
Environment Committee

HB 2411

Brief Description: Reducing wasted food in order to fight hunger and reduce environmental impacts.

Sponsors: Representatives Doglio, Slatter, Macri, Appleton and Gregerson.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Establishes a goal of reducing wasted food in the state by 50 percent by 2030.
- Directs the Department of Ecology to work with the departments of Health and Agriculture to develop a food waste reduction plan by 2020 to achieve the 2030 wasted food reduction goal.

Hearing Date: 1/18/18

Staff: Jacob Lipson (786-7196).

Background:

Solid Waste Management.

Under the state's solid waste management laws, local governments are the primary government entity responsible for implementing state solid waste management requirements. The Department of Ecology (ECY) also has certain roles in overseeing the administration of solid waste management laws. The ECY is responsible for working cooperatively with local governments as they develop their local solid waste management plans. The ECY also evaluates, analyzes, and monitors the state's solid waste stream, and develops a statewide solid waste plan that, in part, addresses organic material wastes.

County and city solid waste management plans are required to contain certain elements, including a waste reduction and recycling element. This element must include waste reduction strategies, recycling strategies, and source separation strategies, including yard waste collection.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

Donors of food to nonprofit organizations that distribute food to needy individuals are generally protected from civil or criminal liability under state law. Similarly, persons who allow the collection or harvest of food for distribution to needy individuals are generally protected from civil or criminal liability.

Other State Programs.

The Washington State Board of Health (Board) establishes, by rule, minimum standards for the prevention of food-borne illness. The Board's rules are based on the 2001 Food Code, which is a model code adopted by the United States Food and Drug Administration. Local jurisdictions may adopt more stringent standards than the ones adopted by the Board.

The Washington State Department of Agriculture (WSDA) Food Safety Program helps regulate the safety of Washington's food supply by inspecting food processing and storage facilities and their practices, managing several food processing licenses, providing technical assistance, and investigating consumer complaints and food-related emergencies.

Federal Agencies.

The United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) adopts a hierarchy intended to maximize food recovery, and minimize food waste. This policy prioritizes, in descending order, source reduction, the feeding of hungry people, the feeding of animals, industrial uses, composting, and, as a last resort, landfilling or incineration. In 2015, the EPA and the United States Department of Agriculture jointly announced a domestic goal of reducing food loss and waste by 50 percent by 2030.

Summary of Bill:

A goal is established for Washington to reduce wasted food by 50 percent by 2030. This reduction goal is to be measured against 2017 wasted food levels, which the Department of Ecology (ECY) may estimate using any combination of solid waste data reported to the ECY, including data from voluntary surveys.

In order to achieve the 2030 wasted food reduction goal, the ECY must consult with the Department of Agriculture (WSDA) and the Department of Health (DOH) to adopt a food waste reduction plan. This plan must include, in descending order of priority, strategies to:

- reduce wasted edible food;
- match edible food with food banks and other distributors to those who need it; and
- support other productive uses, such as animal feed, energy production, commercial uses, and compost.

Stakeholders must be consulted throughout the development of the plan, and the ECY may designate a stakeholder advisory panel. Alongside the plan, the ECY may recommend changes to state law that would help achieve the 2030 goals, and must explain any such recommendations in a report to the Legislature due on December 1, 2020.

Among the waste reduction strategies that a city or county may include in their local solid waste plan are the food waste and wasted food reduction strategies from the plan developed by the ECY, DOH, and WSDA. Programs that collect food waste, in addition to yard waste, are

identified as source separation strategies that may be implemented by cities and counties in their solid waste collection plans.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 9, 2018.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.