



The DUNSTA | Photo source [Alexandra Fransson](#)

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TERRACOTTA CONTAINER USES AN OLD METHOD FOR KEEPING FOOD FRESH

 FOOD & DRINK

A design student has updated the evaporative cooler, creating a stylish kitchen accessory that can reduce food waste

Spotted: One of the best ways to keep fruit and vegetables fresh is not to put them in the refrigerator but to store them in a cool, dry place. For example, potatoes will sprout at warm room temperatures, but at refrigerator temperatures, they convert some starch into sugar and can brown too quickly. However, not everyone has a root cellar in which to store produce. Lund University industrial design student Alexandra Fransson has now come up with a solution.

Fransson's DUNSTA is a terracotta container that uses evaporative cooling to create a similar environment to a traditional root cellar but designed for urban living. Terracotta is a porous clay with a high iron content, which turns red when fired. It is a simple, sustainable material that can be used without any additives.

The DUNSTA is made of a double layer of terracotta. In between the two layers is sand, to which users add water. As the clay is porous, the water evaporates through it, cooling whatever is inside. Once covered with the lid, produce will remain fresh without the need for plastic wraps or containers.

Fransson describes DUNSTA as designed for modern living, where there may not be room for a storage option such as a root cellar. *She says* that for her, "design is a way to make an impact. I want to create design that provokes thoughts and actions whilst still being possible to integrate into people's everyday life. My aim is to work with design in a sustainable way, both environmentally and socially."

Keeping food fresh for longer is more than just a nice way to save money – it can help cut down on food waste, which is a major issue right now. At Springwise, we have seen this in the number of innovations that are aiming to tackle this problem. Recent ideas have included a plan to turn [ugly fruit](#) into cosmetics and upcycling [barley waste](#) to be used as a vegan protein.

Written By: Lisa Magloff

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Takeaway:

Designed as part of Fransson's master's programme in industrial design at Lund University, the DUNSTA is not currently available for purchase. In fact, the concept is not new. People living in hot, dry places have been using evaporative cooling to keep food fresh for centuries. However, DUNST brings this concept to the present, using a clean and attractive design to demonstrate that natural methods of food storage can both work, and look modern.