

Upstream Food Waste Prevention at Boston College

22,000+ meals per day

Self-operated

14 operations open to public

**250+ FTEs and several
hundred part-time employees**

**14,000 undergrad and grad
students**

All retail, à la carte menu



BC DINING
FEED YOUR MIND.

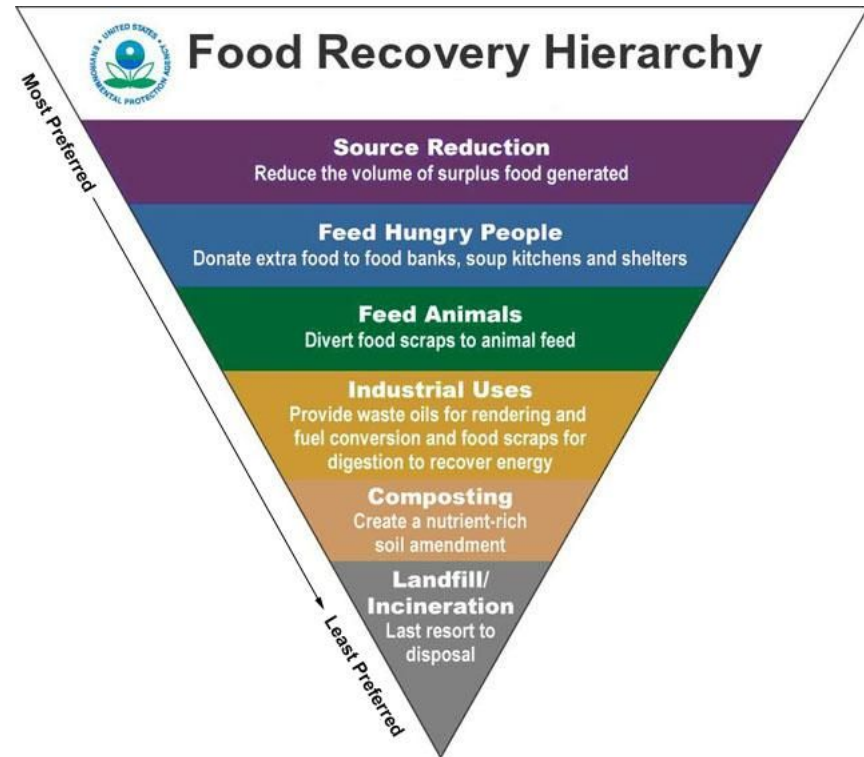
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Source Reduction Habits



1. Compare purchasing inventory with customer ordering
2. Modify menus to increase customer satisfaction and prevent and reduce uneaten food
3. Examine production and handling practices to prevent and reduce preparation waste.
4. Ensure proper storage techniques.
5. **Be creative with your kitchen excess.**
6. **Reduce serving sizes as appropriate and avoid use of garnishes that don't get eaten.**
7. **For buffet-style service, encourage customers to take only what they will actually eat.**
8. **For colleges, go trayless in the dining halls.**

Source: EPA "Food Recovery Hierarchy"

Challenges to Source Reduction

- **'Don't Run Out' Policy**
 - Number customers varies each meal period
 - Maintain appearance of full at all times
- **Time Scarcity**
 - Repurposing food scraps takes time and labor
 - Conflicting priorities for managers
- **Rigid Allergy Restrictions**
 - Labels limit scratch cooking with scraps

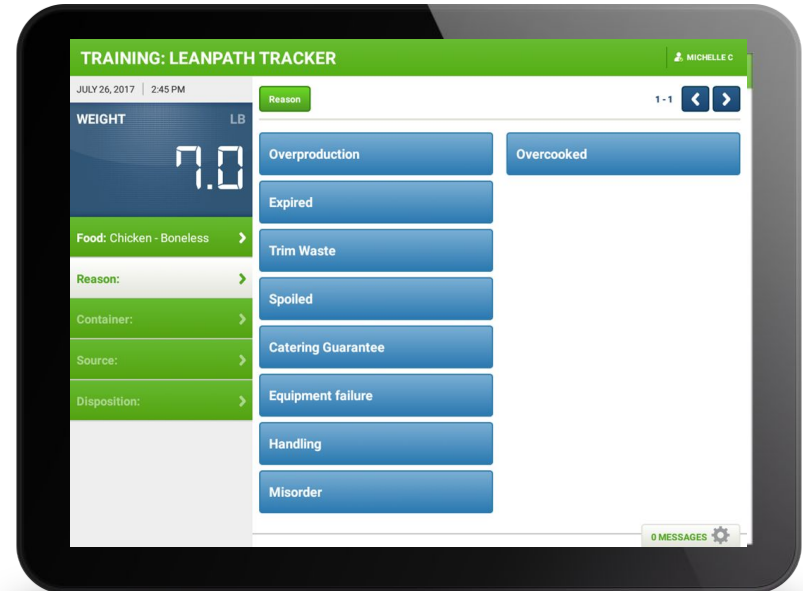


Food Waste Prevention BC Dining

- **Set a baseline**
→ what we measure, we can manage




LeanPath



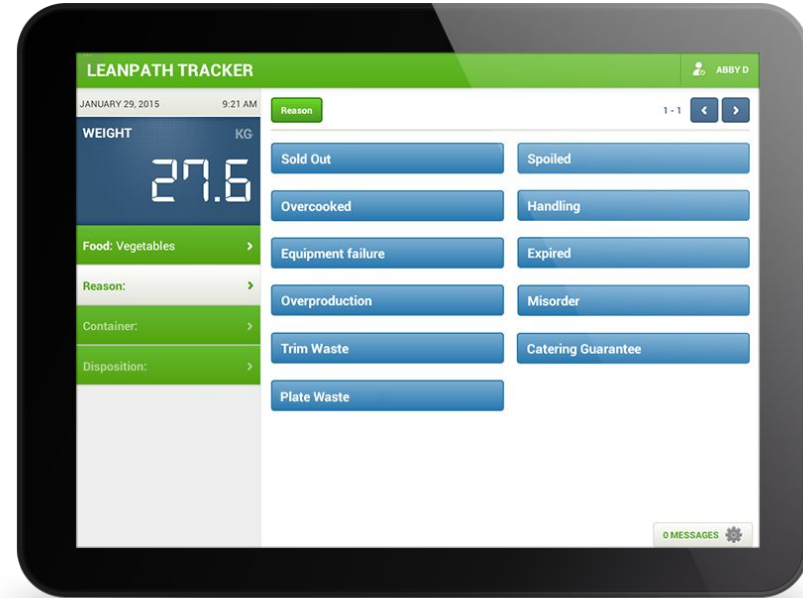
Food Waste Prevention BC Dining

➤ LeanPath waste tracking system

→ Weighs, tracks and divides unutilized food into:

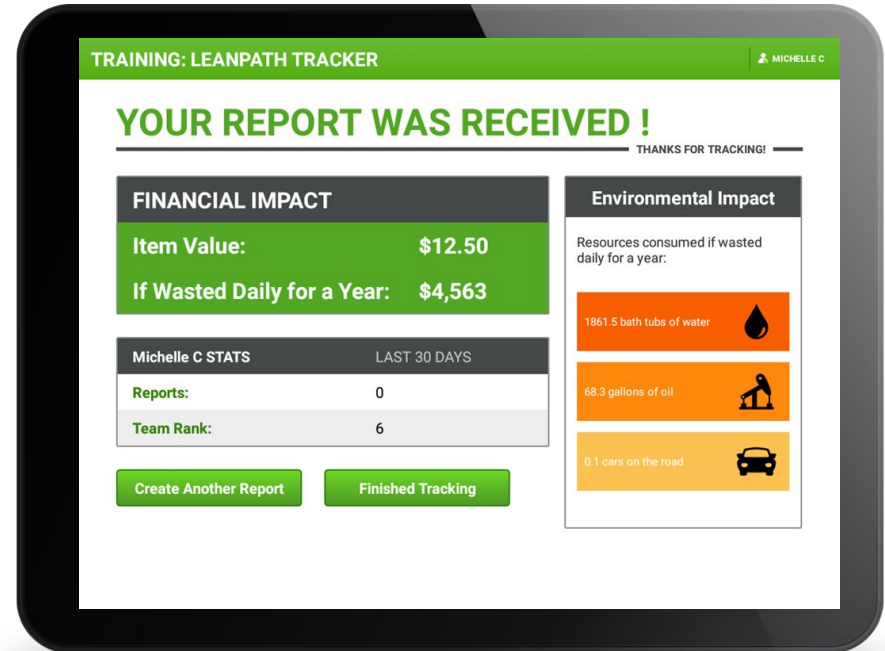
- **Trash**
- **Donation**
- **Compost**

→ Baseline measures week-over-week “savings”



Food Waste Prevention BC Dining

- **Foster staff buy-in**
 - Assigned 'Champions'
 - Staff instantly saw value and impact



Food Waste Prevention BC Dining



- **Foster staff buy-in**
 - Front-line workers has best solutions
 - Create a culture of food waste prevention



Within two weeks, **salad bar waste was down 50%.**



Food Waste Prevention BC Dining

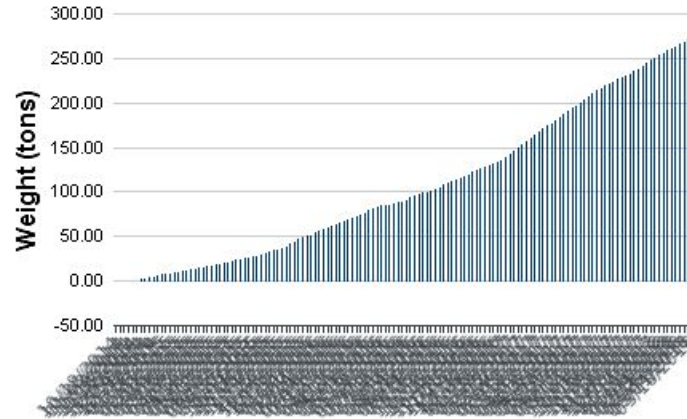
**Food waste
reduced by 60.7%**



= 263 tons of food waste
= 197 tons CO2



Food Waste Avoided (Tons)



How it helps with food waste prevention:

- Sets a baseline
- Helps management improve practices
- Engages staff with environmental issues on individual level

Lessons Learned

- **Set a baseline: measurement forms the basis for actionable change**
- **Assign waste reduction 'champion'**
- **Manager buy-in is crucial to success**
- **Listen to the front line workers**
- **Start with low hanging fruit**

WASTE NOT WANT NOT

