Food waste in Australian households: evidence for designing interventions

> Wasting food costs the Australian economy $36 billion every year.

> Wasting food costs Australian households $19 billion every year, accounting for half the amount wasted from farm to fork.

> Reducing the amount of food waste from households means targeting areas where the biggest impacts can be made:

  - targeting behaviours most linked to less waste (e.g. preparing the right amount)
  - focusing on the products wasted most often (e.g. high value products like meat, or quantities like bread)
  - supporting high waste consumer groups (e.g. families with children living at home)

> For those working to reduce food waste, these pages outline the key areas recommended to focus interventions on.

Whether the focus is on, a specific behaviour, types of food or an audience, this report outlines those able to achieve greater impacts for campaigns and interventions.

The full detailed results can be found in the "Food waste in Australian households: evidence for designing interventions" report delivered by the Fight Food Waste Cooperative Research Centre: bit.ly/foodwasteinterventions

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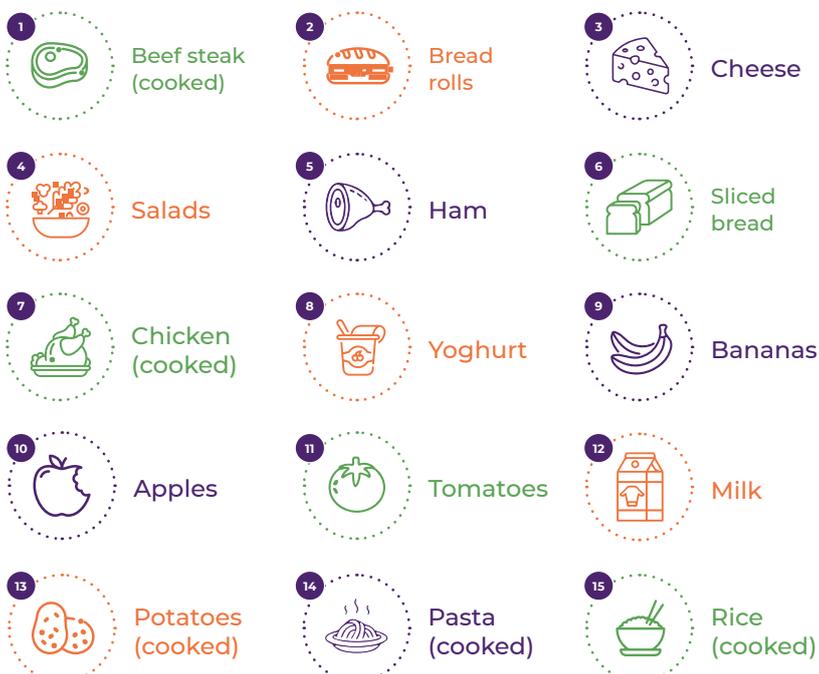## Behaviours to be encouraged
(Based on synthesis of 40 behaviours)

1 Prepare appropriate amount
2 Plan for changes in plans
3 Eat leftovers
4 Purchase appropriate amount
5 Eat oldest items first
6 Appropriate storage in fridge/freezer
7 Encourage small servings

Food categories to be prioritised
(top 5 out of 13 based on $ value)

1 Meat and seafood
2 Fresh vegetables/ fresh herbs
3 Meals
4 Condiments, dried herbs, spices, spreads, oils
5 Bread, bakery, confectionary and snacks

Products to be prioritised

1 Beef steak (cooked)
2 Bread rolls
3 Cheese
4 Salads
5 Ham
6 Sliced bread
7 Chicken (cooked)
8 Yoghurt
9 Bananas
10 Apples
11 Tomatoes
12 Milk
13 Potatoes (cooked)
14 Pasta (cooked)
15 Rice (cooked)

Households to target

	Over providers (23%)	Under planners (32%)	Considerate planners (45%)
Who	> Mostly young couples (below 45 years), with young children living at home	> Mostly middle aged (35 – 64 years) single or couple, no young children living at home	> Mostly older couples (55 years or more), no young children living at home
Context	> Managing busy schedules (often with both working), and multiple food preferences > Often eat out	> Lack of interest in food provisioning > The least likely to plan food shopping and cooking	> Generally current behaviours support reducing food waste
Attitude to changing behaviours	> Moderately motivated > Feels it requires effort	> Least motivated > Feel not much effort required	> Most motivated > Feel not much effort required
Behaviours to encourage	> Plan for changes in plans, purchase appropriate amount > Prepare appropriate amount > eat leftovers	> Purchase appropriate amount > Prepare appropriate amount	> Provide support for continuation of current behaviours > Encourage them to become mentors for Over providers and Under planners

Message frames that are most effective

**$** — Save money ($ or %) by reducing food waste

Avoid throwing money in the bin by reducing food waste

Save water, land and other scarce resources used in producing the food which is wasted

Methods to measure household food waste

Survey
Scaling Factor 1.7

Electronic-Diary
Scaling Factor 1.2

Bin Audit
Scaling Factor 1.9

> Survey is recommended as most cost-effective method

> All methods have limitations and underestimate food waste in households

> Accurate weight of food waste is determined by multiplying the total food waste derived by the method used, by the relevant scaling factor

Actions Required

> Create **Simple** messages to encourage the behaviours

> Pick one message to **Amplify**

> Provide consumers with **Consistent** message from multiple stakeholders, and

> **Repeat** over sustained period of time to **help consumers stop wasting food**

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