Wasted Food Recovery and the Link to Resource Conservation

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Wasted Food vs. Food Waste*

- Wasted/surplus/excess food = wholesome, nutritious food that is lost
  - Food from retail stores
  - Untouched prepared food from restaurants, cafeterias, industrial processing
  - Often used when discussing food recovery for donation
  - i.e., browning banana, yogurt with expiration date

- Food Waste = food unfit for human consumption
  - Spoiled food
  - FOGs (fats, oils, grease)
  - By-products of F&B processing industries
  - i.e. mango pit, used deep fryer oil, hops

*Based on information from EPA: Sustainable Management of Food Basics
It Takes Resources To Toss It Away . . .

Based on information from ReFED: Rethinking Food Waste
And Results In Emissions . . .

Greenhouse gases are reduced per solution by avoiding the resources that go into producing, processing, and transporting food, as well as the methane emissions from food disposed of in landfills.

*Based on information from ReFED: Rethinking Food Waste*
Sustainable Resource Management
Linking Wasted Food Recovery and Greenhouse Gas Emissions

In the U.S annually...

- 63 Million tons of food is wasted.
- $218 Billion dollars spent.
- 1.3% of GDP, growing, processing, transporting, and disposing food that is never eaten.

*Based on information from ReFED: Rethinking Food Waste*
Average lifecycle impacts (CO2E/lb of food) from food waste reduction activities from US EPA Waste Reduction Model (WARM) background data.
"State" Of Wasted Food

1. 'Forget Me Land'

All of our country's wasted food is grown in one place = the size of 80 million acres roughly 3/4 of the state of California.

2. Resources Galore

Growing all this wasted food would consume all the water used in California, Texas, and Ohio combined. The farm would harvest enough food to fill a 40-ton tractor every 20 seconds.
3. **Transport**

The trailers would drive. Thousands of miles. Distributing food. Keeping them cold. But instead of all the procedures to get to our table, the perfectly good food would go onto another truck and be hauled to a landfill.

4. **Greenhouse Gases**

This wasted food would emit harmful streams of emissions as it decomposes.

5. **Rinse and Repeat**

This process is repeated every day at the agricultural, industrial, retail, and residential level. Wasting billions of pounds of perfectly edible food.
Opportunity

There are many opportunities to prevent this. Pacing food as a valued material is the first step. Taking a materials management approach is essential.

Wasted Food Recovery

This is another helpful form of ‘rescue’ programs that divert wasted food from landfill.

Ideas?

Now that you are informed, what are ways you can be involved in the prevention of wasted food?
What’s happening locally?

Annually, an estimated **12,488 tons** of edible food is disposed of as garbage in Thurston County.*

*Based on information from the 2014 Thurston County Waste Composition Study.*
Food Rescue Program
2017 Rescued Food by Donor Sector

- **29%** Grocery Donations
- **42%** Grocery Reuse
- **25%** Distribution Center
- **6%** School Rescue
- **4%** Restaurant Rescue

Information provided by the Thurston County Food Bank. Food gleaning data not included.
Waste Less Food Program
Food Insecurity in Thurston County

Food Insecurity Numbers
In 2017, the Thurston County Food Bank served 327,888 meals--157,386 of those meals went to children.
Take Action

- ThurstonFoodRescue.org
- WasteLessFood.com
- EPA’s Food: Too Good To Waste Program
- Good Samaritan food donation laws (state and federal)
- USDA food product dating
Thank you!

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