

# **Melbourne's North Food Group Summit - Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> May, 2025**

## **Preston Polytechnic Convention Centre**

REDUCE WASTE - TRANSFORM – REPURPOSE WASTE – CIRCULAR ECONOMY

### **FOOD WASTE OUTLOOK**

Food Loss (pre retail) +Food Waste (post service) = Food Insecurity

**Food loss** represents losses through primary production, distribution, wholesale, manufacturing

**Food waste** represents losses in households, hospitality, institutions

FOOD WASTE V FOOD INSECURITY.

Change our relationship to food – reduce production, reduce waste, reduce packaging

Australia has 7.7 million tonnes of food waste annually which costs \$6 billion to the Australian economy in CO2 GHG emissions

Every \$ invested in reducing food waste creates a savings of \$7.21 in business returns

- Australian households throw away 2.5million tonnes of food waste annually.
- Over 3 million tonnes of food is lost prior to reaching the retail market
- Reduce food loss by \* grow less food \*sharing ingredients \* produce less food
- Increase life of food/waste by drying food waste to powder for use in fertilizer and pet food production. Prolonging its life with plastic membranes – controversial
- Package sustainability – 7million tons of food packaging annually - 70% is plastic of which only 19% is recycled
- Biogas from methane gas – used by yarra valley water – which uses sludge and other 'difficult to compost organic waste' from selected businesses to produce energy. .

### **FOOD WASTE SOLUTIONS**

- REDUCE production of waste, RECYCLE waste, UPCYCLE waste for circular economy
- Educate community on how to separate waste and reduce contamination at home. Behavioral change on reducing waste and preparing waste.
- Decontaminating organic waste is costly and prohibitive – govt proposing increased costs to households and business for unclean organic waste.

- Food Waste is costly to councils and compromising other innovations
- Food waste can be composted aerobically - ploughed into the ground
- Metabolized anaerobically in concrete tunnels, mechanically processed, odorless. Hastens breakdown from 3months to 3weeks
- Transporting food waste is costly to stabilize and transport - liquid content makes it heavy & bulky
- Perishable waste may be excluded from landfill altogether in future, tougher regulations will be introduced to manage food waste and keep it from landfill
- Circular economy – upcycle food waste - FIRSTLY dry and form into fertilizer or food pellets for petfood THEN returned to soil for composting.
- BARDEE - Black Soldier Fly grows from the size of grain of sand to jellybean in 3 days. Can process 200 tonnes of FW to protein on site. Flies eat all food matter from organics to meat and bones, also tetra packs, to produce compost/manure/fertilizer. Flies breed quickly, they can multiply to 6 billion from a standard number in one week. They are not considered pests because they cannot fly.
- Establish networks to maximize operations. ie corporate partnership between Melbourne market and Yarra Valley Water to convert waste into methane gas for power to make YVW zero negative by 2026
- Establish networks to share food throughout the cycle – ingredients, catering, share excess food (foodshare/rescue), upcycle unused food (repackaged and repurposed)
- Educate community that food waste is costly – because food in Australia is cheap to buy it is often not valued. Rather than punish consumer with increased food prices (which contributes to increased living costs) incentivize community to REDUCE waste and BUY less.
- EDUCATION
- Stop overproduction **V** need.
- A challenge to manage food waste at the 'hard to get' material at end of life.

## **FOOD WASTE INNOVATORS**

- Food Supplier **V** buyer/demand/distribution
- Corporate labelling prevents food being shared without rebranding/labelling
- Connect people to surplus products – caterers, foodshare, farmers, wholesalers
- Mange food production to EQUAL food consumption
- NETWORK YOUR NETWORKS