

Let's Talk About...Food Waste
7:30pm Wednesday, November 20th
Legion Room, Medicine Hat Public Library

Food Waste Diversion

Loopresource.ca - Guarantee that it won't go to landfill.

Red Hat Co-op – Gillian

Red Hat Co-op donates a lot of food to the Food Bank on a regular basis. They also make their excess food available to all food banks across western Canada. They are currently working with Food Banks Canada to make accessing easier with a point person at Food Banks Canada. Off sizes and excess produce are also donated to schools for lunch and snack programs, as well as the Food Bank's Brown Bag Lunch Program and to Prairie Gleaners. They work with local farmers to feed the produce that is not fit for human consumption to animals. They have reached out to Hutterites to feed their animals, but distance can be an issue for some colonies. In spite of all their work to find ways to divert waste, they do still occasionally have to send food to the landfill. They are working with Loop to reduce their waste and their mission for the New Year is zero waste. They work hard to segregate waste so that it can go in the appropriate stream for recycling or donation for animal feed.

Medicine Hat Wholesale

Once food becomes unusable, it is given to a local farmer for animal feed. They do not discount to move product and do not donate to the Food Bank. I suggested they check out Loop and passed along their website.

Brewmaster

They discount product to move it. Donates to the Food Bank if the food is usable. I suggested they check out Loop and passed along their website.

Huber's Farm Market – Closed for the season.

Save on Foods – Manager Jeff

Progressive movement as a company to bring food waste to zero. The Medicine Hat store has had zero food waste from the first day of opening due to partnerships within the community.

Human Consumption > Animal consumption > composting. Works with organization – Loop (Company founded in Dawson Creek, B.C.) connects with area farmers for animal consumption or compost. Community group action and government level amendments have changed and allowed for better systems. They save money on garbage disposal fees by diverting all their food waste.

Save on Foods allows customers to shop with their own containers in the bulk section. Please know the tare (weight of empty container) so that can be subtracted at the till when weighing food.

Sobeys - Owner Vince

Sobeys are locally owned and decision making falls on the local owners. Our local store procedure is to donate all day old bread & baking to the Food Bank. Also sent to the Food Bank daily are perishable foods before it comes to date. The store has only 1 wet compacter container which is picked up once weekly and is not even full. Any cardboard and plastics are baled & shipped for recycling. I shared Loop info with owner who was keen and going to look into it. Reusable produce bags are available for purchase in the produce section.

Superstore – Manager Darcy

Everything edible & safe goes to the Food Bank daily. The store utilizes Loop – which has reduced half their waste in the last year. New website & app - Flash Foods – sells short dated foods at highly reduced prices. Also the pink triangle sticker Reduction program 30% off. Barely any waste anymore other than packaging. Plastics & cardboard are baled & recycled. People can bring their own containers for bulk purchasing.

Co-op – Darren Andreas, Corporate Office

Just updated their food waste diversion policy in the Fall. They donate all edible food to the Food Bank. Everything else is picked up by Loop. Their landfill waste has dropped to ¼ of what it was previous to using Loop.

Safeway – Manager of Division Ave. Store

Has a corporate policy around food waste. But locally, they donate to Food Bank, with pick-up happening daily 6 days week. Also, the store orders & receives shipments daily, so they don't over-order which reduces waste. I suggested they check out Loop and passed along their website.

Wal-mart – Policy & Procedure unavailable. Manager Vince shared email corporateaffairscanada@walmart.com

Costco – Luke – Corporate Head Office

Anything that is consumable is donated to the Food Bank or the Medicine Hat Women's Shelter (the two organizations they had on file at head office). Corporate headquarters does have policy around food waste diversion, but they largely leave it up to each store to choose where it is donated to based on community relationships, most stores have an average of 4 organizations that they donate too. They do not donate shellfish or ground beef due to food safety issues, but work hard to move product before it needs to be donated. Some food is turned into value-added items through their deli or is frozen. Their biggest issue is getting food to food organizations over the weekend as most places don't have weekend pick-up. I suggested they check out Loop and passed along their website.

City of Medicine Hat Environmental Utilities – Jason Storch, Landfill Superintendent

Alberta Environment sets regulations for municipalities for composting. There are different requirements for kitchen waste than yard waste. In order to meet the provincial requirements for kitchen waste composting, it would require an onerous investment in infrastructure cost for the purchase of equipment and facilities including a warehouse size building for the indoor composting of the kitchen waste.

Who takes food donations in Medicine Hat?

The Food Bank takes unopened canned & dried goods, and fresh produce from gardens or trees.

The Emergency Shelter will take fresh produce after 7:30pm – it must be given to a staff member or it will be discarded.

Only the Women's Shelter will take prepared food such as leftovers from banquets or prepared foods from parties, events, etc.