



The Foundation for New York's Strongest

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DSNY's Foundation for New York's Strongest Hosts its First NYC Food Waste Fair

The "Soup to Nuts" Fair Will Help Businesses Save Money - and the Environment - through the Prevention, Recovery and Recycling of Previously Wasted Food

The NYC Department of Sanitation's Foundation for New York's Strongest is hosting the NYC Food Waste Fair, a unique resource-fair-meets-trade-show today at the Brooklyn Expo Center. More than 1,100 people have registered to attend the fair, and more than 80 exhibitors are expected.

New York City food-industry organizations send more than 650,000 tons of usable food to landfills each year. Instead, that food could be used to feed people and animals, nourish soil, grow healthy food, or create energy. The NYC Food Waste Fair will provide businesses with the knowledge, tools and connections to build a waste prevention plan from scratch, or expand their existing programs.

By pairing an expo-style event with workshops, panel discussions and live demonstrations, the [NYC Food Waste Fair](#) is bringing together experts and provide food waste solutions for local businesses. The Fair is open to all involved in food businesses, such as grocery store owners, street vendors, restaurant and fast food operators, manufacturers, wholesalers, and building and custodial management.

New Yorkers generate more than 1.3 million tons of food waste per year, and while half of that is in generated at home, the other half is generated in businesses – restaurants, mobile vendors, grocery stores, food manufacturers, distributors, cafeterias and others. Today's event is about connecting those businesses with tools and solutions to reduce their food waste

“The opportunity to save money, reduce waste tonnage and grow jobs is tremendous. Still, few in the food and hospitality industries incorrectly assume that embracing sustainability into their operations is too costly,” said **Elizabeth Balkan, Executive Director of the Foundation for New York's Strongest, and Director of Policy and Senior Advisor to the Commissioner for the Department of Sanitation**. “Until now, there has not been a one-stop-shopping opportunity to learn about all the resources available for preventing, recovering and recycling food waste. The first-ever NYC Food Waste Fair is bringing together the largest portfolio of food waste solutions for businesses throughout New York City.”

“Recycling food is becoming as easy as recycling paper, and it is an important component of the City’s goal of sending zero waste to landfills by 2030, which is part of Mayor Bill de Blasio’s OneNYC plan,” said **Sanitation Commissioner Kathryn Garcia**. “Moreover, the support we’ve received for the NYC Food Waste Fair is incredible, and I’m excited to announce that in the coming months the Foundation for New York’s Strongest will create a fund to support small businesses looking to make investments to reduce food waste, recover edible food, and recycling what remains.”

“I am proud to welcome the NYC Food Waste Fair to Greenpoint,” said **Brooklyn Borough President Eric L. Adams**. “Sustainably disposing of and recycling food is an important element of how we all can conserve resources and address hunger, from the meals we cook at home to the items we purchase at a supermarket. The Fair will foster a much-needed conversation in Brooklyn and beyond on how we can tackle food waste, save our planet, and ensure we are doing our utmost with the finite resources that we have.”

“Reducing the city’s food waste is key to reaching our ambitious OneNYC goals of sending Zero Waste to landfills by 2030 and reducing greenhouse gas emissions 80 percent by 2050,” said **Mark Chambers, Director of the NYC Mayor’s Office of Sustainability**. “We are proud to support the Foundation for New York’s Strongest and NYC Department of Sanitation as they launch the first Food Waste Fair, providing NYC businesses with the resources, workshops, and information necessary to tackle food waste at the source.”

“The natural progression for me as a chef in my thinking about sourcing healthy food – knowing where our food comes from and how it was raised – is to think about where it goes,” said **Mary Cleaver, sustainable food expert and founder of The Cleaver Co. and The Green Table**. “How from our kitchen in the middle of New York City we can turn it back into soil? Our waste policy is to try not to create it in the first place, and though we can reduce it through conscientious purchasing, repurposing, and reusing, some is inevitable. The Food Waste Fair will engage chefs and food service providers in this very important thought process and behavior change by giving businesses the tools they need to join the movement and reach the goal of zero waste to landfills by 2030.”

“In the last few years, we have seen a dramatic uptick in interest in reducing food waste nationally, driven by policy changes and innovative new solutions,” said **Chris Cochran, Executive Director of ReFed**. “As a long-time partner of New York City and the Department of Sanitation, ReFed is excited to be a part of the collaborative effort behind the NYC Food Waste Fair, which brings together the industry innovators helping to divert waste, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, save water, feed people in need and create new jobs.”

“The average family wastes \$1,500 a year by throwing away completely edible food,” said **Joel Gamoran, Sur La Table Chef and host of the new culinary series SCRAPS**. “It’s an education problem. Like the chefs on SCRAPS, the food waste innovators participating in the NYC Food Waste Fair and [the previously held] Amuse Bouche events are teaching New Yorkers better habits and inspiring us all to take a hard look at everything from garlic skins to peach pits--and think about how they could be used instead of trashed.”

“The NYC Food Waste Fair will call attention to the role that everyone in the city plays in creating waste – as well as the many ways we can all stop wasting food, in our business and in our homes,” said **Peter Madonia, Chief Operating Officer, The Rockefeller Foundation**. “We are seeing so much excitement about and progress in reducing wasted food. We know it can be done. And the NYC Food Waste Fair will showcase solutions to this global problem that allow us in New York to solve it locally.”

“Chefs and restaurant owners in New York City must take the lead on creative solutions to reducing food waste in the kitchen,” said **Chef Jehangir Mehta, executive chef and owner of New York City restaurants Graffiti, Graffiti Earth, and Me and You**. “The NYC Food Waste Fair will help restaurant owners think about the holistic cost of preparing a meal. By pushing ourselves to be more creative in using the whole product and eliminating food waste, we are doing the right thing for the city, expanding palettes and impressing our guests, and saving money for our businesses.”

“The City Council is very interested in supporting initiatives that reduce food waste, as one of many strategies to support sending zero waste to landfills by 2030. This kind of partnership between the City and the private sector is a great step toward achieving this goal,” said **Council Member Antonio Reynoso**.

For more information on the NYC Food Waste Fair, visit foodwastefair.nyc.

About the Foundation for New York’s Strongest

Launched in 2016 with an avant-garde fashion collaboration with designer Heron Preston, the Foundation for New York’s Strongest educates New Yorkers to embrace environmentalism and highlights Sanitation Workers’ dignity in keeping our City healthy, safe and clean. The Foundation relies upon private funding to create artistic and education events and build unconventional partnerships, all to support DSNY’s commitment to leading New Yorkers to send zero waste to landfills by 2030.

About the New York City Department of Sanitation

The Department of Sanitation (DSNY) keeps New York City healthy, safe and clean by collecting, recycling and disposing of waste, cleaning streets and vacant lots, and clearing snow and ice. The Department operates 59 district garages and manages a fleet of more than 2,000 rear-loading collection trucks, 450 mechanical brooms and 689 salt/sand spreaders. The Department clears litter, snow and ice from approximately 6,500 miles of City streets and removes debris from vacant lots as well as abandoned vehicles from City streets.