



## Capital Area Food Bank Messages about Food Waste

### **In a land of abundant food, there is also abundant waste.**

*Food waste is common.*

- About 40 percent of the food our hard-working farmers produce never reaches our stomachs<sup>1</sup>.
- 76% of 1,000 adults surveyed said they throw away leftovers at least once a month<sup>2</sup>.

*Food waste is expensive.*

- The average American wastes 20 pounds of food per month<sup>3</sup>. Over a year, the average value of that wasted food is \$640<sup>4</sup>.
- The total dollars wasted on discarded food is more than \$165 billion per year<sup>5</sup>.

*Food waste harms the environment.*

- The food we waste makes up over 20% of landfill content – 35 million tons a year – emitting methane gas that is detrimental to the atmosphere<sup>6</sup>.

### **Reducing food waste can feed people and reduce hunger.**

If we wasted just 15 percent less food, it would be enough to feed 25 million Americans.<sup>7</sup>

### **At the Capital Area Food Bank, reducing food waste is part of our organizational DNA.**

- We contribute to the reduction of food waste through our very existence
- Of the 42 million pounds of food we distribute each year, 33 million pounds would have otherwise gone to landfills
- When grocery stores misgauge the consumer and buy more than they want, we distribute it to communities in need. Our trucks make on average 100 pickups at grocery stores every week.
- Our Partner Direct program puts area food pantries and soup kitchens that we work with in touch with small grocers and other food vendors near them who can donate to them directly.
- We've set organizational goals around reducing our own food waste to near zero by:
  - Working closely with food donors to match donations with partner needs
  - Maintaining food freshness by continuously refining our receiving and distribution processes

<sup>1</sup> Hall KD, Guo J, Dore M, Chow CC (2009) The Progressive Increase of Food Waste in America and Its Environmental Impact. National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases. PLoS ONE 4(11):e7940

<sup>2</sup> TNS Global and the American Chemistry Council survey on food waste, April 2015

<sup>3</sup> Gustavsson, Cederberg, Sonesson, van Otterdijk, and Meybeck, *Global Food Losses and Food Waste*, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, 2011

<sup>4</sup> TNS Global and the American Chemistry Council survey on food waste, April 2015

<sup>5</sup> Buzby and Hyman, *Total and per capita value of food loss in the United States*, Food Policy, 2012

<sup>6</sup> *Advancing Sustainable Materials Management: 2013 Fact Sheet*. United States Environmental Protection Agency, 2015

<sup>7</sup> This calculation assumes 2,500 kcal/capita/day and an annual total of 150 trillion calories in losses, as reported in K.D. Hall, J. Guo, M. Dore, C.C. Chow, National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases, "The Progressive Increase of Food Waste in America and Its Environmental Impact," PLoS ONE 4(11):e7940, 2009