

## September 25, 2019 Food Collection & Conversion meeting highlights

Mary Harrington (ECY), facilitator; in attendance: Al Salvi (ECY), Lacy Kooiman (ECY), Dan Corum (City of Tacoma), Kelly Quiroz (St Martin's Univ student), David Hare (P3), Heather Trim (Zero Waste WA), Karen Dawson (Cedar Grove), Rebecca Singer (King County), Austin Gast (CMI Orchards)

**Why we are here:** HB 1114 - to develop a wasted food and food waste reduction recommendations plan that will cover prevention, rescue, and recovery of food to make our systems more efficient, get more edible food to people, and inedible food to beneficial end uses. This group is meeting to discuss barriers and opportunities related to food waste collection and conversion; to come up with solutions that will prevent food waste generation and reduce the potential for hunger relief agencies and compost facilities being overwhelmed with more food.

**Subject Matter Expert Groups:** We have five Subject Matter Expert groups: hunger relief, food businesses, food collection and conversion, food safety, and education and behavior change. Look at these areas through the lens of Prevention, Rescue, and Recovery. Meet bi-monthly to discuss issues, barriers and opportunities.

**Plan Format:** The Core team has chosen a plan format that will facilitate easy understanding of each suggestion, the costs, barriers, opportunities, ease of implementation, and as much as possible, the impact of implementation.

**Meeting process:** Identify barriers and opportunities in the food collection and the food conversion systems. Try to get outside the box when thinking of solutions/opportunities/recommendations.

**Ecology Web Page information:** Ecology launched the food waste reduction planning web page (<https://ecology.wa.gov/Waste-Toxics/Reducing-recycling-waste/Organic-materials/Food-waste-prevention/Food-waste-plan>); we are loading stakeholder information and meeting summaries onto the page as we get them.

### **Options discussion on September 25th:**

- Barriers and opportunities to using anaerobic digestion (AD) as an option for managing food waste or energy and nutrient recovery
  - Free standing, dairy affiliation, wastewater treatment facilities
  - Expensive; PNW low (Hydro) energy costs; transportation routes; food conversion process; systems for methane capture and use; physical contamination (plastics!)
- Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) – may reduce options for beneficial management of food processing waste (land application and animal feed). AD is an option (Austin Gast mentioned the community digester in Fremont, MI: <https://fremontdigester.com/>) – processors working together to support a central digester – community level solution.
  - Need to review the FSMA and WA Food Safety updates to see how the updates may create more food waste by implementing general rules about how long food opened/cut/used in-store may be kept before disposal. Concern over timelines being general not specific to different foods. Keeping food safe to eat while not encouraging needless food waste.
  - Food banks, etc will be impacted by changes to food safety rules. Plan needs to emphasize the importance of “food waste” as a valuable feedstock for other systems,

view “food waste” as a commodity not a useless product (“waste”); establish a “supply chain of waste” – make connections between food waste producers and those who need the feed stock (animal feed, composters, digesters) – creating standards or systems related to the end user.

- Impacts of pesticide and PFAS residuals in food waste coming up in testing – testing will become more stringent.
- Remain aware of patchwork of regulations pertaining to pesticides.
- Many university students are unaware that Universities (and schools in general) have a food waste generation problem and a food waste prevention opportunity.
- From edible food to inedible food waste to food left in fields that need gleaning – need to tie all options together so when someone with anything from edible food to food waste asks “What can I do with my food or my waste?” we have a list of different end users. Educational outreach. “Supplier score cards” so retailers know what they are getting or how the supplier manages all of their material and wastes (like: how does the supplier manage recyclables...)
- Helping farmers when markets shift or collapse – keeping those crops going to people. Improve edible food recovery and delivery to outlets.
- Work on food date labels – make sure “improvements” make sense not more waste.
- Establish a circular investment system – all parts of the system support other parts (farmer saves or earns money by selling or donating food, so makes a contribution to a food bank...)
- Taking full advantage of technology – using food labels to educate and inform retailers and customers and programs for retailers to keep employees informed of progress.
  - Know the technology options that already exist
- Keep end use markets for compost in mind – FSMA impacts, removing contaminants, testing for unwanted pesticides and chemicals; compost certification – who provides, what are requirements, etc
- Keep ghg and climate change mitigation/impacts in mind as we consider recommendations

Due to the logistics of reserving a room and WebEx, I had to keep the next meeting on the originally selected date.

**Next FCC SME (that’s Food Collection and Conversion Subject Matter Expert) meeting is Wednesday, **November 27 from 9:00 – 11:00.****

**ECY HQ meeting room: ROA-36**

**WebEx connection:**

<https://watech.webex.com/watech/j.php?MTID=m2a8d0773d446c344db018aa0b3ca3d5a>

Audio connection: +1-415-655-0001 US Toll Access code: 802 091 224