



The Nudge system alerts users to which groceries are nearing their expiration, so they can be prioritised | Photo source [Nudge / Kickstarter](#)

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## ELECTRONIC TAGS NUDGE PEOPLE TO AVOID FOOD WASTE

 FOOD & DRINK

### A system of food tags helps users keep track of which foods in their refrigerator need to be eaten first

**Spotted:** No matter how much we try to avoid it, we have all had the experience of finding food at the back of the fridge that spoiled before we could eat it. In fact, it is estimated that, each year, around 6.6 million tonnes of food are wasted this way in the UK alone. That equates to £10.2 billion (€12.3 billion). Now, startup Tugiba has proposed a solution with connected devices that remind users when the food in their fridge is about to go out of date.

Tugiba's Nudge Tag system has two parts – a cloud-connected 'Puck', and electronic 'Tags' that are connected to the Puck. The Puck is hung on the front of the refrigerator door, while the Tags are clipped to individual foods or packets. When the user places a food item in the fridge, they twist a dial on the Puck to indicate how many days are left before the food item expires. They then press a Bluetooth pairing button on a Tag, and hold that Tag near the Puck. The devices connect and the Tag uploads the expiration data.

After this, whenever the fridge door is opened, the Puck wirelessly triggers all of the active Tags inside to light up in one of three colours – green for food that has a lot of time left before expiration, yellow for food that should be used soon, and red for expired foods. Users are instantly alerted to what needs to be eaten first.

In addition to the Tags and Puck, the system comes with an app that tracks the Tags, offers alerts when high value items are about to go off, estimates the savings made by eating yellow tagged food in time, and highlights a curated selection of food charities that can be donated to. The company explains the thinking behind the Nudge system as a way to break the cycle of wastage. "No one intends to waste. Wastage is often just a result of our busy lives and the intention to not

waste doesn't turn into Action. We then have no choice but to throw away the food. Often the younger ones in the family pick up these bad habits from the parents and the cycle continues.”

At Springwise, we are seeing a growing number of ideas for reducing food waste. These include the [climatarian movement](#), and practical innovations such as systems for turning leftovers into [cooking gas](#) and packaging made from [waste potato peels](#).

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## **Takeaway:**

Food waste is a huge and growing concern. Not only is it bad for sustainability, as resources are wasted on growing food that is then thrown away, but it is bad for hard-pressed consumers who spend excess money on food they don't eat. Nudge is not a full-scale solution to this problem, but it is not intended to be. Rather, it is a way to make people more aware of the problem, and 'nudge' them into the habit of keeping closer track of when food needs to be eaten. The hope is that once people become accustomed to keeping track of use by dates and prioritising what they use, it will become second nature. Tugiba has just launched a [Kickstarter campaign](#) for the system.