March is National Nutrition Month. This years theme is Go Further with Food.

Go further with how we use food to better our health and further in how we manage food's impact on the environment; the two are inseparable. Most of us don't really consider that what we eat effects our earth. Other than recycling a takeout container, we tend to look at our meals and snacks as a harmless personal choice. So what if we throw out that broccoli we never cooked? We just didn't have time and now it's limp and yellow. Following are some facts about food production and waste, it's impact on the environment and our part in the drama from Further with Food; Center For Food Loss and Waste Solutions.

The USDA estimates food waste at the retail and consumer level to be ~30% of our food supply. That amounts to 66.5 million tons at a cost of about $1500 per person a year. Worldwide, food that is harvested but not consumed generates ~8% of global greenhouse gas emissions annually. If this were a country it would be the third largest greenhouse gas emitter behind China and the U.S. In the U.S., food is the single largest component of our everyday trash. So, as you can see, as individuals we do have an impact here!

The USDA wants to decrease food loss at the retail and consumer level 50% by 2030. Check out the Feed People not Landfills infographic.

So what can we do as individuals and a community to ease this issue? Individually we can take advantage of the variety of foods around us and make choices towards a plant based diet; because these foods have a gentler impact on the earth than raising meat. This is reflected in the smaller carbon foot print emitted by plant food production. As a nation we have reduced our meat consumption. So

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‡ Try the World One Bite at a Time app.

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