

LFS 350: Vancouver Strategy Project Proposal (Group 4)

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Introduction

Group 4 aims to support the City of Vancouver's vision of improving food security, specifically by contributing to the management of food waste. Our group's objective is to promote awareness of food waste among the UBC population and local food markets through the utilization of affordable recovered foods. We will do so by deepening students' understanding of food waste, equipping them with knowledge on nutrition to better sustain their health inexpensively and assisting them in building food literacy skills. Inquiry questions directing our research are the following:

- a) What percentage of the student population sample is aware of recovered foods?
- b) What is the availability of retailers located within a 15 km radius from campus that sell recovered produce, and what are some of the patterns they have noticed in regards to the type of produce they sell?
- c) What is the current state of food literacy among the students sampled in our survey?

Background and Significance

The Metro Vancouver Regional District predicts 30-40% of food ends up in landfills. This food is considered edible, yet is thrown away due to factors such as excess production and purchasing (City of Vancouver, 2013), and/or undesirable disfigurement of produce (Krashinsky, 2014).

We are focusing on the student population, for they may value affordability and convenience due to their busy schedules. Food security can often be a cause of concern for students, as they generally have inconsistent and inadequate sources of income (Hughes, 2011).

The objective of this project is to positively influence students' lifestyles and further increase their understanding of the food system. By recognizing the significance of their food choices on the food system, in addition to their own health, food literacy can thusly be improved within the student population (Cullen, 2015). As a result, minimizing food losses will allow for other uses of these resources, which may further improve food security. Additionally, it can be economically beneficial for producers and consumers, through increased efficiency and lowered costs (Bagherzadeh, Innamura, & Jeong, 2015). We hope to influence food waste reduction on both household and commercial levels, as students will be able to further have an impact on food waste doing so by engaging in conversations with their peers, parents and even grocery stores' management.

As McCullum et al. (2005) mentioned, strategies that can be adopted by dietetics researchers or professionals to increase food security in a community include creating "...small but significant changes to existing food systems", predominantly through the collection and sharing of data, followed by implementation of small changes. In our case, understanding how students view food waste is paramount to the success of the project, as it could help us establish whether our project has elevated awareness on the food waste issue or not. This information is of particular importance to our project, as data on UBC students' views on food waste does not exist yet. In respect to successfully improving food security in a community, McCullum et al. (2005) also emphasizes the importance of networking. In this instance, encouraging students to further engage in dialogues surrounding food waste at home, at the grocery store and among peers, can create a network of different perspectives and sources of information on the matter of food waste as part of food security.

Methods

The first part of our project is to find the number of retailers that sell recovered food within a 15 km radius around the UBC campus. We will gather information on what these stores do with disfigured or end-of-date produce, whether they are selling it, using an established program to minimize food waste, or nothing at all (see Appendix A).

Data collection from students will take place on UBC campus inside the AMS Nest or Agora Space during the afternoon of our 2nd flexible learning session (Session 8). At our booth, we will be making smoothies out of recovered foods collected from the grocery stores, and offering them to students interested in our goals. The booth will be operated in the following order

1. Tell students about the purpose of our research and what recovered foods are. We will then ask if they are interested in trying smoothies made from recovered produce.
2. Disclose the ingredients and source of produce before they consume the smoothie. Smoothie is made according to our own “formula” (see Appendix C).
3. Explain the issue of food waste and offer a comparison of nutrition and economic value from recovered foods versus chain stores (e.g., Booster Juice, Liquid Nutrition).
4. Distribute the survey for students to fill out. We will ask students for their consent to use their input for our statistics, and ensure that their identity will remain anonymous.
5. Share the link to our blog on a piece of paper, which contains a map of grocery stores that sell recovered foods within 15 km radius of UBC campus.

Each student that takes a smoothie sample will be asked to fill out several survey questions that assess their knowledge of food waste and whether they have a budget for food

purchase (see Appendix B). We will provide awareness on healthier alternatives in their diets and how to reduce food waste with the benefit of minimizing financial expenses by comparing prices of store-bought vs. homemade smoothies.

Success Factors

There are several indicators our group will use to determine the success of our project. Since we do not have a community partner, one of our main success factors will be being able to deliver a message that positively impacts the students. The questionnaire will assess how aware students are of recovered food, and how willing they are of purchasing recovered food in the future. The success of the questionnaire will be based on how well the data collected ties into our objectives and aims. In addition, the number of view counts generated from the blog website, containing the map of grocery stores, will be another determinant of our success.

The communication between group members, time management, planning and the ability to work as a group, as well as the skills we end up developing, will reflect our personal success in this project. We will be keeping each other accountable by setting clear expectations of how each member should contribute to each assignment. Additionally, group assignments will be written on a Google Doc so we can keep track if each member has fulfilled their task or not.

Appendix

Appendix A

QUESTIONS FOR GROCERY STORE:

Store Name		
Location / Address		
Radius from campus		
Bus routes from campus?		
Is the store privately owned or part of a chain? PRIVATE CHAIN		
Do they have discount produce section? YES NO		
If YES	Where is it located?	
	What type foods do they have in the discount section?	
If NO	What do they do with produce they don't sell?	
	Why don't they sell recovered foods?	

Appendix B

Recovered Foods Survey:

1. Has your experience at the booth made you rethink food you're potentially wasting?
 Yes No
 2. Do you live within a 15 km radius from campus?
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3. Circle all that are applicable for the following: How do you get to school?

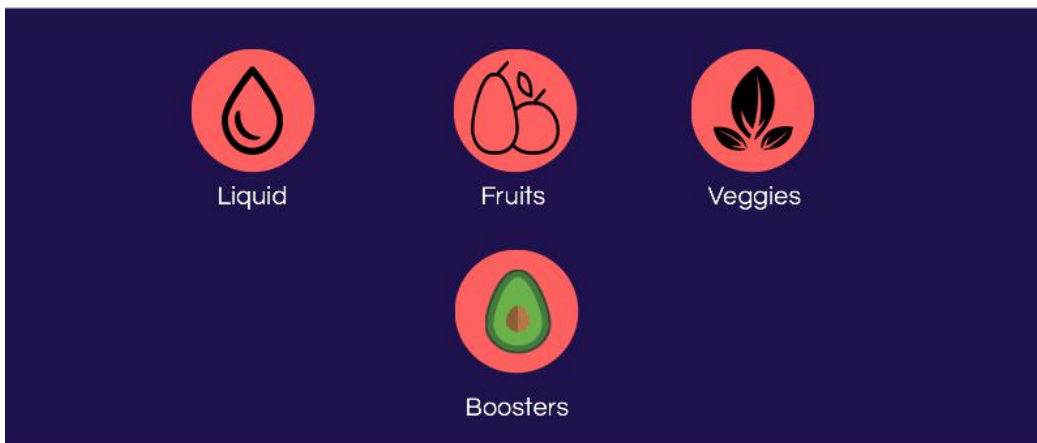
a) Commute b) Car pool c) Drive (access to a car?) d) Walk

4. Are you looking for ways to save money?
 Yes No
5. Do you set a spending budget on a weekly basis?
 Yes No
6. Have you ever felt conflicted choosing between convenience vs. environment?
 Yes No
7. Would you consider purchasing recovered produce after today?
 Yes No
8. Have you ever thought about how your food choices impact the environment?
 Yes No

Feedback

The Smoothie Formula

3 CORE, 1 BONUS



INGREDIENTS

- 1 LIQUID**
To get the blender going. Some may heighten texture.
Example: water, nut milk, coconut water
- 2 FRUITS**
For your fibre needs. Also functions as natural sweetener!
Example: berries, apple, orange, banana
- 3 VEGGIES**
Greens are excellent for you. Also, fibre!
Example: spinach, kale, mixed salad greens
- 4 BOOSTERS**
If basic smoothies aren't your thing
Example: avocado, honey, protein powder, oats

References

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