

National chef urges Scots to help fight climate change

Scotland's National Chef, Gary Maclean, is urging Scots to help fight climate change by making small changes in their kitchens.

The MasterChef winner supports the national campaign from The Scottish Government to encourage people in Scotland to address climate change. The latest Scottish Household Survey, published by the Scottish Government, revealed that over half of Scots (55%) view climate change as an immediate and urgent problem.



The new campaign raises awareness of how making greener lifestyle changes is easier than many people think. Although they seem like small actions, if we all avoid and recycle food waste, wash clothes at 30 degrees, leave the car for shorter journeys and turn down thermostat dials by one-degree, together we'll make a huge difference in combating climate change.

The survey also highlighted that more than half (56%) of

Scottish households are now disposing of their food waste in local authority provided food caddies. This has more than doubled in the previous five years (up from 26% in 2012) but there is still more to do. Zero Waste Scotland estimates that Scottish households throw out 600,000 tonnes of food each year.

More than half (60%) of this food waste is avoidable. That's the equivalent of £460 per household per year or a total cost of £1.1 billion to people in Scotland.

Gary Maclean, Scotland's National Chef said: "Tackling climate change isn't about a huge lifestyle overhaul. Small, simple and easy changes make all the difference. They also save you money and help the environment." "Often, it's about going back to basics – buy loose fruit and veg instead of packaged, plan your meals ahead for the week or freeze leftovers to cut down on food waste. Every little change adds up to make Scotland a cleaner, greener place to live."

Gary has the following top tips:

- Plan your meals – it only takes 10 minutes to think through what you'll need for the week and write a shopping list. Planning ahead means you'll only buy what you need – it's greener and you'll save money.
- Work with leftovers – when planning your week's meals, work in leftovers too – they can make tasty and quick lunches and snacks.
- Know your labels – check the 'use by' or 'best before' dates on the food you plan to buy. 'Use by' is the date which relates to food safety whereas 'Best before' is an indication of quality. Have a look and get to know the difference.
- Buy loose fruit and vegetables – buying loose rather

than pre-packaged helps cut down on packaging waste and is often cheaper. There's no point buying four peppers when you only need two.

- Freeze your bread and toast from frozen – bread keeps for longer when stored in the freezer but tastes just as good as fresh when toasted. Pop half the loaf straight into the freezer when you get home from the shops if you know you won't use it all straight away.
- You don't need to plate food – if you have a big family or a group of friends, it's often easier to put a big bowl or casserole dish in the middle of the table and let everyone take what they want. It really helps avoid food waste as everything leftover can just be frozen afterwards.
- Reusable freezer bags are a great invention – you can freeze food flat in a freezer bag, it takes up very little space and the food will defrost quickly when you need it.
- Date your leftovers – put a name label and date on your leftovers before they go in the freezer so you know when to enjoy them at their best – and what they are!
- Unavoidable food waste doesn't need to go to waste – egg shells and peelings can be recycled by most local authorities or you can start a wee compost bin at home.

Roseanna Cunningham, Cabinet Secretary for the Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform, said: “We can already see the impact that climate change is making on the world. That's why the Scottish Government is committed to reducing Scotland's impact on the environment. “Greener living will help to make Scotland a better place to be – cleaner air, warmer homes, less noise and pollution, as well as better health and fitness for everyone. By making simple everyday lifestyle changes today, we will go a long way towards helping Scotland fight the serious consequences of climate change. Everyone has a part to play.”

For more tips and information on making greener choices
visit greenerscotland.org.