

CLASS NOTES

Season 1, Episode 9: Love Your Leftovers: Tackling Food Waste on College Campuses

Featured Guest: Dr. Olesya Savchenko, Assistant Professor of Food and Resource Economics



Key Takeaways

- Holidays or special occasions increase the demand for certain food products and can lead to greater consumption and potential for waste.
- Food services on college campuses often include various types of meals such as All You Can Eat Dining Halls, Catered Student Group Meetings, and Grab and Go Meals, all of which can present different challenges when it comes to reducing food waste.
- If people perceive that there is a problem, they are more likely to engage in behavior that will change that problem.
- Understanding human perception allows economists and policymakers to design behavioral interventions that are more effective at influencing consumer choice.

Classroom Activity

Fill out the Fridge Reality Check and keep a diary of your food habits over the course of one weekend.

Afterwards, reflect and answer the following questions:

1. What food have you thrown away in the last three days?
2. How often do you finish all of your leftovers (percentage)?
3. How much food went to waste? Was it more or less than you would have expected?
4. What types of food were you buying? Did certain types go bad more than others?
5. Were you mostly cooking dinner at home or were you eating out? How did this impact the results?

Additional Resources

- Ellison, Brenna, et al. "Every plate counts: Evaluation of a food waste reduction campaign in a university dining hall." Resources, Conservation and recycling 144 (2019): 276-284. Available at <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0921344919300540>
- Dr. Savchenko's faculty directory page: <https://fred.ifas.ufl.edu/about/directory/olesya-savchenko/>

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