TIPS FOR MEAL PLANNING

Weekly meal planning can help you reduce the amount of food you waste, while also saving you time and money. Here are some helpful tips for meal planning:

START SIMPLE

Meal planning doesn't mean you have to spend hours looking for new recipes online or in cookbooks every week. Start with your favorite go-to meals and incorporate new ones as you go.

START WITH WHAT'S IN YOUR REFRIGERATOR

A good way to start your week of meal planning is to check your refrigerator to see what needs to be used. Once you create meal ideas from your refrigerated items, check your pantry to see what other ingredients you have on hand before heading to the grocery store to buy the rest.

PRIORITIZE YOUR FRESH FOODS

Use your fresh foods earlier in the week to help preserve their freshness and prevent them from spoiling before you can use them. Save frozen or nonperishable foods, such as boxed or canned goods, for later in the week since they have a longer shelf life.

KEEP KEY ESSENTIALS ON HAND

Having some essentials on hand—such as pastas, grains, beans, spices, and sauces—can help bring together other odds and ends you may have to make a delicious meal.

USE DOUBLE-DUTY INGREDIENTS

Using ingredients across multiple meals in a week can help you avoid having an overload of leftovers and wasting food.

GIVE YOURSELF A BREAK

Take a break and schedule a leftovers night or go out to enjoy a meal at your favorite restaurant.

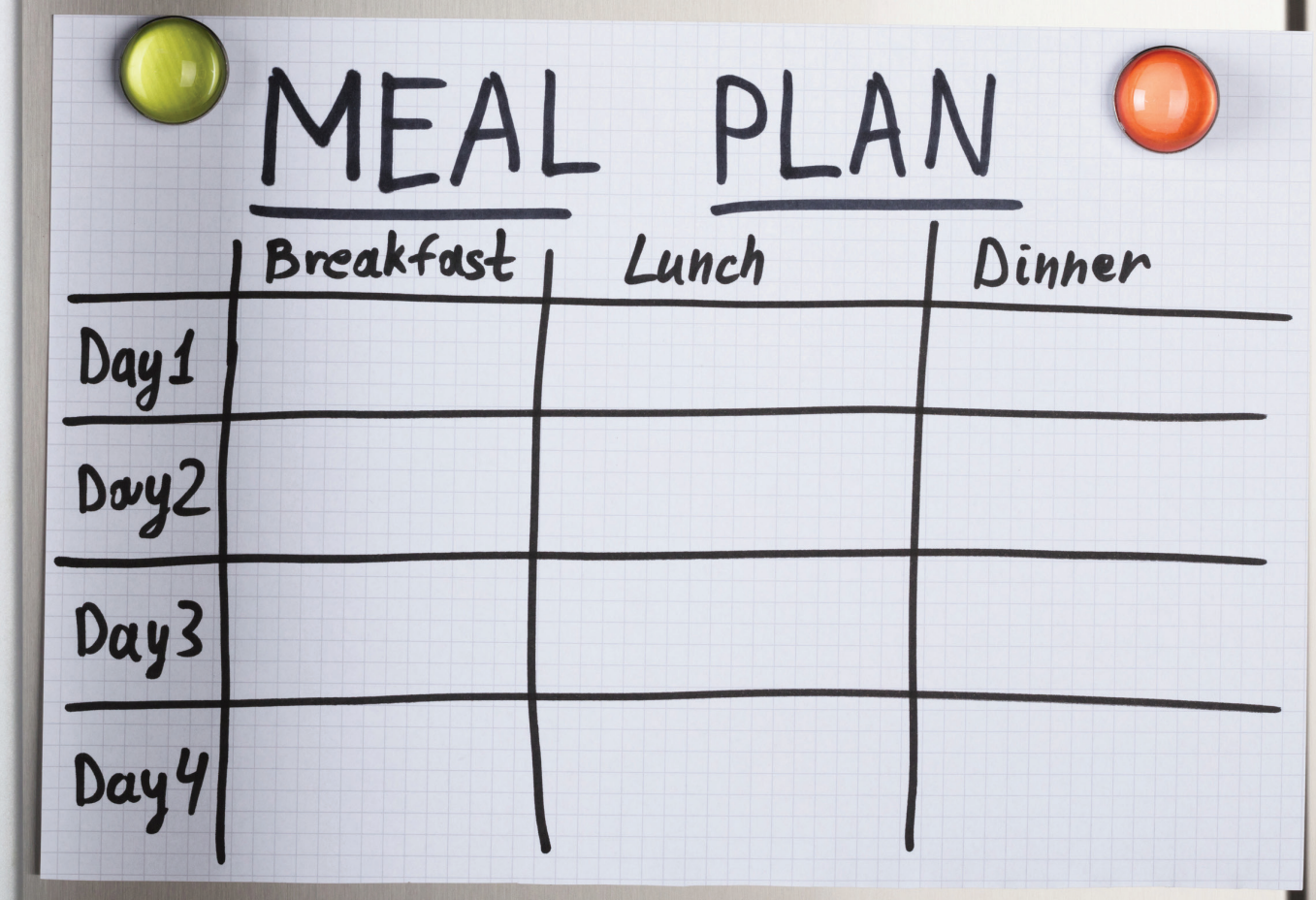
TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE FREEZER

Soup, casseroles, and lasagna are perfect to freeze and pull out to use when needed. To make life easier and avoid wasting food, freeze your leftovers in meal-sized portions.

USE FROZEN INGREDIENTS

Frozen ingredients last longer than fresh, refrigerated products, so you don't have to worry about them spoiling or wasting food.

EAT SMART, WASTE LESS, COMPOST THE REST



DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION • NEW YORK STATE •