

BACKGROUND

Much of the attention surrounding food waste is on households. Information regarding food waste was limited in the industrial, commercial, and institutional (ICI) sector which caused challenges in effective data collection. Restaurants, fall into this category, and these establishments have potential to support sustainable development goal – Target 12.3 (SDG12.3), which focuses on halving food waste in retail and consumer levels by 2030. The study attempted to explore barriers or challenges faced by restaurant staff and ultimately provide recommendations for management and governing bodies to support their efforts for food waste recovery.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This paper set out to discover the challenges facing restaurants in reference to food waste management. Additionally, the research aimed to uncover a knowledge gap between restaurants' staff perspective on this issue and its relation to sustainability.

The research questions were:

1. Why is it important for restaurants to consider sustainability as part of their business model and how is it connected to food waste management?
2. What steps are currently in place to help manage food waste in restaurants and what are the barriers to adoption?
3. What are some recommendations or mechanisms that are available to supplement a sustainable strategy targeting food waste in restaurants?



Sustainable Development Goal 12 – Target 12.3
By 2030, halve per capita global food waste at the retail and consumer levels and reduce food losses along production and supply chain, including post-harvest losses (FAO, 2021)



Credit: Purdue Agricultural Communication photo/Tom Campbell

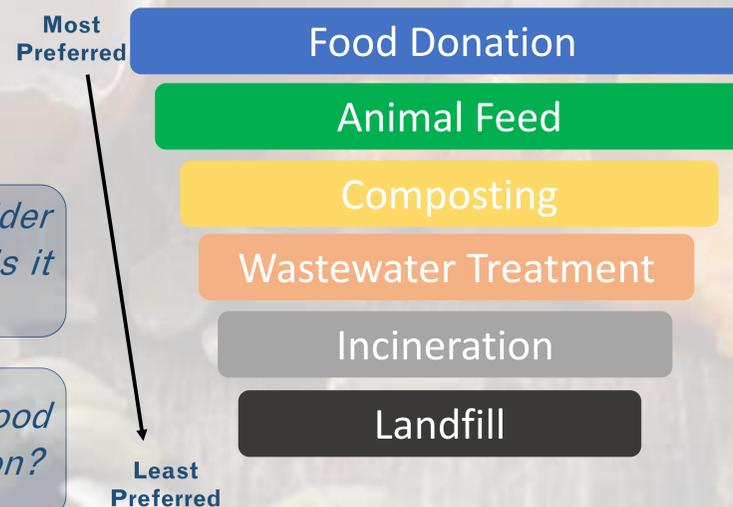


Figure 1. Modified food waste hierarchy showing conventional management options after source reduction has been maximized (Trabold & Nair, 2018)

KEY FINDINGS

- ❑ Strong requirement for restaurants to take on responsibility for **end-of-life management** of their production of food waste
- ❑ **Assigning responsibility** is challenging as high turnover and fast-paced work environment were noted as barriers
- ❑ **Empowering** individuals to weigh their food (buffet-style) had an impact on how much food was wasted
- ❑ **Fluctuating consumer demands** add additional complexity when ordering produce and food items for restaurants
- ❑ Design of the restaurant is a factor and space is needed to place bins collecting food waste – must be convenient for staff and be **integrated into the workflow**
- ❑ Limited resources on food waste and its relation to climate change combined with low levels of policy enforcement – messaging should target consumers but also management should be **trained** on the importance of food waste and options available to divert it from landfill

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS



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