



FOOD WASTE ACTION WEEK
1-7 MARCH
#FoodWasteActionWeek

IN MY OPINION *Fi Glover*



The Radio 4 journalist airs her views

Cupboard doors are creaking open to reveal wardrobes full of clothing not squeezed into since March 2020 as we start to prepare for re-entry into the world. The last time I went into work I wore a pair of camel high-waisted trousers, a tiger-striped top and a pair of ankle boots. It is an outfit I haven't worn since because I've dressed for the tasks in hand – dog walking, working from 'upstairs', wrangling kids and watching TV. Jeans, jeans and more jeans.

Sometimes this has made me happy. Sometimes not. Radio is a forgiving trade and we have moved with the times, so I probably could turn up wearing the dog walking outfit and people would just think 'how creative'. I certainly wouldn't be turned away at the door like Conservative MP Jonathan Gullis. He was taking part in a virtual debate in the House of Commons and was in a lovely jumper at his kitchen table when Deputy Speaker Eleanor Laing spotted the offending woollen and denied him entry until he put a jacket on. "The honourable gentleman has to be dressed as if he were here in the chamber," she said. Although it's

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not written down, it is assumed that all MPs will attend the chamber in a jacket and preferably a tie. I quite often feel a little for the women, aping the same look.

There is nothing worse in the world of workwear than the female suit. I defy anyone with a bosom to look good in a suit jacket. Unless it's made to measure it'll be riding up whenever you sit down. The female shape means that few have shoulders broad enough to allow a sleeve to taper down – so unless we bulk up with shoulder pads like it's 1987, our arms are straitjacketed for the day. Don't set me off on matching skirts. I hate waistbands and I'd rather not let anyone see my knees so I'll be wearing the trouser version and dealing with the static cling. I could light up the national grid just walking 100 yards in 'suit trousers'.

It's daft of any place these days to deny entry to someone in leisure wear. You'll be excluding some of the most successful people on the planet – the unicorns of Silicon Valley, billionaire singers, rappers and cultural icons like to dress down. As some of their kit costs more than the best Savile Row suit, it's more dressing up really.

Time to change at the HoC then? It wasn't like Mr Gullis had come in a little zebra-striped top. It was only a jumper and it surely says sensible, cosy, and trapped at home – just like the rest of us. Democracy looks like that to me.

Fortunately... with Fi and Jane and The Listening Project are on BBC Sounds @ffjglover

'We must realise food waste is a major factor in climate change'

Our fridges are the new frontier in the ongoing battle against global warming, writes Anna-Marie Julyan

If food waste were a country, it would be the third-largest emitter of greenhouse gases in the world after China and the US. Yet two-thirds of us don't make the link between food waste and global warming. That has to change, according to the charity Waste & Resources Action Programme (Wrap) and *The Great British Bake Off* winner Nadiya Hussain, who are behind the first-ever Food Waste Action Week.

Together with a range of partners, including Waitrose, Wrap and Nadiya hope to persuade people to take up the #FoodWasteActionChallenge to ensure no edible food goes in the bin. The aim is to help people realise that 'wasting food feeds climate change' – the theme of the week's campaign.

"Being at home more this last year has given many of us – including myself – an opportunity to reassess our relationship with cooking," says Nadiya. "Most don't realise it, but wasting food is a major contributor to climate change. And it isn't just the leftovers on our plate to consider, but the many resources that go into producing our food, like water and land."

Topping the charts for the most wasted foods are potatoes, followed by bread, milk, complete meals and fizzy drinks. A Wrap report says every day 4.4 million potatoes go to waste in UK homes and we throw away a staggering 20 million slices of bread.

"We decided to have this dedicated week of action because we really need to raise awareness of the link between food waste and climate change," says Helen White, special adviser for household food waste at Wrap. "We might think of the impact of flying or food waste rotting in landfill releasing methane, but we don't think about the whole production of food."

In fact, wasting food generates more greenhouse gases than all commercial flights in the world. And it's in our power to make a difference, because household food waste is the single largest element of UK food waste at 6.6 million tonnes, more than two-thirds of which could have been eaten.

"The reason we're focusing on household food waste is because that's the biggest proportion," explains Helen. "That's quite shocking. We think most food waste might come from retail, manufacturing or hospitality but actually it doesn't. It comes from our homes."

The week runs until Sunday (7 March), highlighting key changes we can make – things

IT'S TIME TO ACT
Nadiya Hussain is urging us to think about the impact of wasting food



'We want to shine a spotlight on key behaviours that bring benefits to your household and the planet'

'well within our gift'. Many have already taken positive steps during the pandemic. Self-reported food waste dropped substantially during the first lockdown and then rebounded slightly but settled at a lower level than normal. A report from Wrap in October 2020 found that the average level of waste across four key products – bread, milk, potatoes and chicken – was 17.5%, up from a historic low of 13.7% in April 2020 but below the 24.1% of November 2019.

Levels of food waste are higher among people who feel under time pressure.

"We need to buy what we need and get through it," says Helen. "When we ask people why it ended up in the waste, one of the biggest reasons given is because it wasn't used in time."

The Food Waste Action Week Challenge focuses on a different theme each day, from an A-Z of food storage to portion planning with a bespoke

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Changing how we store products can help reduce waste, with potatoes one of the items thrown away the most



FIVE WAYS TO REDUCE FOOD WASTE AT HOME

Store food better – most fruit and veg will stay fresher for longer in the fridge, including apples and citrus fruit.

Avoid wasting bread – freeze it sliced and remove individual slices as needed.

Set your fridge temperature – the average UK fridge is 6.6°C but it should be below 5.

Press pause – if you're not going to use something, freeze it. Even eggs can be frozen (first cracked and put into a sealable container) so long as they are within the use-by date.

Check your cupboards – make a rough plan of meals for the week but first look at what you already have tucked away.

Find out more at lovefoodhatewaste.com and waitrose.com/foodwasteathome

online planner, tips for freezing and defrosting and setting your fridge to the optimum temperature.

Adding to this, Waitrose is working on a programme of activities to support customers in reducing food waste – part of its aim to help halve UK household waste by 2030. It has also pledged to cut food waste across its supply chain by 50% by 2030, over and above a commitment of 50% within its own operations.

"The Wrap initiative will raise awareness of the far-reaching environmental consequences of wasting food and encourage all of us to play our part in tackling food waste," says Marija Rompani, Partner and director of ethics and sustainability.

In 2017 Waitrose also linked up with FareShare, a charity that collects surplus food for people in need. More than four million meals have been donated from Waitrose stores and distribution centres.

"Everybody can do something about this and the outcome is so important," says Helen. "We want to shine a spotlight on key behaviours that bring great benefits to your household and the planet."

Wrap collaborates with Innovative Farmers – a network of researchers and farmers supported by sales of Waitrose Duchy Organic products – as part of its campaign to cut food waste and reduce emissions



7 QUESTIONS WITH... HUMZA ARSHAD

The writer, comedian and youtuber has an MBE and a fondness for naughty snacks

1 Where are you? At home in south west London. I'm looking out at the beautiful English rain and my garden shed.

2 You've written a book, *Little Badman and the Radioactive Samosa*, for World Book Day. Why were you keen to get involved? It's a dream come true for me. World Book Day's mission is to promote reading for pleasure, offering young people the opportunity to have a book of their own. There are so many distractions for kids today, with the internet, films and TV, but books are still so important.

3 Most treasured book from your childhood? Roald Dahl's *James and the Giant Peach*. I've been very lucky recently to record a new audio version of the book. It was great to revisit the characters and story.

4 Favourite magazine as a teenager? *Shoot* – the football magazine. Everyone at school collected the stickers, which were like gold dust.

5 Which fictional character from a book would you like to hang out with? I'd like to chill with Harry Potter and his magic wand. Who doesn't love Harry Potter?

6 Favourite snack while writing? Fruit pastilles are my naughty snack, but don't tell my personal trainer!

7 Most listened to podcast? *The Joe Rogan Experience*. He's an American comedian and his podcast is fascinating. He speaks to people from the world of science and beyond.

Little Badman and the Radioactive Samosa (Puffin) is a £1 title for World Book Day. worldbookday.com. Interview: Nick Needs