Overview of Tennessee’s Food Waste Reduction Efforts

Presented By Matt Taylor

ISSE Research Conference – September 15, 2022
Content Today

1. Background
2. Get Food Smart TN
3. Program Wins
4. Food Waste Awareness Week
Office of Sustainable Practices Programs

State Government and Institution Team
- Tennessee Higher Education Initiative
- Sustainable State Government
- Tennessee Environmental Education Initiative
- Tennessee Radon Program
- Unwanted Household Pharmaceutical Program
- Tire Environmental Act Program

Business Team
- Get Food Smart TN
- Governor’s Environmental Stewardship Awards
- Tennessee Green Star Partnership
- Tennessee Materials Marketplace
- Clean Tennessee Energy Grants
- Tennessee Sustainable Spirits
TDEC's History Pertaining to Food Waste

- 2025 Solid Waste and Materials Management Plan
  - 2016 - 5 composting grants ($2.5 million)
  - 2017 Organics Management Grant ($3.8 million)
- Stakeholder Meeting - October 6, 2016
  - Recommendations
  - TDEC Policy Paper: Southeastern State Efforts to Address Wasted Food and Food Waste Upstream of Composting
- Development of Recognition Program
Get Food Smart TN

Formally launched in April 2018

- Education and outreach
- Recognition
- Technical assistance

Outside of these functions, staff working in the food waste space are also working to advance capacity of the state to address food waste, through legislation, partnerships, and granting programs.
Education and Outreach

**W E B S I T E**
The Get Food Smart TN website houses tips and resources for consumers, businesses, and organizations, a news portal, and additional information on food waste assistance.

**R E S O U R C E S**
Including:
- Food Waste Posters and brochures
- Meal Planning Notepad
- Infographics on various food sustainability topics

**W E B I N A R S**
Our focus for webinars is to educate and provide assistance to industry leaders.

**E V E N T S**
Participate in events hosted by other organizations.

Food waste and sustainability events hosted by our office.
Recognition Program

- Organization must satisfy at least 5 of up to 30 criteria under their category.
- The four categories are:
  - Schools
  - Restaurants
  - Government Entities and Non-Profit Organizations
  - Grocers, Industry, and Agriculture
- Access to a peer network of organizations with a common interest in reducing food waste and the opportunity to share best practices
- Currently 191 Participants
Technical Assistance

- Our technical assistance offerings are made to assist entities with food waste reduction strategies and technologies.
- Open to any sector, and at any level, whether there are initiatives in place that need improvement or if they are starting from scratch.
- Workshops and events:
  - January 2019
  - Memphis
  - Chattanooga
Program Wins

• Passed Bill expanding Food Donor Liability Protections in Tennessee. Future possible work on:
  • Food Donation Tax Incentive
  • Animal Feed Regulations

• Received funding from EPA for a project with The Society of St. Andrew, Row by Row

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SYH3goJj7bk

• Funded food waste drop-off pilot at Knoxville Convenience Center

• Hosted a successful inaugural Food Waste Awareness Week
Tennessee's Inaugural Food Waste Awareness Week
This was a week full of virtual engagement and educational opportunities, state-wide food drives, and regional events featuring food waste awareness activities such as locally-made upcycled bread beer, live food waste cooking demos, and local resources and representatives.

- Daily Themes
- Videos featuring best practices of businesses and organizations, with a call to action
- Food Hero Photo Challenges
- Food Waste Memes
- Statewide Food Drive
- Saturday events at local breweries
Food Waste Memes
Bread to Tap Events
People reached via education and outreach efforts: 617,000

Pounds of food donated during the week for the Statewide Food drive: 12,065

Pounds of bread rescued and used in a specialty bread beer: 46

Tennesseans attended Bread to Tap events: 600

Food Waste Awareness Week Engagement
Questions?

Find more information on our website

getfoodsmarttn.com