This year, Canadians will throw away over two million tonnes of food—that’s the equivalent of 18 CN Towers. As you toss out mouldy cheese and slimy cold cuts, you probably aren’t thinking about prairie farmers struggling to feed their animals this winter after last year’s drought destroyed feed crops. Maybe you should be.

Canadians are largely food illiterate, perhaps because most of us are spoiled when it comes to our supply.

February 9 is Food Freedom Day. By this date, the average Canadian has earned enough to pay their grocery bill for the entire year. That’s because Canadians spend less than 10 percent of our income on food, according to the Canadian Federation of Agriculture, the farmers’ organization that calculates Food Freedom Day.

Chinese, Russian and South American citizens spend 20 to 30 percent of their incomes on food. In African countries, it’s more than 40 percent.

With notable exceptions, like the North, Canada enjoys a stable and low-cost food supply. But that doesn’t mean we should take it for granted. Improving our food literacy—understanding the environmental, social and economic impact of our food choices—can help us make a positive daily impact and learn to appreciate every meal.

You can become more food literate by reducing waste, supporting local vendors and reconnecting with the farmers who keep us fed.

Our grandparents were raised on farms, but the following generations grew up on city concrete. It wasn’t until Craig married a fifth-generation dairy farmer that we reconnected with our rural roots. When was the last time you were on a farm, or talked to a farmer? Canadian producers contribute over $100 billion to our economy. Yet we rarely hear about challenges like higher suicide rates for farmers, caused by stresses like financial pressures and the impact of climate disasters on their livelihoods.

Reconnect with the people who grow your meals. When you shop at the farmer’s market, talk to the producers about their business. Attend an agricultural fair. Invite local growers to speak to your child’s classroom or your local community group.

Privilege can also be a barrier to food literacy. While suburbanites have endless mega-supermarkets, low income urban families often find themselves in “food deserts” that lack affordable healthy foods. There is a growing movement to irrigate these deserts with mobile markets, social enterprise grocery stores and urban agriculture projects.

On grocery day, support local enterprises that are making fresh, affordable food more accessible in your city.

Speaking of grocery day, imagine dumping one quarter of the food you just bought straight into the trash. That’s how much Canadian households waste annually. It doesn’t just injure our pocketbooks, it wastes water and generates greenhouse gases. Every tonne of food waste is equal to the emissions of a car on the road for a year. Reduce waste by using an app like Everyday Portion Planner so you don’t end up with more leftovers than you can eat.

Being food literate isn’t knowing the difference between Atkins and Keto. It’s knowing where our food comes from, and how our food choices affect the world around us. Let’s stop taking our bounty for granted.

Craig and Marc Kielburger are the co-founders of the WE movement, which includes WE Charity, ME to WE Social Enterprise and WE Day. For more dispatches from WE, check out WE Stories.