

---

# Save Money In Your Operations by Reducing Food Waste

Lesly Baesens, DDPHE  
October 5, 2023

**Empowering Denver's communities to live better, longer**



# Content

- Food waste facts and quiz
- How is Denver tackling prevention?
- Reducing food waste in your operations
- Resources



# Setting the stage



# Food Waste Facts and Quiz



# One year of wasted food produces the greenhouse gas equivalent of how many coal fired power plants?

- 6
- 11
- 31
- 42



Wasting food wastes the labor, water, energy, land and fertilizers that went into growing, harvesting, transporting, cooking and storing that food.

## Environmental Impacts of U.S. Food Waste: EPA

What resources go into a year of food loss and waste in the U.S.?

\*excluding impacts of waste management, such as landfill methane emissions



**Greenhouse gas emissions** of more than 42 coal-fired power plants

**Enough water and energy** to supply more than 50 million homes



The **amount of fertilizer** used in the U.S. to grow all plant-based foods for U.S. human consumption

An **area of agricultural land** equal to California and New York



Learn more: [www.epa.gov/land-research/farm-kitchen-environmental-impacts-us-food-waste](http://www.epa.gov/land-research/farm-kitchen-environmental-impacts-us-food-waste)



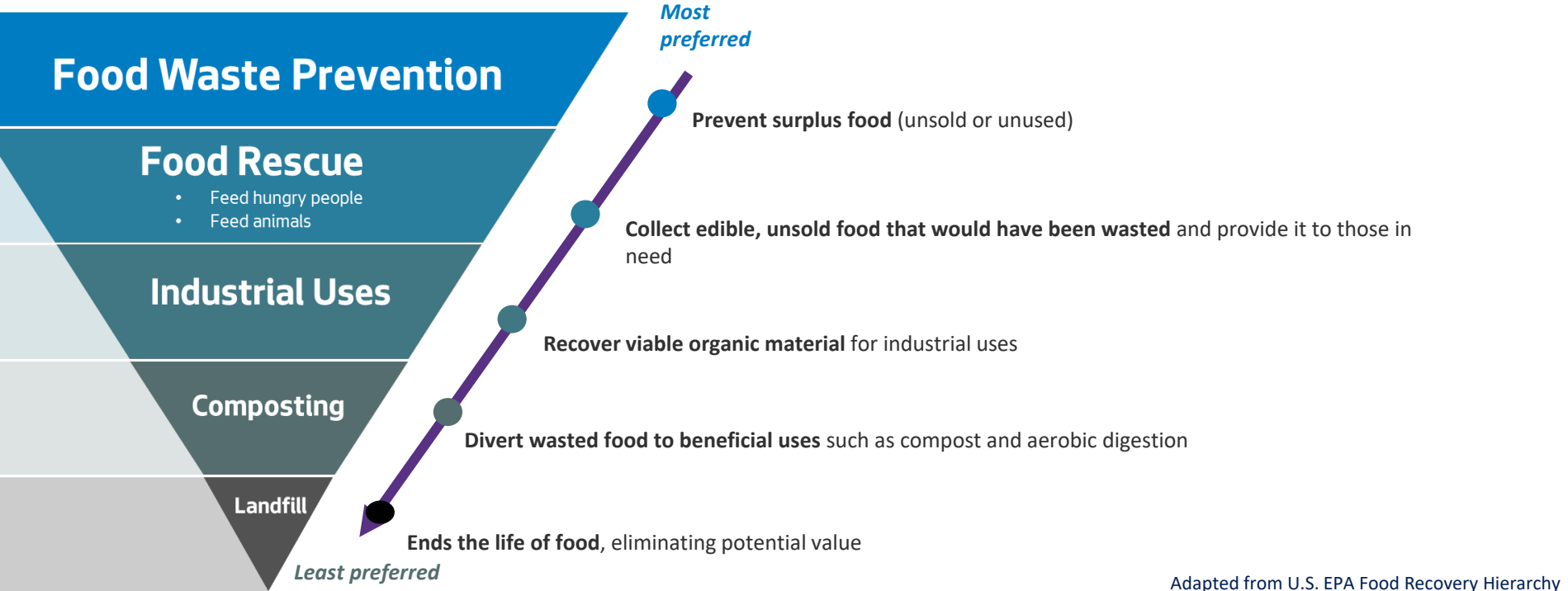
## How long does it take for lettuce to decompose in the landfill?

- 2.5 weeks
- 2.5 months
- 2.5 years
- 25 years





# Lettuce not put food in the landfill...





NRDC estimated the number of additional meals that could be rescued each year in Denver. What was their maximum estimate?

- 1.6 million meals
- 4.9 million meals
- 7.1 million meals
- 9.8 million meals



# Where is food wasted?

## DENVER

### DENVER'S UNTAPPED POTENTIAL PER YEAR

#### AMBITIOUS SCENARIO

**901** TONS

**1.5** MILLION MEALS

**9.7%** OF MEAL GAP

#### MAXIMUM SCENARIO

**4,232** TONS

**7.1** MILLION MEALS

**45.7%** OF MEAL GAP

### TOP SECTORS



**Retail Grocery**



**Hospitality**



**Small Retail**



# How is Denver Tackling Food Waste?



# Focus groups

- Partnership with community org.
- 68 residents participated.
- Confirmed what we suspected: Food is wasted across income levels, though not for the same reasons.



# Food Pantries

- Four best practices
- Inspired by focus groups
- Highlights potential for money saving through more culturally appropriate offerings.



# Conduct behavior change campaign

## EAT THIS FIRST



## Past the Date? Wait!

Date labels indicate peak quality, not safety. Fresh foods like milk, yogurt, and eggs are often safe to eat past the printed date.

Use your senses - taste, smell, and sight - to decide if food has signs of spoilage, like an odd smell or texture.

Denver, together, let's #SaveTheFood!



## ¡Los residentes de Denver quieren ahorrar dinero, hacer que la comida dure más y reducir el desperdicio de alimentos!

Inicie nuevos hábitos para ahorrar dinero haciendo que su comida dure más tiempo con las herramientas para reducir el desperdicio de alimentos que se adjuntan.

- Coloque en su refrigerador en una bandeja con la leyenda "Come esto primero" y añada ahí los alimentos que su familia necesita consumir pronto.
- Utilice la calcomanía reutilizable "como esto primero" en los envases de alimentos.
- Ha pasado la fecha? Las fechas de caducidad suelen indicar la calidad de los alimentos, no su seguridad. Use sus sentidos gusto, olfato y la vista para decidir si los alimentos tienen signos de deterioro.
- Puede usar el íman para el refrigerador para recordarle cómo almacenar artículos comunes.

### ¿Problemas con el desperdicio de alimentos? Tenemos soluciones!

- ¿Necesita inspiración para cenar? Cooking Matters ofrece recetas sencillas y flexibles en inglés y español.
- ¿Le cuesta decidir cuánto comprar? NatsBerry le ofrece recetas y enlaces con Walmart y King Soopers para ayudarlo a elaborar una lista de la compra que evite el desperdicio.
- ¿No sabe cuánto cocinar para una multitud? El Guestimator calcula cuánta comida preparar para tener suficiente sin desperdiciar.
- ¿La nevera o el congelador están demasiado llenos? Olio le permite donar comida a sus vecinos de forma fácil y rápida, aunque esté a punto de caducar o ya esté abierta.

Estos recursos forman parte del programa Food Matters: Soluciones para la prevención del desperdicio de alimentos. Derivado a partir de las aportaciones de los habitantes de Denver, Food Matters ayuda a los residentes y a las empresas a aprovechar al máximo sus alimentos proporcionándoles consejos prácticos y herramientas para evitar que los alimentos en buen estado acaben en el basurero.

Para acceder a estos recursos, apunte con la cámara de su teléfono al siguiente código QR:





# Materials





## Work with retail food establishments

- As of 2016, liability concerns still cited by 50% of restaurants as a barrier to donation.
- 98% of food in restaurant is discarded, only 2% is donated.



## What was the potential for diversion during the 2019 restaurant food waste pilot?

- 40%
- 65%
- 80%
- 90%



# Restaurant Challenge



# Engage Restaurants in Donation

## Join the growing number of Denver restaurants that have a food donation program.

Donors are federally protected from liability - there is no record of a lawsuit against food donors.

"We are so grateful to be partnered with We Don't Waste [...]. Working with We Don't Waste has been an easy process with a big impact!"

- Kyle M., Executive Chef, Big Red F Restaurant Group

Email [SaveTheFood@denvergov.org](mailto:SaveTheFood@denvergov.org) for a website acknowledgement and to receive a window decal letting your patrons know about your efforts.



SAVE MONEY

HELP YOUR COMMUNITY

REDUCE WASTE

*Get Started!*

To start donating and learn about tax benefits, liability protection, and more scan:





# Promote Restaurants that Donate

**MORE MEALS,  
LESS WASTE**

After we close our doors, we put food on tables  
by donating extra meals to our community.

**FOOD MATTERS BUSINESS**

**WE DON'T WASTE**

**DENVER PUBLIC HEALTH & ENVIRONMENT**

**CENTER FOR ECOTECHNOLOGY**

Ask us what we are doing or scan the QR code to learn more.



# Save money (and Make Money) by reducing food waste



# What do these have in common?





## BIG DISHES

**Grilled Salmon** Aurora, from Norway ~ with Indonesian style col-  
and brown rice....14.25

**Donmiyaki** *crispy cabbage pancake, wasabi-okonomi sauces,  
choice of kabob: vegetable / chicken or shrimp*....13.00 | 14.00

**Free Tacos with Salmon or Beef Brisket**

Aurora & Roseda Farm ~ corn tortillas, napa cabbage, carrots,  
onion, chipotle salsa, crema and lime....14.25 | 13.00

**South Indian Vegetable Curry**

kale, chickpeas, tomato, chayote squash, and roasted carrot  
in turmeric coconut sauce, with brown rice....12.00

**Thai Chicken Curry**

D'Artagnan Family Farms ~ chicken in a Thai yellow curry with  
jasmine rice and a skewer of grilled vegetables....13.25

**Vegetarian Cheeseburger**

House-made with beets, walnuts, organic tempeh and quinoa, on ciabatta  
with lettuce, tomato, Thai basil, vegan cheese, vegan mayo, with a  
side of broccoli with orange vinaigrette....13.00 (hot)

**Vegetarian Brisket Sandwich**

Prepared from Roseda Farm ~ ciabatta roll, Asian slaw, gochujang sauce,  
vegan mayo, topped with fried onions and served with a side of broccoli  
with orange vinaigrette....13.00

**Vegetarian Noodle Soup** fat noodles with fresh ginger & mushroom

with seared mushrooms, baby kale, with choice of added vegetables /  
chicken or shrimp....13.25 | 14.25

**Udon Noodle Soup**

with your pot of Hojicha tea over this Japanese rice "soup," with your  
choice of pickled plum / salmon or shrimp....12.00 | 14.00

**Flatbread Eastern Goat Cheese Salad**

with baby kale, lettuce,  
cucumber, radish, poblano pepper, with Pipe Dreams goat cheese,  
olive oil, lemon, sumac vinaigrette....12.00 | without goat cheese 8.50

**Pipe Dream Salad** a nutrient-dense salad with quinoa, beet

with chickpeas, lettuce, fruit, dates, pickled onion, Golden Monkey tea  
and mix of nuts and seeds. Tossed in a raspberry vinaigrette....13.00



# seasonal Pipe Dreams Menu Penn Quarter

## SMALL DISHES

**trash or treasure** .....

6.00 each

These menu items were developed to  
utilize product often wasted in restaurants.

**Broccoli Tots** with goat cheese & togarashi dip

**Seared Salmon Belly** with collar stems  
pickled in herb trimming (#RescueDishDC)

**Cabbage Butts** stir-fried in gochujang

**hot** .....

**Coconut Miso Sipping Broth**

mug with cilantro, citrus & jalapeño garnish....4.75

**Sautéed Broccoli** in sesame oil

with ginger and garlic....4.50

**Baby Kale & Chayote Squash**

sautéed in coconut oil....5.00

**Indonesian Collards**....5.00

**Brown Rice** Lundberg Farms....3.00

**Flatbread**....3.00

with Housemade Chutney....4.00

with **Goat Cheese** by Pipe Dreams....6.50

with **Beet Hummus**....7.00

**Grilled Veg Kabob** jicama, trumpet mushroom,

melish peppers and indurpin, pork or sausage below....6.50

THE  
SALT LINE  
OYSTER + ALE

LOCATION & HOURS

MENUS

PRIVATE EVENTS

SPECIAL EVENTS

ABOUT

PURVEYORS

GIFT CARDS

DELIVERY

RESERVATIONS

## APPETIZERS

BUTTER LETTUCE SALAD

spring radish, grainy mustard vinaigrette, Cayuga blue cheese, house  
crotons 14

HEIRLOOM TOMATO SALAD

harissa xo, charred cucumber, px sherry vinegar 15

BAKED PIMENTO CRAB DIP

jumping shrimp, tomato, scallion, scallion, green tabasco, Old Bay crab chips,  
scallions 17

SEAFOOD CHARCUTERIE

see raw bar menu for today's selection 27

## CRUDOS

GULF BAY SCALLOP

golden beets, chili crisp, marcona almond, house-made labneh, cilantro 14

ROCKFISH TARTARE

15

bay scallops, basil puree, Coulter Farm ricotta, garlic bread crumbs

PRIME BAVETTE SIRLOIN

earth 'n eats broccoli, mustard vinaigrette, blistered farm pepper, house  
steak sauce 27

## SANDWICHES

served w/fries or greens

LOBSTER ROLL

choice of dressed or buttered, split top bun, market price MKT

NEW ENGLAND SMASH BURGER

2 ground chuck patties, american cheese, lettuce, tomato, pickle, mayo,  
sesame bun 16

BOSTON ROAST BEEF

bbq sauce, horseradish cream, american cheese, onion roll 16

## SIDES

FRIES

8

# Donate surplus

- Peace of mind – you are protected from liability.
- Do good for your community
- Benefit from tax deductions
- [Denvergov.org/savethefood](https://denvergov.org/savethefood) for safe donation protocols



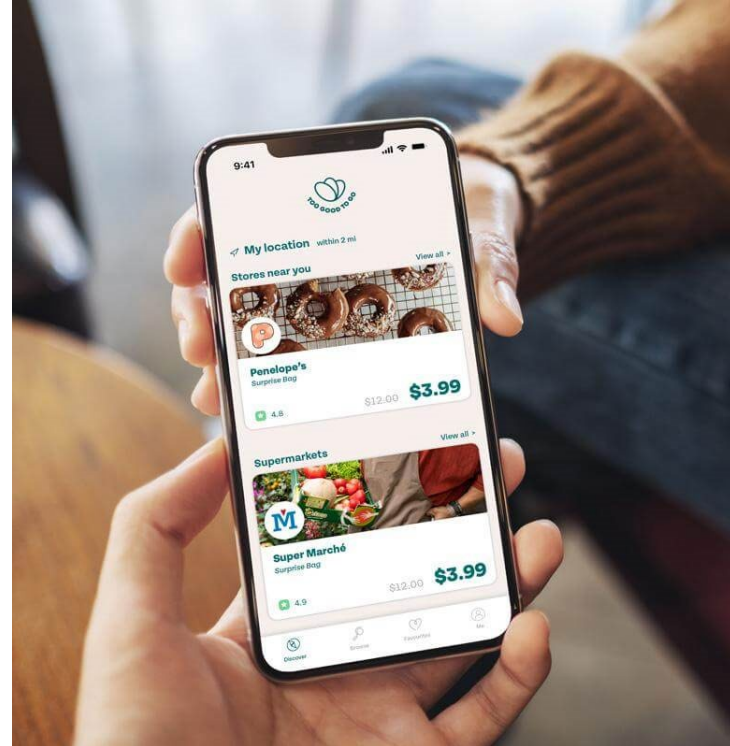
# Track waste to reduce waste

- Invest in systems such as Leanpath or Winnow
- Save 2-8% in food costs
- 7:1 Return on investment



# Use technology

- Apps such as Too Good To Go let you sell surplus food at the end of the day



# Fight food waste at the office

- Engage staff in food waste prevention through contest, prizes, etc.
- Provide take-out containers after office functions (or remind staff to bring their own!)
- Donate unserved food after catering events.
- Embed prevention in your sustainability policy.



**#FOODWASTE**  
**PREVENTIONWEEK**

**Rebecca Currie**

**Denver Public Library**

Today's lunch is all the leftovers in the fridge. Shrimp scampi, broccoli and a little chicken.





# Resources

- [Denvergov.org/SaveTheFood](https://denvergov.org/SaveTheFood)
- [Leanpath.com](https://leanpath.com)
- [Winnowsolutions.com](https://winnowsolutions.com)
- [Toogoodtogo.com](https://toogoodtogo.com)
- <https://www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/usda-good-samaritan-faqs.pdf>

