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Food Waste in Our World

Food waste is the loss of an edible item during processing, production, retailing, or consumption. According to Diane Hatz, in 2010 the United States wasted 33.79 million pounds of food. That massive amount of food waste could fill the Empire State building 91 times (endfoodwastenow.org). The wasting of food isn’t just a environmental issue but a social issue as well.

It is common sense that a customer would rather buy a fresh shiny apple opposed to its less vibrant or possibly scuffed counterpart. There are many programs that find ways to use these culinary misfits and give them a new meaning, a decreasing food waste. These programs work on decreasing food waste through alternative uses..

One organization helping the cause is ReFED. ReFED is a organization of businesses, nonprofits, foundations, and government leaders that joined forces to analyze food waste problems and to develop practical solutions to raise awareness about the threat of food waste, (foodtank.com). Another organization is Food Cowboy, which uses technology to help prevent wholesalers and restaurants from producing a surplus of food. Food Cowboy also runs the No Waste Promise Campaign. The No Waste Promise is a campaign that growers, wholesalers, retailers, and others can join to which customers know these companies are doing everything in their power to sustainably ship food and properly recover and dispose of unsalable food, (foodcowboy.com).

The problem of food waste can not be fixed in a matter of days. Practicing mindful routines can help start the change. Some suggestions are to:

* shop smart
* buy only what you need
* when preparing meals, don’t make to big of portions
* properly store food
* avoid clutter in your pantries or freezers

Following these simple suggestions could be small victories in the elimination of food waste.

A big portion of the food waste derives from schools and campuses. Virginia Tech., alone, produced 169,055 pounds of edible food waste (endfoodwastenow.org). Food waste around our world is taking toll on the ecosystem. Food waste is releasing 3.3 billion tons of greenhouse gases into the atmosphere (unep.org). Food waste is the largest component sent to American landfills, containing significant amounts of methane exerting greenhouse gases and causing a rise in carbon dioxide levels, which can lead to the increase of global warming (inquriesjournal.com). Action needs to take place in order to save the planet.

Not only is food waste impacting the atmosphere, it’s impacting the world population. Why would we throw away perfectly edible food when we have people dying of starvation every day? According to Poverty.com, over 21,000 people die everyday due to starvation. This is equivalent to one person dying every four seconds. With everyone practicing mindful routines and alternatives to stop food waste, as a nation, the impact of food waste can be decreased.

<http://mashable.com/2015/02/15/food-waste-tips/#Jx682QgGGqqV>

<http://www.safebee.com/infographics/food/preventing-food-waste-schools>

<http://www.unep.org/newscentre/Default.aspx?DocumentID=2726&ArticleID=9611>