A Case for Reducing Food Waste

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Current Food System

- Over 7 billion people
- 1 billion have too little
- 1.6 billion eat too much
- Wasting > 40% of food
Pedal to the Metal and Eating Poorly

- Two-thirds of health-care costs can now be attributed to chronic diseases associated with unhealthy eating. *20th Century Agriculture: the health cost.* 2009, CAPI

- What if we ate to be healthy, rather than continuing habits that make us sick?
There's Waste and Waist

The average American consumes about 3747 kcal per day (not including junk food) compared to the recommended 2000 to 2500 kcal per day.

23 July 2008
NewScientist.com news service
Pimental et. al.

- Insurance discount for families with CSA subscription?
Population, Consumption and Waste

• We need 79 billion cal /d for 34,300,000 Canadians.

• If eat 1.2 x need, then must provide 94 billion cal/d.

• Furthermore, with carelessness of wasting 40%, must provide 158 billion cal/d.
1 billion

the number of extra people that could be fed if we globally applied the best current methods to reduce food waste.

Preliminary Findings at Ontario Curbs

- Total food waste per household per day = 500 g. By extrapolation, total food waste per household per yr = 182.5 kg, and if the 12 mil households in Canada are similar, then about 2.2 mil tonnes of food is wasted each year.

- Total vegetable and fruit waste per household per day = 270 g or 53% of food waste.
Sustaining Food and Dollars?

- Households in Canada spend $140/wk on food. If we assume 20% of food wasted in households, then the cost of tossing is $28/wk
- Can consumers buy more healthy food with $28/wk, rather than wasting?
- Spend the same amount on meat and sweets, but eat less, that is of higher quality?
Principles of Addressing Food Waste

- **Reduction** trumps **Diversion**
- Distinguish between **Avoidable** (e.g. bread crusts) and **Unavoidable** (e.g. apple cores)
- Savings of food, money, GHGs, energy, water, biodiversity, soil quality, labour and respect
- What is personal and what is public?
Vision to Sustain Food

A food system based on healthy soil, clean air and water, minimal waste and regenerative energy to support profitable and resilient farming and fishing communities and a healthy food supply for all.

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