

Laudato Si' Care for Earth
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Food Waste Reduction
Dusty goes bananas to reduce food waste.

by Dusty Krikau



In mid-February, I received a message from a friend whose employer had a full box of bananas destined for the dumpster. My friend messaged to ask whether I would be interested in the bananas rather than seeing them go to waste. He took about a third of the bananas for his own freezer, and I took the remainder to process at home.

Most of the bananas were speckled with dark spots and some were entirely brown. I removed all the sticky labels and then peeled the bananas. One-third went directly into the blender and then into freezer trays, while the solid ones were divided into two or three sections and set onto silicon mats on cookie sheets and placed directly in the freezer, before going into recycled gallon food storage bags. The remaining one-third of the bananas were ingredients for banana bread. My three chickens were not producing eggs and with store prices as a premium, I opted to replace the eggs in the recipe with aquafaba—the water from cooking beans or inside a can of

chickpeas or other beans. I had enough aquafaba on hand to produce five full loaves of banana bread. Three loaves went to the freezer, one went straight to my cutting board for a late-night snack, and the last one was destined for the employee lounge to be shared with my colleagues.

Next, I had many banana peels to use. Though I could have blended the bananas with skins on for the banana bread, I opted to offer the chickens a special treat instead. All the peels went into the blender and were then greedily enjoyed by the three hens.

Finally, the woody tops that were too hard for the blender went into the compost pile. Composting is an aerobic process, unlike the anaerobic environment created by landfills, so it does not produce methane, which is key to reducing the footprint of food waste.

Methane and Food: A relationship with an environmental impact

Once in a landfill, food waste breaks down and emits greenhouse gases, including carbon dioxide (CO₂) and methane (CH₄). Methane is 30 times more potent than carbon dioxide, making it more damaging to the environment. Reducing the world's methane emissions by 30% over the next decade would have the same effect on global warming by mid-century as immediately shifting the global transport sector to net-zero CO₂ emissions ([source](#)). Food waste accounts for 9 billion metric tons of methane every year ([source](#)). Globally, if food waste could be represented as its own country, it would be the third largest greenhouse gas emitter, behind China and the United States ([source](#)). I did a little personal banana math. I would need to drive 6,826 times around the planet to produce the same amount of methane as that 25 pounds of bananas would have produced in a landfill.



Click here to see **Tools for Preventing and Diverting Wasted Food.**

<https://www.epa.gov/sustainable-management-food/tools-preventing-and-diverting-wasted-food>

We really can make a difference in caring for the earth by reducing the footprint of food waste (even beyond old bananas).

Dusty holds her pet hen, Alma, who got a special treat of chopped banana peels.

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<https://laudatosianimators.org/>

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