

# Reducing Food Waste in Merced County

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#### Introduction

Food waste is a problem that has serious consequences to the environment, economy and human lives. Billions of pounds of perfectly edible food is wasted around the world. Food that could feed many hundreds of thousands of people. Food waste contributes to the following

- Climate Change
- Social Problems
- Economic Problems

Why Food Waste Programs?

- Implementing food waste programs can help reduce many gigatons of CO<sub>2</sub>.
- According to the USDA in 2010 approximately 133 Billion pounds and \$161 Billion worth of food was wasted.

Bobcat Eats Food Waste Awareness and Prevention Program had saved 900,000 pounds of food as of July 2019. This UC Merced program rescues food from local businesses and donates it to distribution sites.

#### Project Goals

This project aims to increase the number of food donors and distribution sites by aiding in food rescue efforts.

- Reach out to local business
- Rescue food from local business
- Collect data on amount of food rescued
- Why is food wasted?



#### Materials and Methods

Material

- Scale
- Reliable Car
- Gloves
- Containers

In order for food waste programs to be successful food must be handled safely. Food rescuers are required to take a course to earn a ServSafe Certification.

Following guidelines and procedures created by Bobcat Eats to make food rescuing efficient.

#### Results and Outcomes

In aiding Bobcat Eats Food Waste Awareness and Prevention Program with their efforts to reduce food waste in Merced county we learn that businesses are very receptive and support programs that reduce food waste. Business waste food because it is economically, however by implementing food waste programs that take care of coordination, transporting food and distribution businesses are able to reduce food waste without loss of profits.

1. Increase distribution centers. A total of 26 New Distribution Sites
2. Increase amount of food donors: A total of 32 Food Donors



#### Conclusions

The efforts of Bobcat Eats in reducing food waste in Merced County has been successful because of the procedures and guidelines set into place, and the support of the community.

Increasing the number of food donors and distribution was made possible because community support and results. Over 2,103,405 pounds of food has been diverted from landfills since June 1st 2018.



#### Future Goals

A future goal for this project is to continue to divert food from landfills, increasing the number of food donors and increase the number of distribution centers.

Due to COVID19 food rescuing efforts were suspended, therefore a future goal of this project is to create guidelines and find a zero-contact way to handle food.,

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#### Acknowledgements

