



## THE COMMON THREAD

Grandma. Granny. Nan. Mimi. We all have them, or know someone who fills that role. The steady presence. **The one who reminds us to be kind, to share and to take care of one another.**

For Linda, this isn't just a title. It's her everyday life. Her home is always full of energy, noise and love – plus six grandchildren ranging from four months to nine years old. And their appetites grow just like they do, especially in the summer.

When school is in session, meals are easier to manage. But as temperatures start to rise, and kids start to eat more meals at home, healthy pantry staples inevitably run low. Linda works hard to make sure everything stretches just a little bit further but sometimes that means seeking the support of her local pantry in Petersburg.

“Everything helps,” she says. “Noodles, mac and cheese – anything I can do to stretch a meal. It’s a struggle for everybody, but I know I’m blessed.”

She also knows that being Gran is about determination and showing up, again and again, even when it's not easy. **It's about kindness too. Because that's the steady thread that holds family and community together.**

# FOOD *for* THOUGHT

**Life moves fast. Schedules fill up. And next thing you know, your fresh food from that last grocery run is still sitting in the fridge. And not looking so fresh anymore.**

**The good news? 50-60% of household food waste is avoidable.** And these small shifts can help you stretch your grocery budget and reduce food waste right in your own home.

**Understanding food labels.** Best by dates are usually about quality, not safety, while use by dates are more closely tied to freshness. Too often, perfectly good food gets tossed because of a date on the package instead of a closer look, smell or taste.

**Don't judge a book by its cover.** Or a banana by its color. Green bananas mean more time on the counter and more days for you to enjoy once they start to turn yellow. Slightly wilted vegetables may not look perfect, but they still have plenty to

offer. Just cut those stems and place them in a cup of water and presto – they'll perk right back up.

**Soup, there it is.** A clean-out-the-fridge quick soup can be a delicious adventure. Gather leftover vegetables and herbs, cook them in water and seasoning, blend if you'd like and/or freeze portions for later. And you can also use this nutrient-packed goodness for gravies, sauces and roasts.

**Not sure what combos taste good together?** Just go online, enter the items you have available in your search bar and options galore will appear. This can help save money, make the most of your groceries and keep good food out of the trash.



## Label, label, label

Yes, post-it notes work in the fridge too. You're busy, it's easy to lose track – so help yourself and others know what's available and ready to eat.



## Scale vs. single use

Buy and cook with flexibility in mind. Ingredients that can stretch across multiples meals (like roasted veggies, rice or protein) are less likely to go to waste than items with only one specific use.



## Air-tight extends life

Good containers make a real difference. Keeping food sealed – especially greens, herbs and leftovers – helps maintain freshness and gives you more time to actually use them.

## FOOD WASTE FACT

**140 B POUNDS**  
of surplus food in the U.S. for 2024

That's 140,000,000,000 lbs – roughly the weight of 350 Empire State Buildings!

Source: 2026 ReFed U.S. Food Waste Report

## DID YOU KNOW?



**Berries, fresh herbs and bagged greens spoil the fastest – keep them dry and covered.**



**Carrots and broccoli like high humidity, apples, pears, peppers and mushrooms not so much.**



**Revive limp carrots or celery by soaking them in ice water for a few minutes.**



**Potatoes and onions shouldn't be stored together. Onions release moisture and gases that can cause potatoes to sprout or spoil faster.**



**Leftovers should usually be eaten or frozen within 3-4 days to help reduce food waste and keep meals safe.**



**In 2025, Feed More rescued more than 14.5 million pounds of food, moving it out to neighbors in need across 29 counties and 5 cities.**



## Use your fridge like it matters

Run your fridge like a food bank with these helpful tips and tricks.

- 1 Eat first zone – front and center**
  - Top shelf and eye level
- 2 Everyday items, accessible and easy to scan**
  - Middle shelf
  - Group like items together
  - Put new items in the back, older in the front (first in, first out)
- 3 Know where it's cold**
  - The bottom shelf
  - Keep dairy here, not in the door
  - Avoid overcrowding as airflow matters
- 4 Keep it crisp**
  - Whole produce last longer than pre-cut.
  - Keep bananas away from green – they speed the ripening of other fruits and vegetables
  - Don't wash produce until ready to use
  - Store herbs like flowers (in water, loosely covered)
  - Keep fruit and vegetables separate
- 5 Door (warmest area)**
  - Avoid highly perishable items
  - Great for jams, syrups and sauces
- 6 Freezer**
  - Freeze portion sizes – in plastic bags, wrap or foil. It only takes a few minutes to do and your wallet will thank you later
  - Don't overload
  - Freeze scraps (veggie ends, bones from a roast) for broth later – in freezer bags or containers

# BUILT FOR WHAT'S NEXT

At Feed More, the work begins long before a meal is made or a morning delivery heads out. It begins with how we source, store and distribute millions of pounds of food for neighbors across Central Virginia.

As community needs grow and change, so does our responsibility to strengthen how we serve. That means continually improving our systems, investing in the right people and making sure every dollar and every donation is used with care.

Meet Murph. Patrick “Murph” Murphy joined Feed More in December as Chief Supply Chain & Production Officer. With deep experience in logistics, operations and data-informed decision-making — including decades of leadership in the U.S. Navy and at Amazon — Murph brings both expertise and perspective to this critical work. His focus is simple: helping people do their best work, efficiently and thoughtfully, across every part of our operation.

That includes working closely with grocery stores, manufacturers and local farmers to recover high-quality surplus food and make it available throughout our region. It also means using innovative sourcing strategies for purchased food so staples like fresh produce, lean proteins and pantry items remain within reach for the communities we serve.

Just as important is careful, disciplined inventory management. By aligning incoming food with real-time distribution data, we can reduce waste, respond more quickly as needs shift and help ensure the right food gets to the right place at the right time.

Murph is helping Feed More build for today while preparing for tomorrow, but this work is never done alone. His dedicated team, together with volunteers, partner agencies, food donors and financial supporters, all make it possible.

**Together, we are building a stronger, more responsive network that helps our neighbors thrive.**



## How we make it work

Just like at home, managing what comes in, what goes out and how everything is cared for in between takes intention and discipline. At Feed More, that same principle guides how we operate across our 60,000-square-foot warehouse (that has over 20,000 square feet of cold storage!) and our 15,000-square-foot commercial kitchen, helping us handle food with care, efficiency and purpose at every step.



**Plan it** – We anticipate neighbor need across our partner network and prioritize sourcing it efficiently.



**Track it** – We monitor inventory from arrival through distribution and are working to improve delivery times to our 400 distribution sites.



**Use it** – We move food quickly and safely across the hundreds of partners across the state we work with and their varying distribution times and operating hours.



**Stretch it** – We maximize every donation to reduce waste and increase impact.

# EVERY HAND HELPS

Every season, Debbie and daughter Ember plant and tend a garden that grows more than they need – by design. Living on a single income, they grow fruits and vegetables to stretch their budget. But from the start, their garden has never been just about getting by.

**It's about making sure there's enough to share.**

“Zucchini comes in like crazy,” Debbie told us. Which is just what she wants, because she passes all that green goodness right along to neighbors, friends and family. She also prepares and delivers meals to her elderly relatives who can't drive. “It's easier for them than handing over ingredients,” she says.

Still she says, many older neighbors are reluctant to accept help. “I tell them, help is okay, but some are still too proud.” Too often, that pride leads to quiet hardship – meals of tuna and crackers instead of something healthy and sustaining.

**That's where neighbors step in.** Through small, consistent acts, Debbie and Ember extend the reach of places like Promise Land Storehouse food pantry in Charles City and their team of caring volunteers. And help ensure support finds those who can't, or won't, seek it out.

But even with a full garden, Debbie knows what it's like to sometimes rely on the pantry and the kindness of others. And that's the point.

**It isn't about giving or receiving, it's about community. A shared effort. And a reminder that every generous act matters.**



# Kitchen Wise

You don't need a complicated system to cut food waste – you need a few go-to recipes that rescue ingredients before they go bad. Here is a simple, 3-ingredient recipe that does exactly that!

## OVERRIPE BANANA PANCAKES

### Ingredients

- 1 overripe banana
- 2 eggs
- ¼ cup oats

### How to Make

1. Mash the banana.
2. Mix in eggs and oats.
3. Cook small pancakes in a pan on your stovetop (2–3 min each side).



## FOOD IS MEDICINE

We're proud to partner with Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield Foundation, the philanthropic arm of Elevance Health Foundation, and Feeding America to advance Food as Medicine! Since 2019, their support has helped

Central Virginia neighbors manage diet-related illnesses with medically tailored foods, improving health outcomes and quality of life. Because when you eat good, you feel good - and a healthy community benefits us all!



## MORE THAN A MEAL

Give a few hours and get so much more in return – connection, purpose and community impact. Volunteers deliver meals, meaningful moments of connection and more to seniors while experiencing the joy of giving back. Head to [FeedMore.org/volunteer](https://www.feedmore.org/volunteer) to sign up.



Hossein Sadid  
Meals on Wheels  
volunteer driver



  
CALL OR VISIT US  
(804) 716-3249  
[FeedMore.org](https://www.FeedMore.org)

