



Civil Society Input to a Renewed Food Policy for Canada

Discussion results Food Loss and Waste

On May 9th, 2023, Food Secure Canada (FSC) held an open consultation on the future of food policy in Canada. [Watch the plenary recording and explore results from all discussion groups here.](#)

To provide context for the discussion group on *Food Loss and Waste (2019 - 2023)*, FSC prepared a [backgrounder](#) summarizing current federal Food Policy language, instruments, and financing.

Principles and Approach

- Food waste diversion should never be conflated with, or presented as a solution to, food insecurity.
- Corporate food producers and distributors should bear the responsibility for overall reduction of their food loss and waste, and for financing and managing food diversion programs.
- Diverted food should be made available for all eaters, rather than primarily relying on it as a way to provide food to charities and perpetuate the institutionalization of food banks.
- Income-based solutions are the appropriate pathway to tackling food insecurity. Food is a right, and food access should be viewed as a matter of healthcare and a public good.
- Emphasize the importance of local knowledge and community involvement.
- Support short supply chains and local food systems that reduce food loss and waste.

Reflection on the Current Food Impact Challenge

- Acknowledge that tiny start-ups that have yet to attract significant funding often have the most brilliant and innovative ideas, while larger companies are more conservative. Provide support and eligibility to enterprises across the board.

Recommendations to Government for 2023 Food Policy for Canada

The recommendations below align with and help advance Canada’s Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) commitment, particularly *Goal 12: Responsible Consumption and Production*, as they address food waste and loss in a sustainable and equitable manner.

Specifically, these recommendations provide valuable guidance to Canada in achieving Target 12.3 of Goal 12, which states: “By 2030, halve per capita global food waste at the retail and consumer levels and reduce food losses along production and supply chains, including post-harvest losses”.



Food Donation and Diversion

- Consider implementing a legislated, incentivized food waste reduction and donation program that aligns with the principles outlined above. Learn from experiences of other jurisdictions such as France and California, mentioned as examples below.
- Introduce financial incentives, such as tax rebates, for businesses that take on waste diversion and establish systems to simplify the process, relieving the burden off charities.
- Allocate infrastructure funding to support food waste commercial and community kitchens to process diverted food while providing local jobs and supporting the local circular economy.
- Recognize that labor costs constitute the largest expense in food up-cycling and incentivize job creation by businesses and the social economy that produces food products for all eaters.

Organic Waste Management

- Acknowledge that organic waste management is complex and expensive, even for companies and other entities that want to do the right thing. Explore cost-shared avenues forward in partnership

with municipalities, provinces and territories, businesses, and other stakeholders:

- Increase the responsibility of businesses to fund waste management and pick-up;
- Increase the eligibility of small businesses to join municipal waste management programs;
- Regulate the cost of waste haulage by companies taking advantage of small businesses;
- Implement regulations, enforce compliance, and expand composting facilities to divert organic matter from landfill, in other words build infrastructure and systems; and
- Overall, reduce cost-to-compost while increasing cost-to-trash.

- Acknowledging that colonial structures and ongoing colonialism have created an even worse situation on Indigenous territories, prioritize recycling and composting facilities to replace landfill, and support Indigenous Food Sovereignty.

Waste Audits

- Widen the scope of mandatory waste audits and ensure compliance.
- Make waste audit data public, including reporting associated greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions.

Knowledge and Education

- Create a centralized knowledge hub focusing on food loss and waste reduction, within a food systems framework that recognizes its intersection with other food policy priorities, including the impact on climate change and meeting Canada's targets.
- Create awareness and momentum for action regarding industrial food waste and loss and its relative impact as the biggest contributor.
- Share best practices for reducing household and consumer food waste, including guidance on "Best Before" dates, food storage, and food literacy generally.

Best Practices/Successful Community Models to Scale or Replicate

<ul style="list-style-type: none">● “Mandatory” food donation programs<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ France - where many lessons have been learned.○ SB 1383 in California, food donation and organic waste management.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Circular Innovation Council in Ontario has good practices for collection.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Ontario Food Collaborative on food literacy and reducing food waste.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Food Rescue Project - Victoria has support from food retailers to rescue food, paid for by provincial and municipal governments but started by Rotary Club.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Not Far From The Tree sharing fruit, (but needs more support for labour and processing)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Lessons to be learned from ECCC as they work towards implementing a Federal plastics registry which intends to harmonize EPR program data and collect data from non-EPR program provinces on the life cycle of plastic materials (how much are produced and captured for reuse, recycle or disposal, and whether those are reprocessed into new plastic products as recycled resins); if there was producer responsibility framework for organics, there is a way to track and monitor with good data and reporting, but requires lots of collaboration
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● The Seed (Guelph)



**FSC
RAD**

Food
Secure
Canada
Réseau
pour une alimentation
durable