strongly agree

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Q19. How frequently do date labels on food items, such as "use by" and "best if used by," influence your decision to purchase them?

1. Never
2. Rarely
3. Sometimes
4. Often
5. Always

Q20. How often do you dispose of food that has passed its date label (e.g., “best if used by” or “use by”)?

1. Never
2. Rarely
3. Sometimes
4. Often

Q21. How worried are you about the health risk of each of the following behaviors?

1. Eating left-overs (with no signs of spoilage)
2. Eating food past its “use by” date (with no signs of spoilage)
3. Eating food past its “best if used by” date (with no signs of spoilage)
4. Very worried
5. Worried
6. Somewhat worried
7. Not too worried
8. Not worried at all

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Q22. How often does your household typically do the following with food?

1. Use leftovers or partially used food as ingredients in future meals
2. Eat leftovers as a meal by themselves
3. Prioritize preparing and eating foods close to expiration or spoilage
4. Throw away leftovers because no one wanted to eat them
5. Daily
6. 2-3 times per week
7. About once a week
8. A few times a month
9. Once a month or less

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Q23. On how many of the past 7 days did your household cook at least one meal at home? (drop down 0-7)

Q24. On how many of the past 7 daysdid your household order at least one meal from a food delivery service, pickup/takeout, or eat at a restaurant? (drop down 0-7)

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Q25. When it comes to discarding food in your household, would you say that you…?

1. Do all of it
2. Do most of it
3. I share the cleaning responsibilities equally with another person
4. Someone else does most of it
5. Someone else does all of it

# Block 3 – Food Waste Attitudes and Intentions

Q26. Which of these food issues are you most concerned about? Please select up to five. [programmer: randomize order of response options, allow only 5 choices]

1. Food prices
2. Food waste
3. Animal welfare
4. The healthiness of food in my diet
5. The amount of food packaging
6. Availability of food in stores
7. Being able to afford to buy enough food for myself/my family
8. Difficulty recycling food packaging
9. Hormones, steroids, or antibiotics in food
10. The use of pesticides to grow food
11. The impact of food production on the environment
12. How food producers and farmers are treated
13. Genetically modified food
14. Food poisoning (e.g., Salmonella and E. Coli)
15. The impact of food production and waste on climate change
16. I don’t have any concerns about food (**exclusive response**)

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Q27. Please indicate which of the following behaviors you exhibit regularly. *Select all that apply*.

1. Buy amount of food you know you can eat
2. Donate excess food
3. Prepare portion sizes that you know will be eaten
4. Freeze food before it goes bad

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Q28. Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements

1. I feel guilty when I throw food away
2. There is not much I can do to minimize the amount of food thrown away in my household
3. Throwing away food is a waste of money
4. Throwing away food is bad for the environment
5. Americans should do more to reduce the amount of food they waste.
6. Strongly disagree
7. Disagree
8. Neither agree nor disagree
9. Agree
10. Strongly agree

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Q29. There are many people who believe that changes need to be made in the United States to reduce food waste. This could involve changing policies or behaviors around food production, distribution, or consumption. How much responsibility should each of the following groups have for making these changes?

1. The federal government
2. State and Local governments (state, city, town, or county government)
3. Grocery stores/supermarkets
4. Food manufacturers/brands
5. Restaurants
6. Non-profit organizations
7. General public
8. No responsibility at all
9. Very little responsibility
10. Some responsibility
11. A lot of responsibility
12. I don’t believe changes should be made

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Q30. To what extent do the following motivate you to try and minimize the amount of food that you waste?

1. Reducing my impact on the environment
2. Food shortages in the US or elsewhere in the world
3. Saving money
4. Wanting to manage my home efficiently
5. Feelings of guilt when I throw food away that could have been eaten
6. Not at all
7. Not very much
8. A little
9. A fair amount
10. A great deal

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# Block 4 – Food Waste Knowledge

The following are food waste knowledge questions. Please give your best guess for these questions based only on your current knowledge and reasoning, without looking up or researching any additional information. We just want to see what you think!

Q31. Please indicate your level of agreement or disagreement with the following statements

1. Wasting food is a problem in the United States
2. More food is wasted in the United States than in most countries
3. Strongly disagree
4. Disagree
5. Neither agree nor disagree
6. Agree
7. Strongly agree

Q32. Of all the food that is produced for human consumption in the U.S. each year, about what percent is wasted? If you’re not sure, just make your best guess! [write in]

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Q33. For each of the following, please indicate whether you believe it is a consequence of food waste.

1. Pollution of land, water, or air
2. Waste of water, energy, or natural resources
3. Waste of human labor
4. Increased hunger or malnutrition
5. Climate change
6. Is not a consequence
7. Is a consequence

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Q34. Approximately how much money do you think a typical U.S. household could save on average each month by not wasting food?

1. Less than $10
2. $11-$50
3. $51-$100
4. $101-$300
5. $301-$500
6. $501-$1,000
7. More than $1,000

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Q35. To the best of your knowledge, which of the following food-waste policies currently exist in your community? Please select all that apply.

1. Food waste reduction targets (for example, reducing food waste by 50% by 2030)
2. Businesses are required to donate surplus food
3. Businesses and individuals are protected if they donate food and the recipient becomes ill
4. Businesses receive tax credits or deductions for donating food
5. Food composting is required
6. Landfill ban for food waste (bans on disposing certain types of food waste in landfills)
7. Pay-as-you-throw food waste pricing (costs more to throw away more food)
8. Public food waste education and outreach (public service announcements, educational campaigns, workshops, etc.)
9. Food waste education within local schools
10. Household organic waste pick-up
11. Local organic waste drop-off for composting
12. Don’t know
13. A different policy not included here
14. My community does not have any food-waste policies [programmer: exclusive]

Q36. Which of the following food-waste policies would you like to see implemented in your community? Please select all that apply.

1. Food waste reduction targets (for example, reducing food waste by 50% by 2030)
2. Businesses are required to donate surplus food
3. Businesses and individuals are protected if they donate food and the recipient becomes ill
4. Businesses receive tax credits or deductions for donating food
5. Food composting is required
6. Landfill ban for food waste (bans on disposing certain types of food waste in landfills)
7. Pay-as-you-throw food waste pricing (costs more to throw away more food)
8. Public food waste education and outreach (public service announcements, educational campaigns, workshops, etc.)
9. Food waste education within local schools
10. Household organic waste pick-up
11. Local organic waste drop-off for composting
12. Don’t know
13. A different policy not included here
14. My community does not have any food-waste policies [programmer: exclusive]

# Block 5 – Household Characteristics

Q37. What is the highest level of school you have completed or the highest degree you have received?

1. Less than a high school diploma (Grades 1 through 11 or no schooling)
2. High school graduate (Grade 12 with diploma or GED certificate)
3. Technical, trade, vocational, or business school or program after high school
4. Some college - college, university, or community college - but no degree
5. Two-year associate degree from a college, university, or community college
6. Four-year bachelor’s degree from a college or university (e.g., BS, BA, AB)
7. Some postgraduate or professional schooling after graduating college, but no postgraduate degree (e.g., some graduate school)
8. Postgraduate or professional degree, including master’s, doctorate, medical, or law degree (e.g., MA, MS, PhD, MD, JD)

Q38. Which of the following best describes your current employment status?

1. Employed full-time
2. Employed part-time
3. Not employed and not looking for work (i.e., retired, homemaker, full-time student)
4. Not employed but looking for work (unemployed)

Q39. Including yourself, how many people currently live in your household? Please include individuals who live in your household at least part of the time each week. (Dropdown, 1-10+)

Q40. How many of your household members are individuals under the age of 18? (Dropdown, 1-10+)

Q41. What is your total ANNUAL household income, before taxes? Please include income from wages and salaries, remittances from family members living elsewhere, farming, and all other sources.

1. Less than $12,000
2. $12,000 to $23,999
3. $24,000 to $35,999
4. $36,000 to $47,999
5. $48,000 to $59,999
6. $60,000 to $89,999
7. $90,000 to $119,999
8. $120,000 to $179,999
9. $180,000 to $239,999
10. $240,000 and over
11. Don’t know

Q42. Which of the following types of media do you use on a daily basis. [Select all that apply]

1. Facebook
2. WhatsApp
3. TV Subscriptions
4. YouTube
5. Instagram
6. Twitter
7. Music streaming – free
8. Music streaming – paid
9. Tik Tok
10. Snapchat
11. Podcasts
12. National Public Radio (NPR)
13. Newspaper (online or print)
14. Television news broadcast

Q43. What is your level of English language proficiency?

1. No proficiency
2. Elementary proficiency (basic sentences only)
3. Limited working proficiency (limited conversations)
4. Professional working proficiency (general conversations)
5. Full professional proficiency (extended conversations)
6. Native/bilingual