

## Inaugural 'National Leftovers Day' highlights massive food waste at Christmas

**Australians spend \$7.6 billion on food in December – much wasted**

**Food buying reaches a frenzy today, the final shopping day before Christmas.** What's amazing is how much we buy. IBIS World estimates that Australians will spend an estimated \$7.6 billion on food in December alone. But a lot of this will be wasted. Over the Christmas and New Year period, Australians will spend hundreds of millions of dollars on food that we buy but don't eat.

To tackle this issue, action group Do Something has announced the launch of its inaugural **National Leftovers Day** on Boxing Day, 26 December. The aim of the event is to help Australians save money and the environment by reducing festive season food waste.

Jon Dee, the Founder of Do Something! and NSW Australian of the Year for 2010 says: "On Boxing Day, Australians open their fridges to be confronted by vast amounts of leftover food. Given that some of us waste up to 20% of the food that we buy, being a little bit careful over Christmas can save us all lots of money."

In a national poll commissioned by Do Something, 60% of Australians admitted that they waste more food than usual at Christmas. Research also shows that Australians are unaware of the environmental impact of this food waste. "When food waste rots in landfill it produces methane," said Dee. "As a greenhouse gas, methane is 20 times more potent than the carbon pollution that pours out of your car exhaust."

When it comes to Christmas food shopping, Do Something has some simple money saving tips:

- 1) Buy only what you need – draw up a shopping list and stick to it.
- 2) Avoid the panic buy – don't buy food for people that might turn up and never do.
- 3) Try not to cook more than you need – get your portions right.
- 4) Be sure to re-use your Christmas staples - turkey, ham, chicken and vegetables can be used in sandwiches, quiches and soups that can be eaten over the Christmas period. Recipes are available from [foodwise.com.au](http://foodwise.com.au)
- 5) If you have leftovers, put them in Tupperware and freeze them for another day.

"Our message is that we can all still have a wonderful time and have plenty to eat, but being a bit more careful with our food can really save our wallets and the environment," says Dee.

Do Something's [foodwise.com.au](http://foodwise.com.au) website also features a National Leftovers Day competition. People are invited to send in their own best Christmas leftover recipe to be in the running to win a \$2000 Tupperware kitchen makeover and six \$500 prize packs. Entries close January 6<sup>th</sup>.

Every year, Australians waste three million tonnes of food, costing Australians \$5.2 billion.

**[Jon Dee is available for interview, pre-records and newsgrabs](#)  
For more information, please call Wenlei Ma on 02 9519 8766 (available on 24 December)  
or Annemarie Jonson on 0428 278 880 (available on 26 December).**

*Do Something! is a not-for-profit action group that seeks to create social and environmental change. For more information, visit [dosomething.net.au](http://dosomething.net.au) or [foodwise.com.au](http://foodwise.com.au)*