STRETCH YOUR MEALS AND REDUCE WASTE

Use healthy ingredients to bulk-up your homemade meals and ensure the food you have will last you longer!

1. **Add a can of beans or vegetables to your recipes to make your meals more filling and to create a few extra servings.**
   For example: add garbanzo beans to your pasta sauce, or peas to your mac & cheese

2. **Store foods properly.** Properly stored fruits and vegetables stay fresh longer, taste better, maintain nutrients, and reduce food waste.

3. **Get creative! Don’t be afraid to swap ingredients in recipes for what you have in the fridge or pantry.**

4. **Understand date and expiration labels.**
   
   “**Sell by**” is used to inform retailers when the product should be sold or removed from the shelves.

   “**Best by**” is a suggested date that consumers should use their products by. Neither of these terms means that the product is unsafe to eat after the given date. Check the FoodKeeper website or app to maximize the freshness of your food!

   https://www.foodsafety.gov/keep-food-safe/foodkeeper-app
5. Use legumes in your cooking. Beans, lentils, and split peas are nourishing, long lasting and inexpensive. See the "Healthy Cooking and Baking Swaps" handout for easy swaps to include legumes in your meals!

6. Add leftover cooked pasta, or other whole grains (rice, bread cubes, quinoa, etc.) for a more nourishing salad.

7. Get friendly with your freezer! Freeze leftover meals, sauces, berries, and fresh vegetables.

8. Add cooked lentils or beans to your soup or pasta sauce for an extra dose of protein and fiber.

9. Make a soup at the end of the week with produce that needs to be used before going bad!

10. Help avoid food spoilage by keeping your fridge clean and organized.

11. Reuse and recycle your food! There are many ways to repurpose your food such as:
   - Eating the whole plant including skin, stalks and leaves
   - Using coffee grounds as a plant fertilizer or mosquito repellent
   - Using too soft greens, bananas and fruit in a smoothie
   - Using peels from citrus fruits, apples, and cucumbers to flavor your water