

REDUCE FOOD WASTE IN YOUR COMMUNITY

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# FOOD WASTE AWARENESS WEEK

EVENT PLANNING GUIDE

# A WORD FROM THE CREATORS

This document is a product of the collaboration of the City of Boulder Climate Initiatives Department, Boulder County Sustainability Office, and the capstone project of two University of Colorado Boulder Masters of the Environment (MENV) students, Sarah Ditton and Skye Fabrizio.

In 2019, the City of Boulder Climate Initiatives team partnered with the MENV students for a yearlong capstone focused on food waste initiatives. The City of Boulder Climate Initiatives Department focus of 2019 was Resources, a subsection of the city's broader climate commitment. The Resource commitment focuses on food surplus and waste along with climate friendly foods, water, the sustainable use of materials, and zero waste.

**City of Boulder Resource Goal:** By 2025, Boulder will be a zero waste community where residents, business owners, employees and visitors reduce the waste they generate and then reuse, recycle and compost at least 85 percent of what they throw away.

We assembled this guide to spread awareness and action around the issues of surplus and wasted food. Through our work, we have learned reducing surplus and wasted food requires a combination of government, corporate, and collective action. We provide resources to make organizing local awareness and action weeks easier. It is important to host events at a local/community scale because engagement is more likely to influence behavior and connect people with the food system when it comes from areas and people they already trust. A national campaign helps consumers understand the magnitude of the problem, but the local campaigns better assist them in making day-to-day changes and connections with their local food system. Together, we can reduce wasted food and improve the condition of our communities and environment for generations to come.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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## WHY FOOD WASTE MATTERS

Research shows that in the United States, we waste 40% of the food we produce. This wasted food represents not only wasted potential, but also wasted water, fertilizer, human effort, greenhouse gas emissions and land. Often, this food is landfilled and breaks down to emit methane, a potent greenhouse gas. There are many better destinations for excess food, including reuse, donation, animal feed, and compost. However, according to EPA measurements, reducing the amount of wasted food in the first place reduces the net greenhouse gas emissions 20 times more than composting the same amount of food<sup>(1)</sup>.

Reducing food waste is necessary for keeping our communities and farms healthy and thriving for future generations.

Food waste and surplus awareness and action weeks are all about getting at the most environmentally impactful intervention - reducing the amount of food that is wasted in the first place. They educate the public so that people both reduce food waste in their lives and support structural change necessary to reduce surplus production. These weeks create community by connecting non-profits, for-profits, the government, and the public.

Finally, they boost your community's status as a food and environmental innovator because food waste and surplus action is still in its early stages.

This document provides the foundations for a successful food waste action week. It covers initial considerations, metrics of success, further educational resources, partnerships, communications, potential events, timelines, and budgeting.

*We encourage you to innovate and tailor these recommendations to your community.*

An example of how communities can tailor recommendations based on their community is for coastal communities to focus on fisheries and farming communities to have a greater focus on gleaning and surplus, etc. Create new partnerships, design new media, invite artists to collaborate, and at all times, have fun.

# RESOURCES

The issues of wasted and surplus food are complex, systemic, and addressed in different ways from the global level to the local and organizational levels. The first step to planning a FAW is to educate yourself on the issue. Here are some websites and reports you can use to learn about wasted and surplus food. Share the information, but also share stories and ask your audience to share their own.

## FACTS ABOUT FOOD WASTE

Wasted: How America is Losing 40 Percent of its Food from Farm to Fork to Landfill  
<https://www.nrdc.org/sites/default/files/wasted-2017-report.pdf>

ReFED: Rethink Food Waste Through Economics and Data  
<https://www.refed.com>

Talking Food Waste Moving the Conversation Forward Highlights - Boulder 2019  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w8m7g0YiaEO>

## BUSINESS ACTION

The Business Case for Reducing Food Loss and Waste  
<https://champions123.org/the-business-case-for-reducing-food-loss-and-waste/>

Food Waste Reduction Alliance  
<https://foodwastealliance.org/>

Whole Earth Calculator (App Store & Android Store)

## REDUCE HOUSEHOLD FOOD WASTE

<https://savethefood.com/>

<http://stopfoodwaste.org/>

<https://ivaluefood.com/resources/>

## GOVERNMENT ACTION

Winning on Reducing Food Waste Federal Interagency Strategy  
<https://www.epa.gov/sustainable-management-food/winning-reducing-food-waste-federal-interagency-strategy>

2017 Oregon Material Recovery and Waste Generation Rates Report  
<https://www.oregon.gov/deq/FilterDocs/2017mrwgrates.pdf>

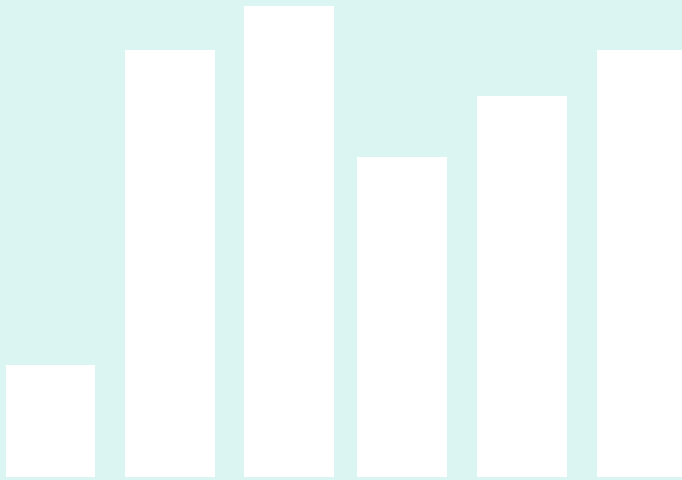
Tackling Food Waste in Cities: A Policy and Program Toolkit  
<https://www.nrdc.org/resources/tackling-food-waste-cities-policy-and-program-toolkit>

Nashville Food Waste Initiative  
<https://urbangreenlab.org/nashville-food-waste-initiative/>

Boulder County Food Waste Awareness Week  
<http://boulder.earth/food-waste>

## HOW TO TALK ABOUT THE FOOD SYSTEM

Framing the Food System  
<http://frameworksinstitute.org/toolkits/foodsystem/docs/tfsmessagememo.pdf>



## BUDGET

The scale of your city's FAWW will likely depend on the budget your city has to operate one. A great FAWW doesn't need to be expensive. However, the bigger scale and the reach of your event, the more likely it is to become expensive. The following *Big Questions* section will help you determine the best scenario (based on scale and reach) that makes sense with your city's budget.

Budget Template Here:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1rdRUo5hUvufga-fMg9FfSTctAeycl-yJ/view?usp=sharing>

## BIG QUESTIONS TO ASK

Planning a large scale event like Food Waste Awareness Week requires answering big questions, like **Who?** **What?** and **Where?** After you have read references from the *Resources* section, use the following charts to determine what impact and reach styles make most sense in your community. Is your community new to looking at issues of food waste? Does your community already have mandated composting? Determine your community's food waste knowledge base to have a more successful week. Understanding these important topics can make sure that money goes further and toward more helpful resources.



# WHO

## Scenario 1: Big Reach, Big Impact

**Select when:** You have a large amount of resources to devote to the week. This could be a main focus of your community's goals. You have a lot of stakeholders who would like to be involved.

Invite everyone, from everywhere! For both speakers and invitees, keep the following groups in mind:

- Farmers
- Schools/Education
- Restaurants
- Grocery stores
- Non-Profits
- Other For-Profits
- People outside of your city limits!
- Connect to national & international movements

## Scenario 2: Small Reach, Big Impact

**Select when:** You have few stakeholders who would like to be involved. You have a significant amount of resources to devote to the topic.

Focus all events within one or two of the following groups:

- Farmers
- Schools/Education
- Restaurants
- Grocery stores
- Non-Profits
- Other For-Profits

## Scenario 3: Big Reach, Small Impact

**Select when:** You have many stakeholders who would like to be involved. Resources are limited.

Have a small event for each within each of these groups:

- Farmers
- Schools/Education
- Restaurants
- Grocery stores
- Non-Profits
- Other For-Profits
- People outside of your city!

## Scenario 4: Small Reach, Small Impact

**Select when:** You have few stakeholders who would like to be involved. Resources are sparse but a small event is possible.

Have a small event with one or two of the following groups:

- Farmers
- Schools/Education
- Restaurants
- Grocery stores
- Non-Profits
- Other For-Profits

# WHAT

## Scenario 1: Big Reach, Big Impact

Organize a keynote event or symposium featuring experts across the food system.

Work with the school district to have volunteer/action opportunities and food waste themed school assemblies & lesson plans for the week.

Advertise related events and volunteer opportunities already happening at non-profits and for-profits around the community.

Work with cities (near and far) to coordinate events. A smaller town may not have a huge budget to put into a FAWW, but they may have the capacity to host a panel or be home to many interested farmers, restaurants, etc. Working within a county level could work well because of increased resources that can be dedicated to the topic.

## Scenario 2: Small Reach, Big Impact

Focus on 1-2 industries only. Set-up as many events as you can within that industry.

Host panels that feature farmers, non-profits, grocery stores, restaurants, and more.

Find farmers to host farm tours.  
Invite restaurants to participate in food waste challenges.

Inspire restaurants to participate in Food Waste Challenge (see *Food Waste Challenge Rules*).

Ask grocery stores to have specific sections for imperfect produce or discounts for food that may otherwise be thrown away.

## Scenario 3: Big Reach, Small Impact

Work with cities (near and far) and coordinate events. A smaller town may not have a huge budget to put into a FAWW, but they may have the capacity to host a small event like a panel. They also may be home to many interested farmers, restaurants, and other stakeholders.

Start with contacting nearby counties and gradually expand as areas commit to events. Expanding to other counties requires coordinating events so that they may be featured & marketed on your city's FAWW calendar/website.

## Scenario 4: Small Reach, Small Impact

Host a panel or similar event for the industry that makes the most sense in your community.

### Examples:

Panel that highlights non-profits dedicated to reducing food waste.

Panel that focuses on the needs and difficulties that farmers face.

Set up a booth at the local farmers market or fair and have conversations about ways consumers can reduce food waste.

# WHERE

## Scenario 1: Big Reach, Big Impact

**County Level:** Look outside of city limits and create events within the county. Providing similar events throughout different areas of the county can allow more people to participate in each event.

**State Level:** Work with the state government to create marketing for a state-wide FFAW. This will require coordination to allow communities adequate time to plan events. Each city will have several events focusing on the industries most applicable to their region.

**Note:** Coordination with other regions to create nationwide momentum is encouraged. Making FFAW a national week is a feasible opportunity. Coordinating with capital cities (or the most populated cities in each state) across the nation is a great way to create a big reach. Providing them with a framework (such as this one) will allow them to create a big impact for their community.

## Scenario 2: Small Reach, Big Impact

Focus primarily on hosting events within your town. Plan these events throughout as many industries that are applicable to your town and host events with expert speakers.

**Examples:**

School District lesson plans  
Farmers Market special marketing  
Church programming

## Scenario 3: Big Reach, Small Impact

Attempt a statewide FFAW and make sure each participating area has at least one event to qualify. Sometimes areas will find it easier to have their FFAW during separate dates than yours. While this may minimize impact during the week, it will still result in more cumulative impact throughout the year.

Focusing on one sector throughout the state could also be beneficial. For example, focusing solely on restaurants or grocers could lead to a huge reach throughout the state.

## Scenario 4: Small Reach, Small Impact

Host events in your town, church, school district, waste management districts, or neighborhood homeowner's association. Highlight existing initiatives. Choose 1-2 industries to engage and plan small scale events such as a networking night or panel.

# WHEN

The time of year that you choose to host a Food Waste Awareness Week should take into consideration the industry trends and events already happening in your community. If you are in an agricultural area or want to feature farmers, don't schedule FAW during the busy harvest time for farmers. In order for schools to get involved, make sure FAW isn't planned during the busiest parts of the school year (or if out of school, check to see if there are summer school programs that can get involved). If your community hosts other events (Restaurant Week, Harvest Festivals, Spring Festivals, etc.), make sure to stagger FAW or coordinate and integrate food waste awareness as a theme to allow for the most interest from the community. Instead of coordinating a whole week, it may be more feasible to host a Food Waste Awareness weekend, as an addition to another event.

Once you have determined a good week to host FAW, use the Timeline on the next page as a guide to planning out the event. Depending on the size/population of your city and the number of employees you have working on planning, it make make sense to modify this timeline. The following timeline is based on 2 employees, working around 1000 total hours (500 each) for a town with a population of 100,000. We suggest using this timeline for towns with populations of less than 500,000.





MONTHS OUT

# TIMELINE

## ACTIONS

- 10 Look at successes and failures of previous FVAW. Listen to feedback from speakers and people involved in programming. Make improvements.
- 9 Pay close attention to industry trends and new players & ideas in food, sustainability, and waste management. Stay on top of new information (see *Resources* section). Every FVAW should be slightly different based on improvements (or failures) in the system.
- 8 Continue previous activities - write down a short list of people/companies who MUST be involved (based on *Big Questions* section).
- 7 Design a Save the Date & graphic w/ date of the week (Facebook event/ IG post). Disseminate widely. Draft list of 5-10 people from each sector (from in & out of community) to lead events/teaching opportunities.
- 6 Make contact with all potential partners. Be able to give: summary of week, goals, ways & reasons to partner (educational events, social media, marketing, excess food meals, increasing awareness). Reach out again in a few weeks to follow-up.
- 5 Draft list of potential events. Contact out-of-town speakers for events. Alert restaurants of Food Waste Challenge rules and allow them to begin brainstorming.
- 4 Reserve venues for events. Continue to follow-up with speakers and partners.
- 3 Release first marketing wave for all events. Directly reach out to organizations and people to invite (Examples: Food-1-1, Local Food Policy Council, University Food Systems Groups, University Environmental Centers). Update website. Secure spot at table/booth community events. Pay for all venues. Confirm participating restaurants.
- 2 Order all print materials, giveaways, and prizes. Release calendar of events. Secure volunteers for event.
- 1 Confirm catering for events. Monitor RSVPs and market necessary events. Reconfirm w/ speakers and venues. Ask restaurants for menu items and pictures.
- 0 Set up gift bags/giveaways. Table/booths at different events (sports, holiday, farmers markets, etc.) Enjoy the week!
- 1 Listen to feedback. Write down successes and failures. Note attendance and most popular events. What type and style were these events? Times/days of week? Etc.

NOTES:

# BENCHMARKS

A successful week will educate, motivate, and drive action. However, every community has different starting points and priorities. Identifying your priorities and goals at the beginning of the planning stage will allow you to focus and lead you to greater success. Set detailed, realistic, numeric benchmarks.

## **Educate and Motivate**

- Number of interactions on social media posts (reacts, reposts, comments)
- Number of event attendees
- Number of events and educational materials distributed
- Amount of press about issue
- Number of people signed up for an email list

## **Create Community Partnerships**

- Number of partners created
- Number of events put on by partners
- Number of new relationships created through event

## **Inspire Collective Action**

- Number of signatures on a petition
- Number of people signed up for email looking for further action
- Number of people partaking in collective action activities

## **Pre- and post- event survey to determine:**

- Number of people that heard about the event
- Know more about wasted and surplus food
- Are partaking in action steps to reduce wasted and surplus food

## **Survey to partners to determine:**

- Whether they are willing to continue collaborating after the week
- What their priorities are relating to wasted and surplus food
- Recommendations for the next iteration of the week





# MEDIA & FRAMING

Media and communications are some of the most important parts of a successful Food Waste Awareness Week. The outcome of the week depends on people's awareness and eventual engagement in the events of the events, engagement opportunities and educational materials you produce. Advertising prior to the week is necessary to ensure people start thinking about wasted and surplus food and make time in their schedules to attend your events. To get the word out, reach out to your local media early in the planning process. Once the week has begins, increase your outreach efforts so that your event is on the forefront of the community's mind.

### LOCAL MEDIA TO WORK WITH

- Newspapers
- Radio Stations
- Local Podcasts
- Local Social Media Influencers
- Submit a Press Release to Local Media Outlets
- Community Boards/Calendars
- Information to Include
  - A hook - why the community should care
  - Events during the week
  - Contact information for interviews

### PRINT MEDIA TO CONSIDER

- Banners
- T-Shirts
- Reusable Bags
- Posters
- Bookmarks
- Flyers
- Magnets

### PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

Nothing gets people more excited than competitions and free stuff. Social media competitions, free giveaways, interesting events, and straight forward calls to action are all great ways to get those that wouldn't usually think about food waste to start a conversation and potentially act.

- Giveaways and Prizes related to food, such as vegetable saver bags, metal straws, and cooking lessons
- Provide Action Items for the public
  - Petition
  - A letter to send to a local business or representative
  - A rally
  - A community food sharing group to join
  - Food waste solutions to bring to their place of work

### SOCIAL MEDIA

- Mix both educational and entertaining materials
- Images and short videos are the most successful
- Create content that can be adapted by viewers so that they amplify the message
  - Memes
  - Comedy
  - Challenges
  - Storytelling
  - Highlight the work of local people and organizations
- Partner with other local organizations to amplify the message - share what they put out and ask them to share your materials. See the *Partnership* section for more information.
  - Engage with communications divisions of local school districts, hospitals and health services

# TALKING ABOUT FOOD WASTE

## CONNECT YOUR COMMUNITY'S VALUES TO FOOD

Common values include legacy and protection

- Legacy - Leaving the world a better place for your children - by working together to reduce wasted and surplus food agricultural lands will be able to provide for our children much further into the future.
- Protection - Making the world a better place for everyone now - by working together to reduce wasted and surplus food the air will be cleaner, the economy will be more efficient, farmers will have a stronger business and we will all rise up.
- Determine your communities other values - Responsibility, Fairness, Freedom, Safety, Community and more. Connect them to the issue of food surplus and waste.

## EMPHASIZE YOUR COMMUNITY'S RELATIONSHIP TO FOOD

- Are you a foodie town?
- Are you known for your craft breweries?
- Are farmers a major part of your community identity?
- Find out how food connects to your community's pride and emphasize that relationship.
- Show how food waste is a problem in relation to your community's identity

## IMPORTANCE OF VALUES ACTIVATION

Connecting your community's relationship with food with its values grabs people's attention and provides them common ground to communicate and act.

When the values you communicate resonate with people they will feel greater emotional connection to the issue and week





# PARTNERSHIPS

# PARTNERSHIPS

Good partnerships increase the reach and number of events and media attention. Partners can help plan the week, create events, design and share communications, and provide personnel and funding. You can partner with schools, governments, non-profits, restaurants, grocery stores, communities, and more. Each of these groups has different communication methods, strengths, weaknesses, and resources. Determine the partners that might be most interested in working with you on the week. Communicate the value of the week to these organizations, groups, and people.

When looking for partners in your community, determine organizations, groups, and people that:

- Have worked on wasted and surplus food in your community
- Have a greater than average interaction with or knowledge of wasted and surplus food
- Could gain publicity through working on wasted and surplus food
- Are looking to expand into addressing wasted and surplus food

## Examples of Valuable Partners

- Food Recovery Facilitators
- Commercial Composters
- Local Agriculture Programs
- Farmers
- Open Space Officials
- Sustainability Programs and Groups
- Local Restaurants
- Local Food Retailers
- Cleaning Organizations
- Event Spaces and Hotels



# GOVERNMENT

Government partners, such as municipality and county environment, sustainability, waste management, climate, and public health departments are highly connected to food, environment, zero waste, and agricultural experts that can provide support for your week's events and communications. They can also connect you with other partners. Depending on their commitment to wasted and surplus food, these departments might be able to contribute personnel time and funding.

## COMMUNICATION

- Contact early in the planning process, as it might take some time to find the people working on related environmental, food, or public health projects
- If willing, include in the planning process
- Consider working with already existing bodies such as a resource conservation committee, a food policy group, or other food, environment, and waste bodies motivated to position the governmental body as a leader on food waste.

## STRENGTHS

- Familiar with making partnerships
- Motivated to include all stakeholders
- Connected to many parts of the community - can recommend for vendors and event spaces
- May have money to support or provide foundational sponsorship

## CONSIDERATIONS

- Work with your government partners to recruit their other partners to contribute to the week
- Determine if the government partner can contribute event funding
- Often willing to be part of events (ie panelists or labeling), especially when that event will inform the public about their work
- Working with government opens possibility of events investigating possible policy interventions



# NON-PROFITS

Non-profit partners often offer strong relationships with the community and a strong dedication to their causes. However, non-profits, especially small local ones, do not have large amounts of manpower and funding to spare for working on a weeklong event. Thus, it is critical to collaborate in ways that are likely to support or amplify their work

## COMMUNICATION

- Communicate with non-profits throughout the planning process.
- They will want to be consistently updated, but might be able to contribute large amounts of their time to the planning process.
- Endeavor to give non-profit partner discrete tasks or events to lead.

## STRENGTHS

- Strong connection with and goodwill from the community
- Relationships with passionate community-members potentially willing to provide assistance during the week
- Often willing to share media about the week through their channels
- May be positioned on the front lines of food waste, anti-hunger, and sustainability work in the community and have a major stake in your week's goals

## CONSIDERATIONS

- Suggest doing events in conjunction with you or other partners so they can participate without diverting too many resources from their other work
- Many are willing to be part of events (ie panelists or labeling), especially when that event will inform the public about their work
- If the non-profits are doing work related to wasted and surplus food, this week can be a great way to spread the word about their efforts
- Host food waste action days or volunteer events that build capacity for partner non-profits



# RESTAURANTS & CATERING

Does your community have a “foodie” scene? Does it have well-known or politically active chefs? Your food waste action week can provide a unique avenue for restaurant partners to showcase their creativity and get both restaurant chefs and patrons excited about how delicious “food waste” can taste.

## COMMUNICATION

- Give restaurants several months notice of the week
- Set aside ample time to contact & recontact restaurants.
- Use direct, concise language - restaurants are busy!

## STRENGTHS

- They use food to interact with many people from the community every day
- Communicate with people that might not hear about the week otherwise
- Chefs are both creative and tend to dislike wasted food. They can be great advocates for the week
- Positioned to make the issue tangible and sensory

## CONSIDERATIONS

- If your community has a restaurant week, work to time the week so that it’s either integrated with the restaurant week or a couple months distant from it
  - Working with a restaurant week provides a pre-made structure for the challenge, but decreases possible focus on food waste
  - Distancing the challenge from a restaurant week takes more effort to reach out to restaurants but keeps the focus on food waste
- Consider a wasted food competition where restaurants compete to create the most creative and tasty dish out of foods they do not usually use (broccoli stems, cauliflower leaves, carrot skins, etc).
- Provide a sheet about the week to the restaurant with common methods restaurants use to reduce their wasted and surplus food (measurement, incentives, recipes, resources)



# FOR-PROFITS

Most food-based for-profits such as grocery stores and local food brands are already working to reduce their food waste in order to increase profits. As awareness of wasted and surplus food spreads, for-profits are using food waste reduction as a method to impress customers. These organizations will be great partners and sponsors for events and media.

## COMMUNICATION

- Notify months in advance
- Form a partnership where events, marketing, and social media are shared
- Very busy and difficult to get ahold of. Recommend finding the contact of their sustainability person if they have one. May need to contact a corporate representative to engage with national chains.

## STRENGTHS

- Funding for media and events
- Communicate with people that might not hear about the week otherwise
- Grocery stores - Use food to interact with many people from the community every day
- Grocery stores - Can highlight their best practices

## CONSIDERATIONS

- Encourage to host their own events or contribute personnel and funding to other events
- Request gift cards, coupons, items, or experiences for social media and event giveaways
- Advertise the week through newsletters and websites
- Encourage to launch new story or enterprise-wide waste reducing initiatives, such as an ugly food stand, during the week



# FARMERS

Farmers are the beginning of the food supply chain and they have a deep connection to land and place. If your community has local farmers, engaging farmers in the conversation and helping consumers connect to farmers is an important way to close the disconnect between the two groups. Furthermore, food waste and surplus is an issue that impacts farmers of all types and can be a consensus building sustainability issues that spurs conversation between farmers of different production practices.

## COMMUNICATION

- If you want farmers to be active participants, ensure that FFAW is not planned for the busiest times of the year
- Can be difficult to contact. Set aside ample time to recontact restaurants.
- Farmers are very busy and will want communications that are direct & concise
- Ensure that the farmers feel heard and follow through on your commitments
- Provide incentives to participate (gift cards? Dinner?)

## STRENGTHS

- Knowledge of the land and food production
- Have many thoughts and ideas about the food system that are interesting to community members
- Care deeply about the food they grow and dislike wasting food
- Can help illuminate the drivers and impacts of surplus

## CONSIDERATIONS

- Include different types of farmers (small organic, large conventional, animal, produce, etc.)
- Help close the disconnect between consumers the farm - work with farmer partners to offer tours
- Many are willing to be part of events (ex. panelists or labeling), especially when the event informs the public about their work



# IDEAS TO CONSIDER

**Below is a list of potential events and ideas for your FAWW.**

- For-profits donating a percentage of proceeds on a food during the week to food surplus and waste reduction non-profits
- Tabling - Representing the week and the issue at a booth. Potential tabling locations include local events and farmers markets
- Food waste action days or volunteer events with non-profits or community groups to increase their reach and capacity
- Disco soup event - community meal made out of to-be-wasted foods
- Host a film screening to help educate the public
- Panel discussion - local actors and what they are doing to reduce wasted and surplus food
- Guest Speaker - local from the community or expert from outside of your town
- Meet and greet with local chefs to learn the challenges in the industry
- Call for artists with art display - inspire a new group of people to think about food waste
- Community workshop teaching the community skills and specific issues. Potential workshops include:
  - Household food waste reduction methods
  - How to support local agriculture
- Tours of local food surplus and waste reduction related facilities. Potential sights include food banks and farms
- Community service day - one-time volunteer events with non-profits or farmers
- Open-Mic Night at a coffee shop where people can share their thoughts through poetry or prose
- Restaurant food waste dish event or challenge such as RescueDish (<https://www.rescuedish.org/>)
- Work with schools and teachers to create and share food waste lesson plans
- An email signup for a household food waste challenge (ex. Measure and report household food waste for 2 weeks. Implement strategies and measure and report the second two weeks) with prizes.
- Sector networking event - Sector professionals come together to network, share food waste reduction practices and listen to short presentations from speakers. Potential sectors include food retail, agriculture, restaurants and catering



# SAMPLE WEEK

The following is the schedule for Boulder's Food Waste Awareness Week (see Boulder.Earth/food-waste). The week followed Scenario 2: small reach, big impact. Most of the events, partners, and outreach campaign focused on the City of Boulder.

## **WEEKLONG EVENTS:**

- Restaurant Food Waste Challenge - See Food Waste Challenge Rules Template
- Sharing and teaching of food waste lesson plans in k-12 schools - Engaged with in-place environmentally active student groups to provide food waste lesson plans to local teachers
- Social media posts based on the daily themes - Themes were based on important aspects relating to food surplus and waste that taken together gave a systemic overview of the issue

### **MONDAY** *THEME: NON-PROFITS AND PARTNERS*

Event: Non-Profit Panel - Values and Insights on the Local Fight Against Food Waste - Representatives from four local food waste non-profits spanning gleaning, event planning, composting, and food redistribution discussed the values that drive them

### **TUESDAY** *THEME: TIPS AND TRICKS*

Event: Encourage public to go to Food Waste Challenge restaurants

### **WEDNESDAY** *THEME: FARMERS AND AGRICULTURE*

Event: Farmer Roundtable on Values and Food - three local farmers took part in moderated questions and audience questions at a venue nearby the Boulder Farmers Market

### **THURSDAY** *THEME: EDUCATION*

Event: Encourage use of lesson plans distributed to local teachers

Event: Tour of local food bank - Local food bank showed attendees around its facilities and answered questions

### **FRIDAY** *THEME: SURPLUS AND OVERPRODUCTION*

Keynote Event: Talking Food Waste: Moving the Conversation Forward - four national wasted and surplus food experts presented on different opportunities and issues in the space. A moderated discussion and question and answer followed.

### **SATURDAY** *THEME: CONSUMERS AND PROCUREMENT*

Event: Tabling at a local art festival - Talked about wasted and surplus food to passerbies, handed out free bags that encouraged compost and free refrigerator magnets with tips on how to reduce household food waste

Event: Food bank Farm to Fork dinner - Local food bank hosted a fundraising farm to fork dinner that educated people on activities of the food bank including food waste reduction and redistribution initiatives.

### **SUNDAY** *THEME: RESTAURANTS*

Event: Tabling at local art festival - See above



# TEMPLATES

# PARTNER INVITATION

**Date**

**Name**

**Title**

**Organization**

**Address 1**

**Address 2**

Dear **Name**,

On behalf of **Host Organization Name** I would like to invite you to serve as a member of the organizing committee for the upcoming **Name of Event** event.

**Name of Event** is designed to increase awareness of wasted and surplus food and inspire individuals, communities, and organizations to take action on the issue. **Name of Event** events and media will engage the community, provide inspirational ways to act and get involved, and connect community stakeholders. Our community is deeply connected to food and we appreciate how you empower that connection.

As an organizing committee member, you will be recognized along with other individuals and organizations that contribute time, money, organization, media, or events to **Name of Event**. You will be highlighted as a contributing member and partner on event communications and your actions and events will be shared widely by other partners.

We appreciate your consideration and hope you will join the host committee for this event. Please let me know if you have any questions or need additional information. Thank you for your time.

**Best,**

**Name**

**Title**

# SAVE THE DATE: FULL WEEK

SAVE THE DATE

**Name of Event  
is Dates of Event**

FOOD IS OUR COMMON GROUND,  
A UNIVERSAL EXPERIENCE  
- JAMES BEARD

## **Events and Activities:**

Event/Activity + Date

Event/Activity + Date

Event/Activity + Date

Event/Activity + Date

Event/Activity + Date

Event/Activity + Date

LEARN MORE AT **ORGANIZATION WEBSITE**

# SAVE THE DATE: SPECIFIC EVENT

SAVE THE DATE

**Name of Specific Event**  
**part of Name of Full Event**

DATE

TIME

NAME OF VENUE

ADDRESS

**Featuring:**

Speakers/Hosts/Movie/Media

Light refreshments will be served

To RSVP, email **Contact Email Address** or  
go to this **Link**

LEARN MORE AT **ORGANIZATION WEBSITE**

# EVENT RECRUITMENT

**Date**

**Name**

**Title**

**Organization**

**Address 1**

**Address 2**

Dear **Name**,

On behalf of **Host Organization Name** I would like to invite you to be a **[speaker / panelist / organizational representative]** at the upcoming **Name of Specific Event**, taking place in **City of Event** on **Date of Event**. This event provides you a venue to share your experience and expertise with **City of Event Audience of Event**.

**Name of Week Event** is designed to increase awareness of wasted and surplus food and inspire individuals, communities, and organizations to take action on the issue. **Name of Week Event** events and media will engage the community, provide inspirational ways to act and get involved, and connect community stakeholders. Our community is deeply connected to food and we appreciate how you empower that connection.

**[Insert details and timeframe of the specific event]**

**[Insert details about what you are able to provide to the speaker - travel expenses, housing, free dinner, etc]**

Thank you for your time and consideration and hope you will participate as a **[speaker / panelist / organizational representative]** at this event. Please let me know if you have any questions or need additional information.

**Best,**

**Name**

**Title**

# FOOD WASTE CHALLENGE RULES

The following rules can be modified based on how you would like restaurants to be able to participate. Keep in mind, the more rules in place, the less likely restaurants are to participate.

We are asking restaurants to create or highlight an existing dish (or create a brand new dish) that uses a large portion of food that would have otherwise been thrown away (ex: broccoli stem soup, caesar salad with croutons from yesterday's bread, or asking farmers/providers for their "ugly" produce, etc.).

Our goal is to market the dishes in a way that highlights each chef's/restaurant's creativity in the dish - not necessarily the fact that the food would have originally been thrown away. For example, maybe the dish appears on a "Specials" menu and in small print underneath it says "In Honor of Food Waste Awareness Week".

Adapt the following rules:

Dishes must contain at least **blank** item(s) that would have otherwise been thrown away.

Dishes must be **blank** percent composed of food that would have been wasted.

Sauces, stock/broth, garnishes **[do / do not]** count as an ingredient.

Qualifying dishes can be **[appetizers / salads / entrees / desserts]**

Winners of the challenge will be based on **[one food critic/ cumulative yelp reviews / specific voting page held by city / etc]**

Winners will receive a **[gift card / free advertisements / trophy]**



# CONCLUSION

We are striving to reduce wasted and surplus food in order to preserve our lands, keep our air clean, reduce our impact on the climate, and create a more equitable and resilient food system. It will take much effort, collaboration, and action on many levels, but it is worth it to maintain thriving communities and ecosystems for generations to come.

Awareness and action around wasted and surplus food, spur on this vision of thriving communities and a healthy planet. Organizing a weeklong event or even a single event can be intimidating, especially if you haven't done it before. We hope this guide provides you with a framework to build a successful community-based event that will spread awareness and action around reducing surplus and wasted food.

**Sarah Ditton & Skye Fabrizio**

