

When it comes to Australian consumers wasting food, who is who?

The Australian Fight Food Waste Cooperative Research Centre (FFW CRC) has commissioned innovative research to identify different segments in the Australian population based on their demographic features, food waste amounts and their food use behaviours and influencers.

Three segments of household food managers* were identified: **Over Providers, Under Planners and Considerate Planners**. They are described below, together with specific target behaviours and recommendations to reduce their food waste.

This research project was conducted in partnership with Monash University's BehaviourWorks Australia.



In collaboration with:



* Those mainly responsible for food shopping and cooking in a household.

Over Providers

Typically parents in young families with children, Over-Providers waste the most food (on per capita and per household basis). While they plan meals and shopping, they purchase and cook more than is needed, and don't eat leftovers. They are motivated to change their behaviours to reduce food waste, but feel it would require some effort, particularly due to the unpredictable tastes and appetites of their children.

2.3 out of 10 household food managers in Australia are Over Providers

“Because I don't like to leave people hungry and that can mean I am a bit of an over caterer... think I've got that from my mom. I just never want anyone to leave my house hungry.”

“The kids can be unpredictable... because they might eat a quarter of what you give them. Sometimes they eat it all, you just never know with them [but] at least 50% of the time you're throwing out a lot of their food.”



How much food do they waste?
6.33kgs per household per week

What influences their food waste?

- Buy extra food because children are unpredictable in what they like
- Their parents also bought and cooked more than needed
- Express love for family and guests by over-catering
- Full fridges with frequent eating-out means less left-overs eaten

Who are they?

- Both work
- Highest income
- More likely to eat out or take-away
- Men and women, usually under 45 years
- Shop mainly at large supermarkets
- Share responsibility for shopping and cooking
- Have children under 17 years at home

How motivated are they to reduce food waste?

They are motivated to reduce food waste, especially by:

- Financial savings
- Environmental issues
- Doing the right thing for their children
- Healthy eating

What makes it hard to change?

They feel change requires an effort due to:

- Busy schedules
- Children's unpredictable appetites and preferences

What can help change their behaviours to reduce food waste?

- Promote a 'use what you have day' as part of their meal plans
- Reminders in the supermarket to buy the right amount
- Involve children in food preparation at home
- Help fridge management with a 'USE ME' area in the fridge
- Remind them at home at meal-times to cook the right amount
- Partner with health and fitness providers to promote weekly healthy meal plans and leftover recipes

What behaviours could be targeted to reduce their food waste?

- Make a complete shopping list before food shopping
- Manage fridges and freezers for food that needs to be used up
- Stick to their shopping list and only buy what is needed
- Cook and serve based on family hunger levels
- Use oldest food first and use leftovers when cooking

Under Planners

Part of single or couple households, without young children, Under Planners are less likely to plan shopping and cooking. They are generally disinterested in food shopping or cooking and the least motivated to change their behaviours to reduce food waste, despite perceiving change does not require much effort.

3.2 out of 10 household food managers in Australia are Under Planners



How much food do they waste?
4.46kgs per household per week

What influences their food waste?

- General disinterest in shopping and cooking
- Want to be time-efficient when shopping and cooking



Who are they?

- Women, 35 - 64 years old
- Often don't have children at home
- One person responsible for shopping and cooking
- Live alone or part of a couple
- Second highest income

How motivated are they to reduce food waste?

They are the least motivated to change, but are:

- Somewhat interested by financial savings
- Motivated by saving time

What makes it hard to change?

They feel change does not require an effort but have a:

- Lack of interest in planning
- Lack of interest in shopping

What can help change their behaviours to reduce food waste?

- Emphasise the financial loss due to food waste
- Promote online shopping as time efficient and an easy way to plan meals
- Show how time can be saved by meal and shopping planning
- Partner with supermarkets to provide greater options to purchase right amount for smaller households

What behaviours could be targeted to reduce their food waste?

- Make a meal plan for a set number of days
- Make a complete shopping list before food shopping
- Check food stocks at home before going food shopping
- Store food correctly at home after a food shop

Considerate Planners

Considerate Planners come from households with older couples. They have a strong interest and love for food and show pride in being organised. With children no longer living at home, they have time and experience to engage in a range of planning, shopping and cooking practices that reduce food waste.

4.5 out of 10 household food managers in Australia are Considerate Planners



How much food do they waste?
3.72kgs per household per week

What influences their food waste?

- The way their own parents shopped and cooked
- Love cooking and food
- Express love for family through food
- Take pride in being organised

Who are they?

- Women, 55+ years
- No longer have children at home
- One person responsible for shopping and cooking
- Live with a partner
- Lowest income generally

How motivated are they to reduce food waste?

They are motivated to reduce food waste, especially by:

- Financial savings
- Environmental issues
- Setting a good example

What role could they play in reducing household food waste?

This segment already engages in many food reduction behaviours and waste the least. They can be used as catalysts of change by sharing their knowledge and skills with other segments, especially Over Providers.



“I love to cook. And since I've been home, I've been cooking even more, but I'm very conscious to be sustainable so that we don't throw things out. So I'll make sure that if I overbuy, I know that I'm going to use it.”