



# Food waste prevention in response to Covid-19

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# Headlines – food waste



On-track: 27% reduction 2007 to 2018

UK  
1.7 Mt annual reduction from 2007 to 2018  
£4.7 billion less food wasted in 2018 vs 2007



- >1.4 Mt reduction
- 30% less per person

- 230kt reduction
- 13% less per capita
- Driven by reductions at manufacture



# Work on redistribution in response to Covid-19

*In mid-March, WRAP set up a Covid-19 redistribution response team focusing on:*

- Identifying the challenges faced by redistribution organisations and businesses, their needs, and using this to inform rapid interventions*
- Widening awareness of who to contact at redistribution organisations, and connecting them with food businesses, particularly in the HaFS sector*
- Providing Defra-funded emergency grants for not-for-profit redistributors*
- Issuing new guidance to ensure that surplus food that has passed its Best Before date is accepted as being good food and gets redistributed*



## Ben Elliot: 'Redistribution in a time of crisis - no good food should go to waste'

**NEW FUNDING**

### COVID-19 Emergency Surplus Food Grant

Phases 2 and 3 of £3.25 million fund now open

**Resource Action Fund**



Ben Elliot, the Food Surplus and Waste Champion for Defra, has written to the UK's leading food manufacturers, major retailers, hospitality businesses and redistribution organisations urging them to ensure that ALL surplus food that's safe and suitable to eat is made available and redistributed.



# Awards announced last week

ca. £4 million awarded as of 25<sup>th</sup> May



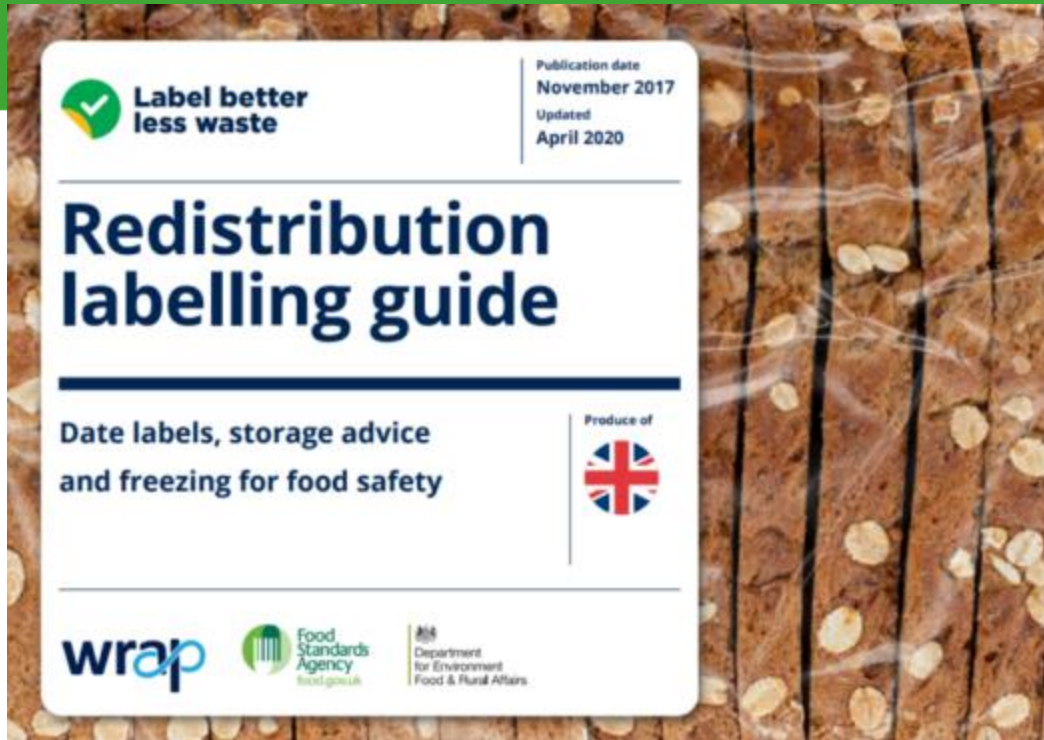
*£670k awarded to 80 smaller NFPs*  
*£400k awarded to 9 larger NFPs*

## Resource Action Fund

The Resource Action Fund is an £18million fund, provided by Defra to support resource efficiency projects, with the goal of diverting, reducing, and better managing, waste.

*£1.25 million awarded to 14 smaller NFPs*  
*£2 million awarded to 4 larger NFPs*

# Updated guidance & awareness raising



Redistributors (and end-users) can work with food retailers and manufacturers to agree:

- The acceptable duration beyond 'Best Before' dates for different products (example durations are given in this guidance, to be used as a basis to inform what is agreed).
- That the necessary checks have been carried out to ensure products are of sufficient quality and free from damage (as outlined above).

An example form that can be used to implement this is provided in [Appendix B - Agreement to supply/ receive food past 'Best Before' date.](#)

His Church Retweeted



**Richard Humphrey** @RichHumphrey74 · May 11

Brilliant Ben! His Church have redistributed over 300% more #BeyondBestBefore meals alone in the last 2 weeks thanks to this guidance. It's invaluable help to redistributors who are genuinely committed to reducing food waste. Thank you to you @WRAP\_UK @DefraGovUK & our donors ❤️

MailOnline

## Some foods CAN be eaten after Best Before day by up to three years later, including Heinz Beanz, according to new government guidance released in bid to reduce waste

- Tinned goods can be eaten up to three years after their Best Before, says WRAP
- Some vegetable and bread can also last for one week, according to guidance
- But it is advised bakery goods are checked for mould and packaging for quality



Love Food Hate Waste - Community

1 May at 02:36

Best before, use by, sell by... 🤔 These dates can be confusing but we're here to help make sense of them and in the process save your food from being wasted!

#LoveFoodHateWaste #DateLabels

**DATE LABELS**  
WHAT DO THEY MEAN?

**BEST BEFORE**

'Best before' refers to quality: your food will be at its best before the date given. After this date, it might not be at its best, but it will still be safe to eat. Use your senses to make a judgement.

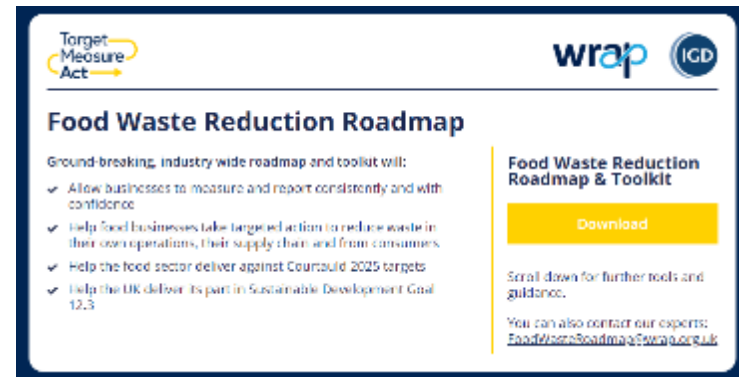
**USE BY**

'Use by' refers to safety: you must not eat food past the 'use by' date, even if it looks and smells OK. You cannot always smell the bacteria that causes food to spoil, so after the

**SELL BY**

The 'Display until' and 'Sell by' are for the retailers – not us at home. You don't need to worry about these.

- *Grants*
  - *Regular assessment of bids and announcements of awards*
- *Guidance & other resources*
  - *Extending to other categories (post-Best Before)*
  - *Extending Food & Drink Surplus Network*
  - *Support to implement best practice (Food Waste Reduction Roadmap team)*
  - *Engaging with enforcement officers*
- *Sharing best practice (Working Group etc.)*







# Supporting citizens in response to Covid-19

- Comms:
  - Creation of a Covid-19 Love Food Hate Waste Comms pack in response to media and partner demands on knowledge and expertise
  - A Covid-19 household food waste task group was established at WRAP, to be proactive in our response to household food waste prevention
- **Key messages**
  - Storage and fridge temperature messages across social media channels became the focus in April
  - From May, as the lockdown relaxed, food waste prevention tips, recipes and portion planner messages were added
  - There has been a substantial increase in:
    - media enquiries and PR coverage
    - website visits and downloads of our tools

# Large-scale survey of UK citizens – April 2020

## UK Citizens love food and hate waste during lockdown

### THE WAY WE BUY FOOD IS IN FLUX

63%

of us are shopping less often as we are asked to stay indoors.

59%

of us are buying more when we shop to create more meals at home.



### WE'RE MORE 'FOOD SMART'

We have responded positively to lockdown. On average we are doing six food management behaviours more often.



Almost half (47%) of us are checking our cupboards more often before shopping, and 45% the fridge.



More and more of us (37%) have been organising the food in our cupboards and the fridge.



One in three (33%) are cooking more creatively during lockdown, and 30% have started saving leftovers.



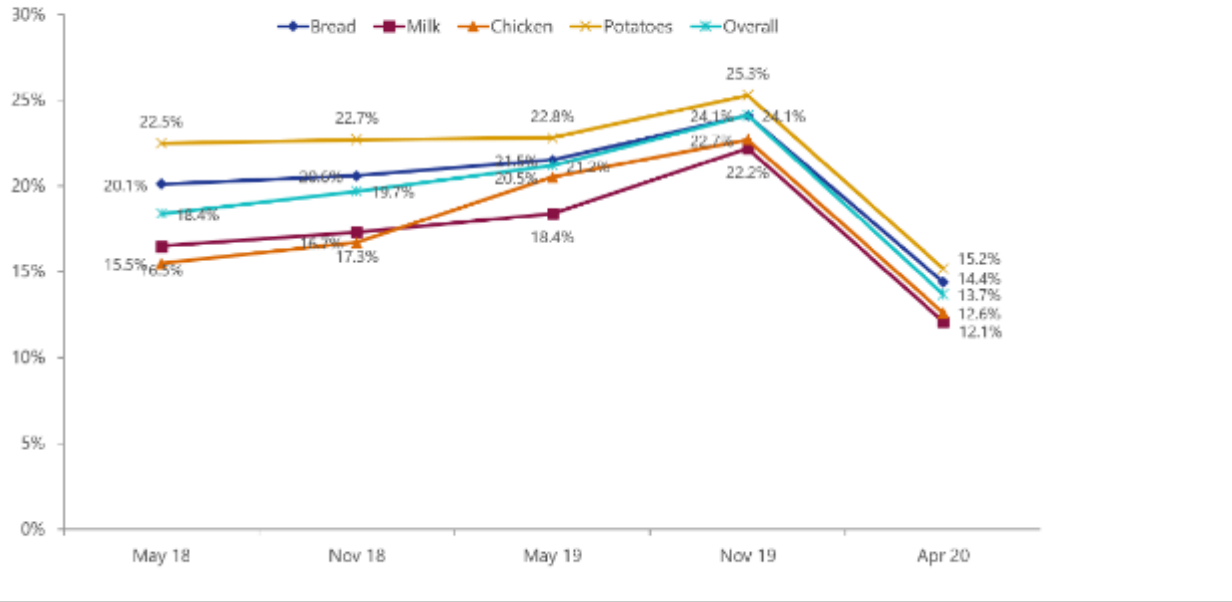
# Significant reduction in self-reported food waste

**36%**

The proportion of consumers saying they are throwing away less uneaten food than usual in the past month



Over time





# Next steps

## Key Messages

- Improve consumer confidence on freezing and defrosting, especially of bread and meat
- Help consumers understand how to store their food in the right way, particularly:
  - storage of potatoes, fruit and vegetables
  - fridge temperature
- Help consumers to make more use of leftovers:
  - eating whole of potato and chickens
  - trying new recipes

Additional messages will continue to come out of ongoing research and be built into messaging

## There are 6 behaviours that we are looking at focus on reinforcing and normalising:

1. Pre-shop planning (portion planner)
2. Better in-home food storage: (A-Z, Chill the Fridge)
3. Freezing (A-Z)
4. Defrosting (and defrosting is an area that people find the most frustrating)
5. A key moment will come when people will need to be encouraged to use up their lockdown larders - this may also feed into the drop in economy with people turning to cheaper food choices - canned and frozen - an important message is that frozen is as good as fresh
6. Creative approaches to cooking food