Communication Tools to Help Consumers Reduce Food Waste

2018 KSRE Annual Conference
Barb Goode
Overview

• Why focus on food waste?
• EPA food recovery hierarchy
• EPA community tool - *Food: Too Good to Waste*
Food production and resource use

- Food and agriculture consume
  - 16% of U.S. energy,
  - 50% of U.S. land, and
  - 67% of all freshwater used in the U.S.

Yet, 40% of food goes uneaten!

Source: NRDC, WASTED: HOW AMERICA IS LOSING UP TO 40 PERCENT OF ITS FOOD FROM FARM TO FORK TO LANDFILL, 2017
www.nrdc.org
THE U.S. WASTES TONS OF RESOURCES WHEN WE WASTE FOOD

1,250 CALORIES PER PERSON PER DAY
THAT IS HALF OF THE RECOMMENDED DAILY INTAKE FOR ADULTS

19% OF ALL U.S. CROPLANDS
THAT IS MORE LAND THAN ALL OF NEW MEXICO

21% OF U.S. LANDFILL CONTENT
THE NO. 1 CONTRIBUTOR BY WEIGHT

18% OF ALL FARMING FERTILIZER
WHICH CONTAINS 3.9 BILLION POUNDS OF NUTRIENTS

$218,000,000,000
WHICH IS EQUAL TO 1.3% OF THE U.S. GROSS DOMESTIC PRODUCT (GDP)

2.6% OF ALL U.S. GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS ANNUALLY

37 MILLION PASSENGER VEHICLES’ WORTH

21% OF THE U.S. AGRICULTURAL WATER USAGE

MORE THAN: TEXAS + CALIFORNIA + OHIO

Source: NRDC, WASTED: HOW AMERICA IS LOSING UP TO 40 PERCENT OF ITS FOOD FROM FARM TO FORK TO LANDFILL, 2017
www.nrdc.org
U.S. Annual Household Food Waste

76 billion pounds = 238 pounds food/person = $450/person = $1,800/yr for a household of four

EPA Food Recovery Hierarchy
Managing excess food

Food Recovery Hierarchy

- Source Reduction
- Feed Hungry People
- Feed Animals
- Industrial Uses
- Composting
- Incineration or Landfill

In 2015 – USDA and EPA joint goal to reduce food waste by 50 percent by 2030

https://www.epa.gov/sustainable-management-food/food-recovery-hierarchy
Source Reduction

Barrier to preventing wasted food is lack of standardized food date labels

Sell by
Best by
Use by
Feed Hungry People

Up to 40% food in US is never eaten
1 in 8 Americans (42 million) struggles to put enough food on the table

- Donate surplus food to—
  - Food banks
  - Shelters
  - Soup kitchens

- Barriers
  - Transportation
  - “Liability”
Good Samaritan Food Donation Act

Source of middle article:
University of Arkansas School of Law – James Haley, Aug 8, 2013
Feed Animals

Food Recovery Hierarchy

- Source Reduction
- Feed Hungry People
- Feed Animals
- Industrial Uses
- Composting
- Incineration or Landfill

Most Preferred

Least Preferred

• Provide to area farms and zoos
  • Vegetable trimmings
  • Post-consumer plate waste

• Barriers
  • Some states ban food donation for animal feed
  • Strict diets in corporate operations
Industrial Uses

• Anaerobic digestion for energy recovery
• Biofuels from waste oils
Composting

- Creates a nutrient-rich soil amendment
- Barrier - Lack of commercial composting facilities
- Backyard composting is a good option!
Landfilling

Food Recovery Hierarchy

Source Reduction
Feed Hungry People
Feed Animals
Industrial Uses
Composting
Incineration or Landfill

Last resort!
EPA Food: Too Good to Waste Tool

Implementing a campaign in your community
Food: Too Good to Waste Campaign

• Goal: to prevent **household** wasted food
• Main message: food is too essential to throw away
• Implementation guide and tool kit
  ▪ Behavior change tools
  ▪ Outreach tools

Five step of community-based social marketing

1. Selecting behaviors
2. Identifying barriers & benefits
3. Developing strategies
4. Conducting a pilot
5. Broad-scale implementation
Benefit - We all hate waste

Photo from EPA FTGTW tool slides
Barrier – Brain on automatic

Source: Cornell University Food and Brand Lab
Barrier – Dynamic lifestyles

Artist: Beverly Naidus
Additional Barriers

• Not enough information
• Time needed to learn new skills
• Time needed to prepare fresh food
• Food preferences
Additional Benefits

• Saving money
• Keeping fruit and vegetables fresh longer may increase their consumption
• By trying different ways to buy and prep food, we can simplify our lives
• Basic satisfaction that comes from wasting less
The Toolkit
## Campaign Strategies & Behavior Change Tools

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategy</th>
<th>Benefits</th>
<th>Barriers</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Get Smart:</strong></td>
<td>Waste aversion</td>
<td>Time</td>
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<tr>
<td>See how much food (and money) you are throwing away</td>
<td></td>
<td>Dynamic lifestyle</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Automatic behavior</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Smart Shopping:</strong></td>
<td>Waste aversion</td>
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<tr>
<td>Buy what you need</td>
<td>Saving $</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Smart Storage:</strong></td>
<td>Waste aversion</td>
<td>Knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keep fruits and vegetables fresh</td>
<td>Health</td>
<td>Time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Saving $</td>
<td>Not enough room in fridge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Smart Prep:</strong></td>
<td>Convenience</td>
<td>Skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prep now, eat later</td>
<td>Saving $</td>
<td>Knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Health</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Smart Saving:</strong></td>
<td>Waste aversion</td>
<td>Gratification</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eat what you buy</td>
<td>Saving $</td>
<td>Convenience</td>
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### Campaign Strategies & Behavior Change Tools (cont.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategy</th>
<th>Tool</th>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
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<td>Awareness and Education</td>
<td>Fact Sheet: “Consider the Tomato”</td>
<td>Outreach</td>
<td>Educate participants and potential participants</td>
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<td>Workshop Presentation</td>
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Get Smart:

• Track wasted food
  ▪ Tool provides instructions and worksheets
  ▪ Measure by volume, weight, or both
    • Consider providing scales
  ▪ Most challenges are four to six weeks
    • Two weeks to establish baseline, four weeks to test strategies and create new habits
  ▪ Measure preventable and/or non-edible wasted food

GET SMART: TAKE THE CHALLENGE
KEEP GOOD FOOD FROM GOING TO WASTE

WHAT IS THE CHALLENGE?
Did you know that in 2013 Americans threw 35 million tons of food into landfills and incinerators? Research shows that nearly everyone wastes more than they think they do. The Food: Too Good to Waste Challenge will help you figure out how much food is really going to waste in your home and what you can do to waste less. By making small shifts in how you shop for, prepare, and store food, you can save time and money, and keep the valuable resources used to produce and distribute food from going to waste!
Smart Shopping: Buy What You Need

• Template for making shopping lists
• Encourages meal planning; simplifies food management
• Creates awareness of amount of food needed for meals
• “Shop your kitchen first”
Smart Storage: Fruit and Vegetable Storage Tips

• Visual prompt – remind how to keep produce fresh
• Suitable for posting on the refrigerator
• Can be distributed at tabling/community events

• VT flyer (how to use the crisper drawer humidity settings)
Smart Prep: Prep Now, Eat Later

SMART PREP: PREP NOW, EAT LATER

Prepare perishable foods soon after shopping. It will be easier to whip up meals later in the week, saving time, effort, and money.

HELPFUL TIPS
- When you get home from the store, take the time to wash, dry, chop, dice, slice, and place your fresh food items in clear storage containers for snacks and easy cooking.
- Befriend your freezer and visit it often. Freeze food such as bread, sliced fruit, or meat that you know you won’t be able to eat in time.
- Cut your time in the kitchen by preparing and freezing meals ahead of time.
- Prepare and cook perishable items, then freeze them for use throughout the month. For example, bake and freeze chicken breasts or fry and freeze taco meat.

EPA-530-16-F-014-E
February 2016
Smart Saving: “Eat First”

- Eat what needs eating first.
Awareness and Education Fact Sheet: “Consider the Tomato”

• Designed to attract attention/raise awareness
• Tells a story about why wasted food matters
• Provides context for wasted food as an environmental and economic issue
• Formatted as a poster
Awareness and Education: Workshop Presentation

• Designed for FTGTW campaign organizers
  ▪ Introduce the campaign and tools to community members
  ▪ Recruit participants
Implement a small-scale campaign

Five step of community-based social marketing
1. Selecting behaviors
2. Identifying barriers & benefits
3. Developing strategies
4. **Conducting a pilot**
5. Broad-scale implementation
Steps to Implementation

• Step 1 – Design the (small scale) campaign
• Step 2 – Adapt the FTGTW tools
• Step 3 – Conduct outreach and recruitment
• Step 4 – Monitor and support; increase retention
• Step 5 – Data collection
• Step 6 – Analyzing and sharing results
Food recovery resources (www.sbeap.org)
Additional resources (www.sbeap.org)
Questions?

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Love Letter to Food

You probably already know this, but I need you.