

The Many Uses of Leftovers

Listed below are ideas for leftover food that some Congregate Meal Program sites are using to increase profit while making use of food purchased to decrease waste.

1. Create individual frozen meals and sell.

Repackage leftovers into individual frozen “T.V. dinners” and sell to seniors for the days that the meal program isn’t offered.

2. Use the individual frozen meals as a second choice.

Re-heat a frozen meal for a senior who wants to come to meal program but is not fond of the planned menu option available. This will allow the senior to participate in meal program, socialize with others and keep attendance high.

3. Offer a “buffet” or “smorg” day on the menu.

Have a set day of the month where all leftovers that were repackaged to sell individually that haven’t sold will be re-heated and used for a buffet dinner. Add a side dish, salad and dessert to have a complete meal.

4. Add vegetables to everything.

Use leftover vegetables in soups (pureed or diced), added to casseroles, pasta sauce, or substitute into other recipes.

5. Freeze milk that is close to expiring for a later use.

If there is milk that is close to expiring and cannot be used (served as a beverage or used in a recipe) before that time, pour the milk into a plastic container or Ziploc bag and freeze. It can then be used in baking or other recipes (but not served as a beverage) to avoid throwing it away. Do not save milk that has already expired.

Friendly Leftover Reminders:

1. Always date the food product before freezing.
2. Make sure to label foods to know what you have in stock.
3. Shallow containers are best for refrigerating and freezing leftovers as food will cool quicker.
4. Refrigerate/freeze leftovers within 2 hours of cooking and serving.