



**DATE:** May 10, 2018

**TO:** Programs & Administration Committee

**FROM:** Pat Cabrera, Administrative Services Director

**BY:** Justin Lehrer, Senior Program Manager

**SUBJECT:** Agency Goals and Indicators Update

**SUMMARY**

The Fiscal Year 2018-19 Budget document includes updates to the interim goals for calendar year 2018. At the May 10 committee meetings, staff will present new upstream indicators and share how these indicators help inform our efforts to prevent waste at the source and optimize local materials use. An update on progress towards all of the 2018 goals also will be provided.

**DISCUSSION**

The interim goals and indicators provide more specificity and help measure progress on the path toward the strategic plan aspirational goal of “less than 10 percent good stuff in the garbage by 2020.” These interim goals include discrete milestones for the organics, packaging, and built-environment focus areas that address all points of the waste hierarchy.

	Organics	Packaging	Built Environment	
<b>REDESIGN</b> Increase in materials optimization	Increasing state and local policies addressing reduction of wasted food	Increasing adoption of the How2Recycle label by major brands and greater recognition by consumers	Increase in presence of environmentally certified building materials	<b>INDICATORS</b> (New for 2018)
<b>RETHINK</b> Increase in awareness	10% increase of families likely to reduce food waste at home	Not selected as a priority	Not selected as a priority	
<b>REDUCE / REUSE</b> Less waste generated	10% of food service and grocers participate in food donation	50% reduction in all single-use bags distributed by newly affected stores	<45% waste generated by construction and demolition projects in landfill	<b>SPECIFIC GOALS</b>
<b>RECYCLE / ROT</b> Increase in proper sorting	<20% organics in landfill	< 5% recyclables in landfill		

## Redesign - Indicators

This year we are adding upstream indicators that help assess progress towards redesigning products and materials that are problematic for our local waste and recycling systems. Designing products and the built environment to use materials and natural resources most efficiently requires long-term behavioral, technological, and economic change.

These upstream indicators are different than goals and are not intended to measure our progress in Alameda County. They provide insight on broader shifts in consumption patterns that can inform, validate, or redirect our efforts to prevent waste at the source and optimize local materials use. The indicators generally reflect macro-level changes impacting entire sectors. They may be supplemented with direct results from some of our own local upstream efforts, although their broader focus on systemic change inherently leads to less influence over local results.

**Organics Indicator:** Reducing wasted food upstream requires operational, financial and social shifts in how businesses, schools and residents make decisions that influence food waste generation. Effective policy is needed to support these efforts by reducing barriers and incentivizing food waste generators to prevent food from going to waste, donate surplus food to feed people, then compost food scraps as a last resort.

The last few years have brought a lot of progress for food waste reduction legislation and policy. StopWaste advocated for and contributed content to several new bills passed in California that collectively will make it easier to reduce wasted food:

- AB 1826 – Mandatory Commercial Organics Recycling (passed in 2014, implemented 2016)
- SB 1383 – Short-Lived Climate Pollutants (passed in 2016)
- AB 954 – Food Waste Reduction & Date Labeling Act (passed in 2017)
- AB 1219 – California Good Samaritan Food Donation Act (passed in 2017)

Locally, we are active participants in ALL IN Alameda County's food recovery initiative, a multi-stakeholder collaborative launched by County Supervisor Wilma Chan that is working to design and launch a state-of-the-art food recovery sector in the county. We will continue to monitor and support food waste reduction policy at the state and local level as an indicator (and driver) of change in how efficiently we produce, distribute, and consume food.

**Packaging Indicator:** StopWaste was an early sponsor of the How2Recycle (H2R) label and participated in its initial development in 2010. This voluntary label provides clear and consistent guidance to consumers on how to recycle all components of a package. Over the last year, H2R rose in prominence in the consumer packaged goods space. New members like Amazon, Campbell's, Colgate Palmolive, and Unilever contributed to 37% growth in 2017, following 32% growth in 2016. Alameda County members include Annie's Foods (now part of Campbell's), Plum Organics, and Clorox.

How2Recycle is proving itself as an effective feedback tool that can influence brand owners to redesign their packaging to be more recyclable. Since December 2017, the How2Recycle team has

made over 5,000 specific design improvement recommendations to its members to improve packaging recyclability. Major retailers are also contributing, with Target planning to add the label to all their owned brand packaging by 2020 and Walmart encouraging their suppliers to join H2R.

Looking ahead, How2Recycle anticipates continued growth, particularly among retailers, and they are working to have more brands feature the label ubiquitously throughout their product portfolio. We will continue to monitor H2R progress as an upstream indicator and driver of packaging design for recyclability.

**Built Environment Indicator:** As part of StopWaste's membership in the Ellen MacArthur Foundation Circular Economy 100, we partnered with global consulting firm Arup to develop a local government primer introducing upstream redesign strategies for optimizing material efficiency in the built environment. The primer addresses potential redesign at four scales: community, buildings, components, and materials. These are emerging practices and substantial, quantifiable progress has only been made at the component and materials scales. To track this trend, StopWaste will monitor the prevalence of building products that have received an environmental certification related to material optimization or characteristics that increase content transparency and make them more readily reused or recycled at end of life. For example, since 2014, the number of Cradle to Cradle certifications in the built environment sector (i.e. building and interior design materials) has increased over 60%.

These collectively provide a snapshot of the current prevalence and we will monitor how much these indicators increase or decrease as we and other industry players advance initiatives to increase upstream redesign strategies. StopWaste's future work to implement actions at each scale will be informed by many factors, including member agency interest and technological and economic innovations in the industry. As momentum and activity toward material optimization through design grow for whole buildings and communities, StopWaste will seek indicators to track progress at those scales.

## **Progress on the Goals**

### **Rethink**

Given the Agency's current upstream focus on organics, the Rethink goal focuses on building awareness and activating residential households to decrease wasted food using food waste reduction strategies, tips and tools. We conducted a baseline survey and focus groups in 2016 to assess household food waste reduction knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors. The results were used to inform development of the county's first Food Waste Prevention campaign, Stop Food Waste. The campaign focuses on upstream strategies to prevent food from going to waste through proper planning, food storage, eating what you buy, using leftovers and composting what's left. A follow-up survey in September 2018 will measure progress towards the agency's food waste reduction goal – a 10% increase in families reducing food waste at home.

## **Reduce/Reuse**

Organics: The reduce/reuse goal for organics is that 10% of food service and grocers participate in food donation. StopWaste has provided grants to the Alameda County Community Food Bank to expand upon the food bank's successful Grocery Rescue Program that recovers surplus food from grocery stores and retail partners to feed food-insecure people. The Grocery Rescue Program increased retail partners from 61 to 124 in 2017, doubling the amount of food diverted to feed people to over 4 million pounds. Our work with K-12 School Districts is addressing surplus food in school cafeterias.

A new School Food Share Guide reinforces new state-wide legislation SB 557 by providing guidance for Nutrition Services staff on establishing food share tables in school cafeterias, saving unwanted food discarded by students, feeding students that may be hungry and donating what's left. We are also collaborating with Alameda County's Environmental Health Department to produce a Food Donation Guide for businesses that environmental health inspectors and mandatory recycling business assistance will distribute to food businesses in an effort to build awareness of the legalities, tax saving incentives and other benefits of donating food.

Packaging: The goal is a 50% reduction in all single-use bags distributed by stores recently affected by the Reusable Bag Ordinance. Parking lot surveys of consumers exiting 41 retail stores recently affected by the expanded bag law shows an 85% reduction in plastic bags distributed at point of sale compared to the baseline data collected at these same stores in 2015.

Built-Environment: The goal is to landfill less than 45% of the total discards generated by construction and demolition activities (C&D) in landfill. Based on preliminary data, we can estimate landfill disposal of 26% of these materials, but this may rise as additional data is analyzed. Staff continues to work on improving the accuracy and completeness of this estimate.

## **Recycle/Rot**

The recycle/rot category are the Agency's "downstream" goals, which tie closely to the Strategic Plan goal of under 10% Good Stuff in Garbage by 2020. For 2018, we have specific goals for organics and recyclables: under 20% organics in landfill and under 5% recyclables in landfill. We anticipate gaining more insight into progress on these goals from the Waste Characterization Study now in progress and will provide a report later this year.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

This item is for information only.