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Surrey residents urged to Love Food, Hate Waste

Nine out of ten Surrey residents admit to throwing away some uneaten food, according to research carried out on behalf of the Surrey Waste Partnership.

A recent waste prevention survey¹ for the partnership, which is made up of Surrey County Council and the 11 district and borough councils in the county, showed that fruit, vegetables and salad feature high on the list of foods thrown away by residents. Half of those surveyed said they throw away completely unopened packs of food and two thirds throw away food that's been allowed to go off.

Food waste accounts for 20% of the waste generated by Surrey households every year with disposal costs in the region of £7.6m. So the Surrey Waste Partnership has launched a countywide Love Food Hate Waste campaign to encourage residents to reduce the amount of food they waste.

Surrey Waste Partnership chairman Jean Pearson explains: "Food waste is a significant issue in the county and it's vital that the amount being generated is reduced. We hope the new campaign will encourage residents to stop and think about the food they buy or cook that ends up in the bin, and make a pledge to reduce it."

National research² shows that an average family can save up to £50 a month on their shopping bill if they take steps to reduce their food waste and there are significant environmental benefits too. The energy, water and packaging resources used in food production, transportation and storage all go to waste when perfectly good food is thrown away.

The new campaign will include a series of roadshows at supermarkets, shopping centres and large Surrey businesses, where a Surrey Waste Partnership team will offer tips and advice on reducing food waste and making the most of leftovers. The events schedule kicks off at the Surrey County Show on Bank Holiday Monday 31 May, when local chef Carmela Tomkins will also be on hand to demonstrate some of her own recipes using leftovers.

"There are lots of food items that end up in the bin that could be put to good use," says Carmela, who lives in West Byfleet and runs her own catering company. "My recipes show simple ways that leftover food can be turned into delicious meals for the whole family."

For tips and advice on reducing food waste, ideas for cooking with leftovers and more facts on food waste, visit www.lovefoodsurrey.com.

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¹ Public Attitudes towards Waste in Surrey, Survey (Prepared by ICM Government & Social Research), Jan 2010

² Household Food and Drink Waste in the UK (WRAP, November 2009)

Notes to editors:

The Surrey Waste Partnership is made up of Surrey County Council and the 11 district and borough councils in the county. It aims to manage Surrey's waste in the most efficient, economic and sustainable way possible.

Councillor Jean Pearson is the chairman of the Surrey Waste Partnership and Leader of Mole Valley District Council.

In December 2009 Surrey County Council leader Dr Andrew Povey announced that a new approach to waste management in the county would see residents being encouraged to reducing the amount of waste they produce, reuse things where they can and recycle as much as possible after that. If this happens substantial savings can be made in waste disposal costs.

Images:

Photo of Carmela Tomkins cooking with leftovers.

For further information contact:

Felicity Stanbridge on 020 8541 8751 or Pat Hindley on 020 8541 8798