

WASHINGTON FOOD WASTE REDUCTION PLANNING PROCESS

Food Safety Subject Matter Experts – January Meeting Summary

Participants

- Emily Hovis – Washington State Department of Health
- Al Salvi – Washington Department of Ecology
- Jade Monroe – Washington Department of Ecology
- David Smith – Washington State Department of Agriculture
- Roger Beekman – Washington State Department of Agriculture
- Luisa Castro – Washington State Department of Agriculture
- Erin Hockaday – Benton-Franklin Health District
- Lisa Breen – Spokane Regional Health District
- Brenna Hoppe – Snohomish Health District
- Sammy Berg – Thurston County Public Health
- Christina Sherman – Tacoma Pierce County Health Department
- Season Long – Cowlitz County Health & Human Services
- Liz Fikejjs – Seattle Public Utilities
- Heather Trim – Zero Waste Washington

Meeting Summary

Recommendation Worksheet & Plan Format

- Department of Ecology website will track progress of plan development and invite public comment.
- We hope that SME groups will draft recommendations using the worksheet that will then be reviewed in Feb. – March 2020.
- Email Emily for assistance drafting recommendations.
- Should we consider a good, better, best model for recommended action in the plan? Showed example report available online [here](#).

Standardized Regulation Recommendation Example

- Recommendation to provide funding to local health jurisdictions to provide technical assistance and conduct food safety inspections at hunger relief organizations.
- Discussed history of inspections at hunger relief organizations and how it has changed over the years. Since hunger relief organizations are not required to pay for a health permit, many local health jurisdictions do not have funding to support inspection activities. This is a concern for donor businesses who have concerns about the safe handling of their food donation. Providing funding for inspections should increase the number of food businesses that provide donations to hunger relief organizations.
- Suggestion for hunger relief organizations to pay a tiered nominal fee for a food permit so they are required to work with the local health jurisdiction. This would require a change in the Retail Food Code, WAC 246-215 and would be contrary to the established norm in Washington that hunger relief organizations do not pay for a food permit.

Discuss Other Potential Recommendations

- Mapping hunger relief organizations
 - In conjunction with the standardized regulation recommendation, we suggest a recommendation to map the hunger relief organizations in a manner similar to Kansas mapping of incubator kitchens. Example available online [here](#). We could then have the document available online for use by donors, hungry individuals, etc.
 - This is something that health inspectors could share during inspections when a food establishment expresses interest in food donation.
 - One negative is that it would take a lot of time to generate and maintain the mapping document.
- Increasing refrigerated storage and transportation
 - Suggest a recommendation to provide grant for refrigeration and storage at hunger relief organizations.
 - This was done in Thurston County and the grants made a huge impact.
 - Hunger relief SME is planning on drafting this recommendation.
- Food safety education for consumers
 - There is a need to have a recommendation regarding consumers, since so much food (about 43%) is wasted at home.
 - Suggest education to focus on understanding food labels (best by & use by dates) and storage recommendations (how long is this food good in the refrigerator?).
 - Collaborate with Education & Behavior Change SME
- Value Added Food Processing
 - Suggest a recommendation to encourage development of WSDA licensed co-packer facilities that can work with farmers, food businesses, and hunger relief organizations to produce shelf stable products.
 - We would need to consider a funding mechanism for this.
- Spoilage Prevention Packaging & Packaging Adjustments
 - Suggest a recommendation for packaging that allows food to last longer.
 - Is there a way we can allow for reusable vs. plastic packaging?
 - Need to investigate this idea further.

Standardized Labeling - Update

- HB 2651 was introduced this session to address food waste by standardizing labels communicating the freshness or expiration of food.
- Bill information available online [here](#).

Next Steps:

- Work on drafting recommendations in February to share during the March meeting
- Email Emily for assistance drafting recommendations.
- A SharePoint site has been created for sharing information gathered by SME groups and suggested recommendations. Information about using this site will be sent out soon.

Next Meeting: Thursday, March 19th, from 10:00am – 12:00pm