Freshly

A pantry-first app that helps people scan groceries, track expiry dates, and prevent food waste by cooking, selling, or donating items before they expire.

Tagline: **Scan it. Save it. Share it.**

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Group: Solo
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Introduction

Freshly addresses household food waste through a mobile app that guides users through the complete process of managing their groceries. The core focus is preventing waste before it happens, rather than just dealing with expired food after the fact.

The app works through several connected steps. After grocery shopping, users scan product barcodes and expiry dates with their phone camera instead of manually entering each item. This creates a digital pantry inventory organized by location (fridge, freezer, pantry) and displays an expiry timeline showing what will expire soon.

The app sends timely reminders before items go bad, which helps users stay aware of what needs to be used. When food is approaching its expiry date, Freshly provides three clear options: cook with the item using recipe suggestions based on current inventory, list it for sale to nearby neighbors at a discounted price, or donate it through local organizations. Users can also share photos and recipes of meals they made with rescued food, creating a community aspect. An impact dashboard tracks metrics like food saved in pounds, money saved or earned and estimated environmental impact.

This project will be delivered as a Figma prototype showing realistic screens, interactions, and user flows.

How the app works

- Quick grocery capture (after a grocery haul): Users scan product barcodes and scan expiry dates using their phone camera. This way you don't have to manually type out everything you bought, which would be annoying.
- Digital pantry: The app builds a pantry list (fridge/freezer/pantry) and an expiry timeline so users can immediately see what is expiring soon.
- Smart reminders: Freshly sends reminders before items expire, so users do not forget them in the back of the fridge.
- Prevent waste with clear actions: When something is close to expiring, the app gives three simple options: cook it (recipes based on pantry), sell it (hyper-local discounted listing), or donate it (nearby donation guidance).
- Community + motivation: Users can share rescued meals (photo + recipe) and track progress on an impact dashboard (food saved, money saved/earned, estimated CO_2 impact).

Novelty

Freshly differentiates itself by combining several functions that currently exist in separate apps. Apps like Too Good To Go focus on restaurant surplus rather than household groceries. Peer-to-peer sharing apps like OLIO enable food sharing but lack the structured pantry tracking and expiry management that would help users prevent waste proactively. Pantry tracking apps like NoWaste help users monitor their inventory but stop at the tracking level without providing clear action pathways. Freshly connects all these elements: capture, visibility, reminders, and action; into a single integrated system.

The novelty also lies in the input method. Most pantry tracking apps require tedious manual entry, which causes users to abandon them after a few weeks. Freshly uses barcode and expiry date scanning to make input fast enough to sustain long-term use. Additionally, having three distinct action pathways (cook, sell, donate) within one interface means users do not need to switch between multiple apps or platforms to handle expiring food.

Transformative experience for the user

Freshly transforms the user's approach to managing groceries from reactive to proactive. Instead of discovering expired food after the fact and feeling guilty about the waste, users maintain visibility over their entire inventory through a clear expiry timeline. When items are approaching expiry, the app presents specific action options, cooking, selling, or donating, rather than leaving users to figure out solutions on their own.

This shift from relying on memory to having a structured system changes the relationship users have with their food purchases. The weekly routine moves from "checking the fridge and hoping nothing went bad" to "knowing exactly what needs attention and having clear next steps." Over time, users develop better shopping habits as the app reveals patterns in what they buy but do not use, leading to more intentional purchasing decisions.

Motto / Tagline

Scan it. Save it. Share it.

Background Research

Market competitor apps (direct competitors)

- **Too Good To Go** operates as a marketplace connecting consumers with restaurants and retail businesses that have surplus food. While successful in the commercial food rescue space, this app does not address the household context where users need to track their own groceries and manage personal expiry dates. The focus remains on business-to-consumer transactions rather than helping individuals prevent waste in their own homes.
- **OLIO** enables neighbor-to-neighbor food sharing with a focus on free exchange within communities. However, it lacks structured pantry management features and proactive expiry tracking that would help users prevent waste before items reach their expiry date. The app functions more as a reactive sharing platform than a preventive system. Users must remember what they have and manually check items before listing them, which often happens too late.
- **SuperCook** generates recipe suggestions based on ingredients users input manually. This addresses the cooking pathway but does not handle expiry tracking, reminders, or alternative options like selling or donating items. It solves only one piece of the food waste problem and requires users to remember what ingredients they have and manually type them in each time they want recipe suggestions.

Market inspiration apps

- **Duolingo**-style habit building: streaks, goals, badges, and gentle reminders (inspiration for gamification).
- **FB Marketplace** UX patterns: fast listing creation, location radius filters, and clear pickup guidance (inspiration for the selling pathway).
- **Fitness**-style dashboards: progress metrics over time and weekly trends (inspiration for impact tracking).
- **Buy Nothing** community model: hyper-local giving culture and trust-based sharing (inspiration for donation/community).

PACT Framework

People

Primary users include:

- Students and working adults who shop weekly and forget items in the fridge.
- Shared households and families with multiple people buying and using food.
- Budget-conscious users who want to save money and avoid re-buying wasted groceries.
- Eco-conscious users who want a convenient, realistic system that fits into daily life.

Key user needs:

- Low effort input (scan instead of typing).
- Clear urgency (what expires soon should be obvious in seconds).
- Simple actions (cook, sell, donate) without extra steps.
- Trust and privacy for local exchange (limited location exposure, basic safety guidance).

Activities

Typical activities in Freshly include:

- Weekly (after shopping): scan barcodes, scan/confirm expiry dates, review pantry and expiry timeline.
- Daily (quick check-ins): view expiring soon items, respond to reminders, mark items as used/sold/donated.
- Occasional: post discounted listings, coordinate pickup, donate items, share a rescued meal post, review dashboard and badges.

Context

Freshly is used in these contexts:

- At home right after shopping (fast capture while items are in hand).
- In the kitchen while planning meals or deciding what to cook.

- During busy weekdays when reminders appear.
- In the neighborhood for pickup or drop-off.

Constraints and considerations:

- Users are often tired or rushed after shopping, so capture must be fast.
- Camera-based expiry scanning may be imperfect, so users need a quick correction step.
- Local selling needs privacy and safety: radius-based discovery, pickup guidance, and basic trust signals.
- Food safety matters: the app should provide simple guidelines and disclaimers for donation and resale.

Technology

Even though this project is a Figma prototype, the concept assumes the following technical capabilities:

- Barcode scanning using the phone camera.
- Product lookup API to auto-fill product name, brand, and category after scanning (example: Open Food Facts).
- Expiry date capture using camera + OCR, with manual edit fallback.
- Push notifications for expiring items and periodic pantry check reminders.
- Recipe recommendations based on pantry items (ingredient matching + filters).
- Location services for hyper-local selling radius and nearby donation options.
- Community posting (photo + recipe) concept, plus report/moderation flows.

Value Proposition

Freshly addresses household food waste by providing a complete system that connects grocery capture, inventory awareness, timely reminders, and practical action steps. Unlike existing apps that handle only one aspect of the problem, Freshly guides users through the entire process from purchase to consumption.

The barcode and expiry scanning approach removes a major barrier that makes other pantry tracking apps too tedious to maintain. Users can capture their weekly groceries in a few minutes rather than spending fifteen or twenty minutes manually typing each item. This low-friction input method makes the system sustainable for long-term use.

The pantry timeline transforms invisible risk into visible information. Users can see immediately what needs attention this week, replacing the unreliable strategy of trying to remember what is in the fridge. When food approaches its expiry date, Freshly presents three practical options in a single interface rather than requiring users to switch between multiple apps or figure out solutions on their own.

The integration of cooking recipes, local marketplace listings, and donation coordination means users have clear next steps regardless of their situation. Someone who wants to cook receives ingredient-based recipe suggestions. Someone who does not need an item can list it for sale with pre-filled information from their pantry data. Someone who prefers to donate receives nearby options with coordination guidance. This flexibility accommodates different user preferences and circumstances while maintaining a consistent experience centered on the core goal of minimizing waste.

Project Contract (Solo)

I, Ekas Chhabra, agree to complete the Freshly Figma prototype and submit all required deliverables by course deadlines.

- Work schedule: 3 focused sessions per week (60–90 minutes each), plus 1 short admin session (15–30 minutes) to update logs and notes.
- Scope control: I will complete the end-to-end core flow first. Nice-to-have features will only be added if the core flow is complete and tested.
- Documentation: I will update the work log after each session and keep brief design notes for major decisions.
- Feedback plan: I will request instructor feedback once after wireframes and once before final submission.

Signature: Ekas Chhabra_____   Date: 01/29/2026_____

Optional Preliminary List of Features

Core Features (Must-Have for Prototype)
- **Onboarding screens** showing goal selection and permissions
- **Add groceries flow** with simulated barcode scanning, product confirmation screen, and expiry date input with manual correction option
- **Pantry views** including list view organized by location (fridge/freezer/pantry) and timeline view grouped by expiry urgency
- **Reminder notification examples** and reminder settings screen
- **Item detail screen** showing the three action options when food is about to expire
- **Cook pathway** with recipe list filtered by available ingredients and recipe detail screen with instructions
- **Sell pathway** with quick listing creation pre-filled from pantry data and pickup coordination screen
- **Donate pathway** showing nearby donation options and drop-off instructions
- **Impact dashboard** displaying recent grocery haul summary, items used/sold/donated, money saved or earned, food saved in pounds, and badge progress

AI Use Section

Table of AI tools and specific use

AI Tool Name	Version (model)	Account type	Specific use in this project
Claude (Anthropic)	Sonnet 4.5	Free tier	Early stage brainstorming of possible food waste app ideas, outlining potential features, and helping organize rough notes into clearer sections for review.
ChatGPT (OpenAI)	GPT-5.2 Thinking	Plus tier	Editing and refining wording for clarity, improving sentence flow, and aligning sections with the provided proposal template after the core ideas and structure were already defined.

Value addition (what I added beyond AI output)

- I made the main design decision to shift from a marketplace-first idea to a pantry-first prevention experience.
- I defined the end-to-end user journey and kept every feature tied to the main user goal (minimize food waste).
- I scoped the concept to what can be shown clearly in a Figma prototype, with a realistic workload.
- I identified practical constraints and designed around them (scan-first input with manual correction, privacy and safety considerations).

Appendix: Prompt history

Paste your real prompts below:

1. "how about something similar to TooGoodToGo? but instead of restaurants, its normal households. for example: i have some veggies that are expiring in a day or two. i can sell them at a super cheap price."

2. "im thinking of a marketplace, social media (recipes), multiple checkpoint"

Work Date/Hours Logs

Student Name: [Your Full Name]

Date	Hours	Description of work done
Jan 24, 2026	2.0	Defined initial concept as a local marketplace for expiring household food. Wrote problem statement and target user notes.
Jan 25, 2026	2.0	Broke down marketplace-first features (map listings, quick listing flow, pickup coordination, trust idea). Drafted the original "experience loop" concept.
Jan 26, 2026	1.5	Competitor research: reviewed Too Good To Go, OLIO, and pantry tracking apps to identify gaps and opportunities.
Jan 27, 2026	1.0	After instructor feedback, reframed the app around the main user goal "minimize food waste." Updated flow to capture → pantry → expiring soon → action.

Closing and References

Acknowledgements

Thank you to my instructor for feedback that pushed this idea beyond a simple marketplace and into a complete experience focused on minimizing household food waste.

References

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- Too Good To Go. Surplus food marketplace overview. https://www.toogoodtogo.com/en-ca/surplus-food-marketplace

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- Buy Nothing Project. About. https://buynothingproject.org/about/