

Opportunities to Reduce Food Waste in the 2018 Farm Bill



Prevention



Recovery



Recycling



Coordination

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About the Food Law and Policy Clinic

- Provide legal and policy guidance to a range of clients (local, state, federal governments, nonprofits, etc.)
 - Educate law students about how law and policy impact the food system
- 4 main initiatives:



The Food Waste Problem

40% of all food in the U.S. goes to waste (62.5 million tons per year)

12% of American families are food insecure

We spend a tremendous amount of natural and economic resources to produce, process, transport, and dispose of wasted food

- \$218 billion each year
- 20% of freshwater
- 19% of cropland
- 4% of U.S. oil



Benefits of Food Waste Reduction: The 3 P's



People:

- Recovering just **30%** of wasted food could feed all food insecure Americans



Planet:

- Save **1.6 trillion gallons** of water
- Avoid **18 million tons** of greenhouse gas emissions annually



Profit:

- Generate **15,000** new jobs
- Generate **\$1.9 billion** in annual business profit

Opportunities to Reduce Food Waste in the 2018 Farm Bill

The U.S. farm bill is the most powerful piece of food and agriculture legislation in the U.S. and fundamentally shapes the American food system.

- The 2014 Farm Bill allocated nearly **\$500 billion** towards food and agriculture over 5 years
- **\$0** went to ensure food produced makes it to consumers and not the landfill
- 2018 is the first farm bill after the announcement of the national food waste reduction goal to reduce food waste by 50% by 2030





Top Food Waste Prevention Solutions for the 2018 Farm Bill

1. Standardize and clarify date labels
2. Provide funding to K-12 schools to incorporate food waste prevention practices and food recovery education in their programs
3. Launch a national food waste education and awareness campaign



Standardize and Clarify Date Labels

Standardizing expiration date labels has the potential to divert 398,000 tons of food waste per year and provide \$1.8 billion in yearly economic value.

Industry Voluntary Standard

- GMA and FMI date labeling voluntary standards
 - “BEST if used by” for quality
 - “USE by” for safety
- Aim for widespread adoption by 2018
- More than half of the states could not implement standards due to current state date labeling laws



Provide Funding to K-12 schools to Reduce Wasted Food

Approximately 360,000 tons of food wasted each year in elementary and secondary schools

Several strategies to prevent and reduce wasted food in K-12 Schools:

- Establish an offer versus serve policy for all grade levels
- Enact longer lunch and lunch after recess
- Conduct a food waste audit
- Incorporate food waste reduction lessons into curricula
- Create share tables
- Donate surplus food
- Set up a pop-up pantry



Launch a National Food Waste Education & Awareness Campaign

*Consumers and consumer-facing businesses waste **52 million tons** of food each year, roughly **80%** of wasted food. **43%** of food waste occurs in consumer households*

A national education campaign could:

- Illustrate how much food goes to waste in households and across the country
- Highlight methods for preserving and storing foods
- Clarify the meaning of date labels
- Provide consumers with tips to identify whether food is still safe and edible
- Teach consumers how to compost food scraps





Top Food Recovery Solutions for the 2018 Farm Bill

1. Strengthen the Bill Emerson Good Samaritan Food Donation Act
2. Provide grants for infrastructure investments to food recovery organizations
3. Provide financial support to innovative food recovery models

Strengthen the Bill Emerson Good Samaritan Food Donation Act

50% of food manufacturers and 25% of retailers and wholesalers cite liability concerns as one of the main barriers to food donation

The Bill Emerson Good Samaritan Act offers federal liability protection to food donors and nonprofits (except for in cases of gross negligence and/or intentional misconduct)

Criteria:

1. Qualifying Food: meets “all quality and labeling standards imposed by Federal, State, and local laws and regulations”
2. Good Faith
3. Donation Recipient: Needy Individuals
4. No Charge for Food



Strengthen the Bill Emerson Good Samaritan Food Donation Act

Recommendations:

- Congress should delegate to a federal agency the authority necessary to oversee and interpret the Act
- Congress should also modify the following provisions in the Act:
 - Protect donations to nonprofits that charge end recipients
 - Broaden protections to cover direct donations to those in need
 - Only require donated food to comply with food safety standards or safety-related labeling standards
 - Explicitly allow donation of past-date foods



Provide Grants to Support Infrastructure Investments for Food Recovery Organizations

Processing, and transporting food for donation can make it financially difficult for food producers and vendors to donate surplus food.

- Example of food donation expenses:
 - Vehicle/refrigerated vehicle
 - Fuel
 - Vehicle Maintenance
 - Kitchen equipment
 - Storage space
 - Labor (volunteers/staff)



Provide Grants for Innovative Food Recovery

Innovative approaches to food recovery have the potential to enhance food donations and reduce food waste in ways not yet imagined.

According to ReFED's food waste innovator database, there are now more than **400** different organizations around the country working on innovative models to reduce food waste

- Technology: Spoiler Alert in Boston, MA provides a platform to connect food recovery organizations, businesses, and farms
- Processing: La Soupe in Cincinnati, OH uses produce that would go to waste to make and sell healthy meals
- Social supermarkets: Daily Table in Dorchester, MA sells healthy prepared meals produced from surplus food sourced throughout Massachusetts





Top Food Recycling Solutions for the 2018 Farm Bill

1. Provide federal grants to support state and municipal organic waste bans, zero waste goals, and food waste prevention plans
2. Provide grants for the development of composting and anaerobic digestion (AD) infrastructure

Provide Funding for State Organic Waste Bans, Zero Waste Goals, Food Waste Prevention Plans

Over 97% of wasted food ends up in landfills, and food waste is the largest filler of landfills nationwide, and a significant contributor to methane emissions nationally.

Organic waste bans prohibit certain entities that generate specified amounts of food waste from sending waste to landfills.

- 5 states have organic waste bans or waste diversion laws: CT, MA, RI, VT, CA
 - Vermont's Universal Recycling Law lead to a **60%** increase in food donations in 2016
 - Massachusetts' ban has created over **500 jobs in 2 years**, and producing approximately **\$175 million** in economic activity

Many cities and states have also created zero waste goals/ plans.

- Austin, TX's Zero Waste Initiative seeks to reduce the amount of trash sent to the city's landfills by 90% by 2040
- Maryland's 2014 Zero Waste plan includes an objective to reduce the amount of organic products going into the waste stream by encouraging food donation



Provide Grants for Composting and AD Facilities

Composting, anaerobic digestion (AD) and other recycling solutions have the potential to divert 9.5 million tons of food waste from landfills annually.

Cost poses a significant barrier to expanding composting and AD infrastructure.

- A large AD facility that processes 50,000 tons per year costs around \$20 million to build.
- A large composting facility that processes up to 40,000 tons per year costs around \$5-9 million to build, and \$17-28 per ton to operate.





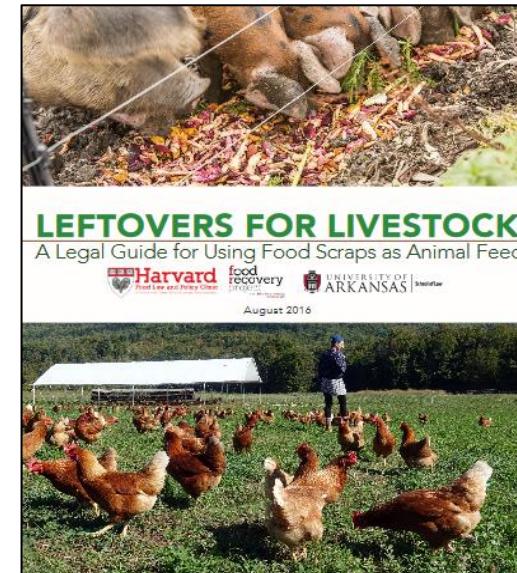
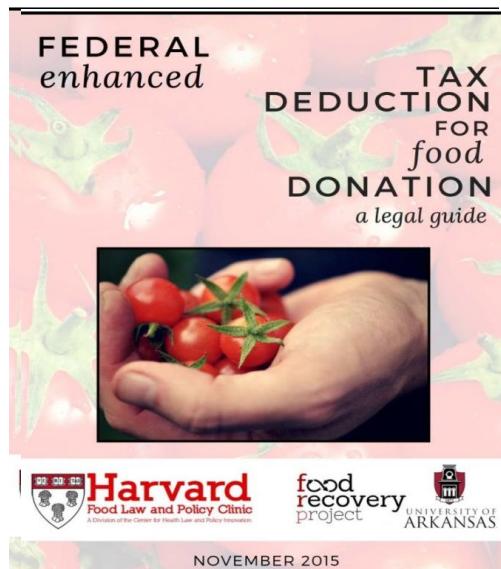
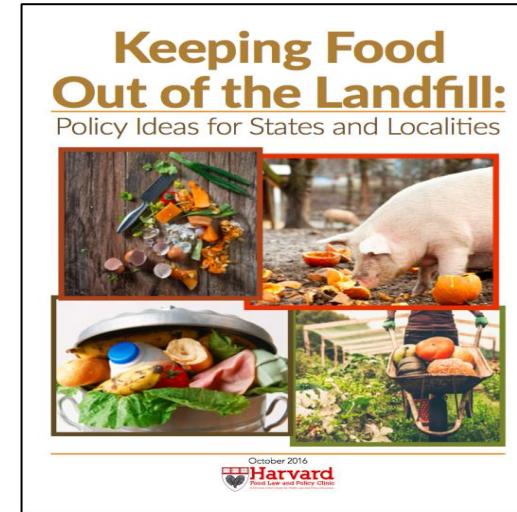
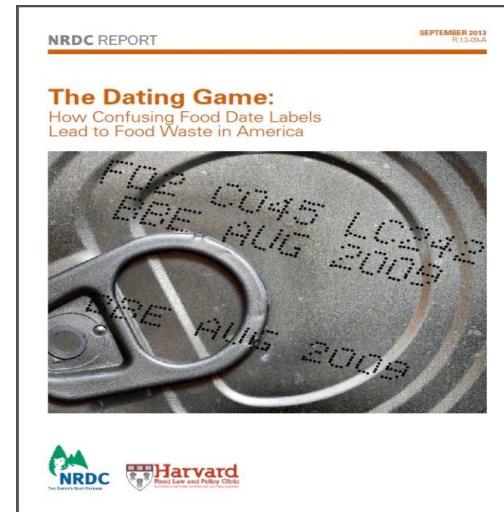
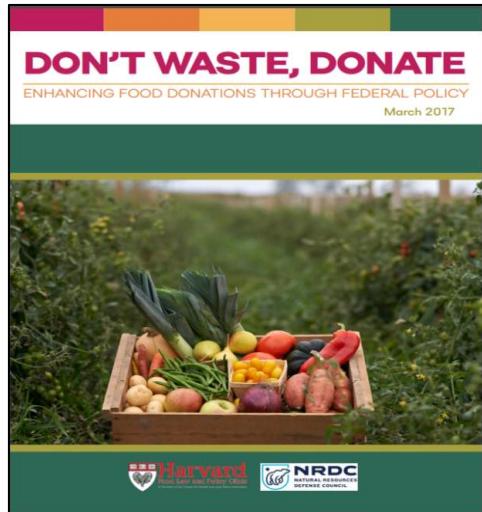
Top Food Waste Reduction Coordination Solution for the 2018 Farm Bill

Create an Office of Food Waste Reduction or a Food Waste Coordinator Position within the USDA

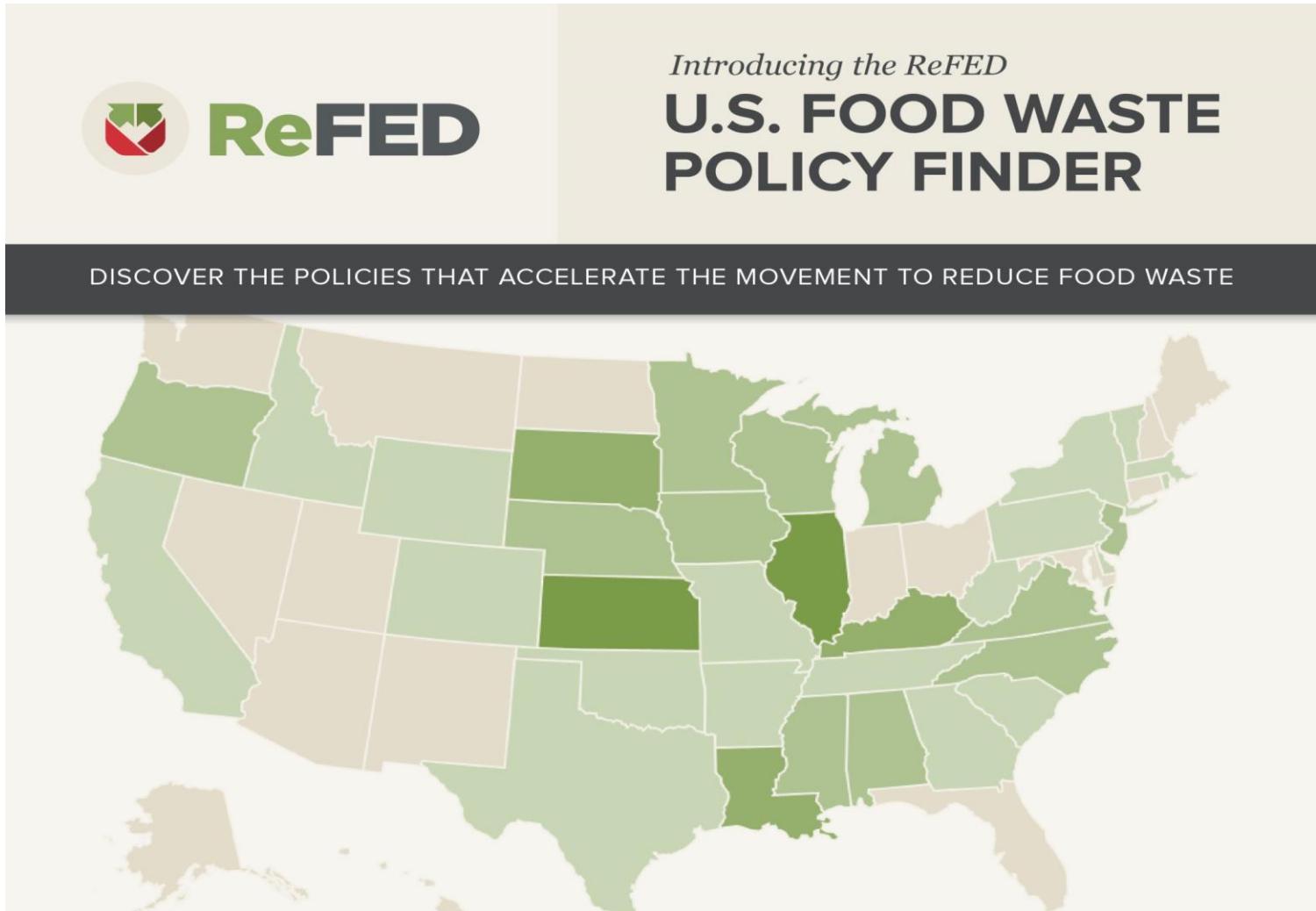
Priority activities for an Office of Food Waste Reduction or a Food Waste Coordinator:

- Identify and eliminate regulations that inadvertently cause waste and harm businesses;
- Provide insight to Congress and other agencies on barriers to food waste reduction in pending laws and regulations;
- Serve as an external liaison to provide information and break down barriers to donation for the food industry; and
- Identify existing programs, such as USDA and EPA grants, that could be expanded to include food waste prevention or food recovery

Resources: http://www.chlpi.org/food_library/



Additional Resource: www.refed.com/policy



Questions ?

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