



## How to create a social movement around food waste?

2023 Inclusion and Business Strategy Case Competition

### About Waste Less Solutions

Waste Less Solutions is a Utah based nonprofit dedicated to education, prevention and diversion of food waste. Their vision is a community that works together to provide sustenance and promote a healthy planet by preventing edible food waste.

Their **Food Rescue** program works to prevent edible surplus food from ending up in the landfill, distributing it instead to partner organizations that serve food insecure families and children. They do this using an innovative, cost-effective smartphone app-based model that connects motivated community volunteers to opportunities to rescue and deliver food items where needed. Their food sources include caterers, cafeterias (including the UofU Hospital), restaurants, grocery stores, food distributors, farmers markets and backyard gardens. Their focus on providing fresh, healthy, and already-prepared food fills a gap in typical food assistance programs and holds unique benefits for food insecure families and individuals, especially those with the least access to standard programs.

In Utah, approximately 600,000 tons of food is wasted every year. Sources of edible food that end up in the landfill include restaurants and food businesses, senior living facilities, grocery stores, food distributors, caterers, school and workplace cafeterias, farmers markets and backyard gardens. At the same time more than 400,000 Utah residents (1 in 6) experience food insecurity, and 1 in 5 are children. (Utah Food Bank 2021). Critically, and much like other issues of resource access and sustainability, food scarcity is inexplicably tied with socioeconomic and myriad other faces of injustice. Food scarcity is not an issue of supply but rather an issue of equity and distribution.

While local food pantries provide vital services to food insecure Utahns, they are not an ideal solution for all. This includes people with transportation barriers, work schedules that do not allow them to get to a food pantry during open hours or to prepare nutritious meals, and people without cooking facilities in their places of residence. And, while food pantries excel at providing essential non-perishable goods, many lack the capacity or sourcing to distribute fresh produce and foods that require refrigeration, or to process or preserve large volumes of usable food before it goes bad.

Waste Less Solutions partners with local nonprofits that serve the needs of vulnerable community members to get this surplus food, in forms that are appealing, convenient, and nutritious to the people who need it most. Populations that benefit from this work include low-income and food-insecure individuals, families, and children; seniors; unhoused individuals, and victims of abuse. Through this model, Waste Less Solutions is simultaneously working towards



reducing the environmental impact of food waste and advancing equitable access to resources for populations facing high amounts of marginalization and injustice.

To date, Waste Less Solutions has engaged the participation of over 200 food donors, 90 receiving agencies, and over 600 volunteers across three major Utah counties. Some of the organizations currently receiving surplus food via their Food Rescue Program include YWCA, Boys and Girls Clubs of Utah County and Greater Salt, Neighborhood House, Salt Lake City Mission, Utah Community Action of Utah County, Utah Aids Foundation, and Centro Civico Mexicano.

In addition to the distribution of rescued food, Waste Less Solutions also provides educational opportunities for the community to learn about the need to reduce food waste. WLS informs our community of the environmental impact of wasted food and the wasted organic matter which contributes to approximately 20% of all methane emissions.

### Our Challenge

This past year we have seen exponential growth in our food rescue program which means the word is finally getting out about the program. Two of our aspirational goals are 1) to ensure every food business in the state knows about us and knows to donate their surplus rather than throw it away and 2) that we create a social movement around food waste. Like the straw movement, we want to see every consumer have the knowledge and passion to not want to see food wasted. Food in their homes, their leftovers at a restaurant, catered food after an event they attend as well as food at their local businesses.

- How do we reach mass with our message?
- How do we do this with limited funds and limited staff?
- What is the right way to market food rescue that will appeal to a large, diverse population? (Consider politics, proper motivation, behavior change). Is this possible?
- What are the barriers to people adopting this change?
- What are the avenues we need to take to make this happen?

**We are seeking creative, innovative ideas and approaches that will take our efforts to the next level and have a transformative impact on food waste in Utah.**

### Waste Less Solutions Resources

How a community in Ohio made an impact in composting:

<https://www.nytimes.com/2023/01/01/headway/composting-food-leftovers.html>

Our own op-ed in the Salt Lake Tribune about day old bread waste:

<https://www.sltrib.com/opinion/letters/2022/12/18/letter-want-save-planet-start/>

World Resources Institute paper on making food waste socially unacceptable:

<https://www.wri.org/research/making-food-waste-socially-unacceptable>



National Academies of Sciences Engineering and Medicine report a national strategy to reduce food waste at the consumer level: <https://nap.nationalacademies.org/catalog/25876/a-national-strategy-to-reduce-food-waste-at-the-consumer-level>

### Goff Case Competition Resources

When crafting your recommendations, you can draw on your own experiences, learn directly from relevant stakeholders of Waste Less Solutions, and look to other organizations and their strategies.

**There are endless resources to tap into, beyond what is listed in this document.**

### Coaches

Write down the name and contact information of your coach here:

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### Solving a Case

There are many methods of approaching a case. Consider the following framework as you move through the case competition with your team. Use resources available to you (both in this document and BEYOND) to inform your process and solutions. Ask questions along the way.

1. Read and examine the case thoroughly
2. Identify the problem(s)
3. Research
4. Turn insights into recommendations
5. Present your recommendations

### Present your Findings

The culmination of your case competition will be a presentation of your ideas, and the ideas of your peers. We are thrilled to listen to your suggestions and look forward to learning about your **process** and **findings**. The top three teams will be awarded prize money. Amounts will be announced soon.

### Considerations for Final Presentation

- Include short-term and long-term recommendations,
- Rationale from your own research, and
- Evidence to support your recommendations.
- Student recommendations will vary, but should be **creative** and include the diverse perspectives of each team member.
- Email final presentations to [kaeden.warnberg.lemm@eccles.utah.edu](mailto:kaeden.warnberg.lemm@eccles.utah.edu) by April 13<sup>th</sup> at 11:59PM.

### Presentation Day: April 14<sup>th</sup> at 1:00 PM in the Garff Auditorium

- A panel of judges will be there to ask questions and award first, second, and third place.



- Presentations should be no longer than 10 minutes. Anticipate ~3 minutes of questions from the judges following each presentation.
- Presentations should include a visual of some sort (PowerPoint, Prezi, etc.).
- Corporate partners will be invited to the event, and participants will have a chance to meet them while the judges deliberate.