Sustainability Speaker Series

Want to learn more about sustainability?

Our presentations are designed to be read online or to be presented by our staff at your event or group meeting.

Contact sustainability@cityoftacoma.org or call (253) 591-5172 to book!
Food: Too Good To Waste
Join the Challenge!
Food: Too Good To Waste

- What is wasted food?
- How much are we wasting?
- What happens when we waste food?
- What can we do?
What is Wasted Food?
Wasted Food vs. Food Waste

Wasted food is preventable!

It is edible food that goes into the trash or compost instead of being eaten.
Wasted Food vs. Food Waste

Food waste is not preventable.

It is inedible food that can be composted (recycled).
It is also a potential source for producing biogas to fuel vehicles.
What is Wasteful?

Food Recovery Hierarchy

**Source Reduction**
Reduce the volume of surplus food generated

**Feed Hungry People**
Donate extra food to food banks, soup kitchens and shelters

**Feed Animals**
Divert food scraps to animal feed

**Industrial Uses**
Provide waste oils for rendering and fuel conversion and food scraps for digestion to recover energy

**Composting**
Create a nutrient-rich soil amendment

**Landfill/Incineration**
Last resort to disposal

Most Preferred

Least Preferred
How Much are we Wasting?
1/3 of all food is wasted globally.
In America, we waste more.

40% of food produced in the U.S. goes uneaten.
U.S. Waste Stream

Food makes up the largest percentage of our waste stream.

These figures reflect amounts of food sent to landfill AFTER recycling and composting.

America’s wasted food could fill the Rose Bowl every single day.
How much do **WE** waste?

Thousands of tons of food enter the landfill every year.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Tons/Year in Tacoma</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Single Family/Duplex</td>
<td>14,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multi-Family</td>
<td>3,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commercial</td>
<td>14,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>31,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
What Happens when we Waste Food?
Wasting Food Wastes Everything

Money

Resources

Energy

Opportunity
Wasted Money

$165 billion – total annual cost of wasted food in America.

$750 million – total annual cost of landfilling that wasted food in America.
Wasted Money at Home

The average American throws away 300 pounds of food per year.

That is like leaving one out of every four grocery bags at the store.
Wasted Money at Home

Average family of four throws away $1,600 every year in food that goes uneaten.

This is what one year’s worth of wasted food looks like.
Wasted Resources

25% of America’s freshwater is wasted on uneaten food.
Wasted Resources

1 Almond = 1 Gallon of Water

1 LB of Beef = 2,500 Gallons of Water
Worldwide, it takes 2.5 billion acres to grow food that goes uneaten. That’s about the size of all 50 states.
Wasted Energy

Carbon pollution from wasted food

- Production & Processing
- Packaging
- Distribution & Retail
- Disposal
Wasted Energy

If wasted food were a country, it would rank third in greenhouse gas emissions!
Wasted Opportunity

While food is more than 20% of our waste stream, it is only 2% of our recovered material.

50 Million Americans are Food Insecure

1 out of 6 adults, and 1 out of 5 children do not have access to enough food.
What can we do?
Join in Food Recovery

Start gleaning!

Help at a local food bank!
Donate Food

Find a full list of food banks and accepted items at the WA Department of Health website.

Donate all kinds of food to your neighbors. This can be easier for individuals than donating to a food bank.
Choose “Ugly” Produce

20 – 40 % of produce is discarded due to cosmetic standards.

Choosing “ugly” produce directly diverts waste from landfills.

Visit EndFoodWaste.org and ImperfectProduce.com for more information!
Understand Your Role

This shows the percent of food wasted by weight at different points along its life cycle.

Farms, Processing and Transport: 16%
Consumer Facing Businesses: 40%
Homes: 43%

Source: ReFED – Roadmap to reduce U.S. food waste
Make Changes at Home

43% of waste happens in homes. This means we all can make a big difference right at home!

Source: ReFED – Roadmap to reduce U.S. food waste
Understand Expiration Dates

91% of consumers report discarding food past its “sell by” date out of concern for the product’s safety.

Here are four different types of dates on the same product – milk.

“Even if the date expires during home storage, a product should be safe, wholesome and of good quality if handled properly.” - USDA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sell By</th>
<th>Best By</th>
<th>Use By</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• NOT a safety date</td>
<td>• NOT a safety date</td>
<td>• Only a safety date for baby formula</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Does not apply to consumers</td>
<td>• Suggests optimal freshness</td>
<td>• Set by the manufacturer</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Be a SMART Planner

- Make a meal plan for the week.
- Try to use several ingredients you already have.
- Know your schedule and plan for nights you will eat out.
- Plan one “leftovers night” per week.

- Keep a list of easy recipes that are family favorites. Stick to one new recipe a week.
- Serve smaller first portions and allow for seconds.
Be a SMART Shopper

- Shop your fridge, freezer and pantry first.
- Include quantities on your list.
- Base your list on your meal plan.
- Buy fewer fresh ingredients more often.
- Avoid pre-packaged produce.
Be a SMART Shopper

- Choose grains, pasta, and beans from the bulk section to control quantities.
- Avoid “buy one, get one” deals and impulse buys that may go uneaten.
- Know the difference between “use-by,” “sell-by,” and other dates.
- Stick to the list!
Be a SMART Prepper

- Set a specific time each week to prep fresh produce for meals and snacks.
- Try prepping your food right when you get home from shopping.
- Make extra portions and freeze as ingredients for a future meal.
- Let kids help!
Store SMART

- Put an “Eat First” box in your fridge for food that needs to be eaten soon.
- Use clear storage containers so you can easily see what food you have.
- Tidy your fridge and freezer regularly.
- Freeze greens and fruits that are about to go bad for soups and smoothies.
- Label all freezer items with the contents and date.
Join the Challenge!

This four week activity for you and your family allows you to see how much you normally waste.

The Challenge comes with a free toolkit to help you waste less, including SMART tips, food storage guide, freezer labels, Eat First bin, and more.
Join the Challenge: it really works!

Our pilot participants saw an average decrease in wasted food of over 56%.
Thank you for Learning About Food: Too Good To Waste

Have questions?
Want to sign up for the Challenge?
Contact Jetta Antonakos at:
jantonakos@ci.tacoma.wa.us
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