

SUCCESS STORY: REDUCING FOOD WASTE

Asian Food Center

Asian Food Center offers a wide selection of meat, fish, produce and Asian staples.

When the store began participating in the City of Beaverton's food scraps program in March 2018, Assistant Manager Sean Wang said: "it was easy and straight forward to set up the program." Now Asian Food Center is on their way to stopping food waste and saving money.

The Opportunity

In the beginning, Sean wasn't aware of the amount of food that was being wasted until he started closely tracking his waste collection service bills. He noticed the monthly spending was high and set out to reduce these costs by creating a strategy to prevent and reduce food waste.

The Process

Sean began a waste audit with Julane Potter, the Business Food Waste Coordinator for the City of Beaverton. Together, they tracked and measured what items were going into Asian Food Center's trash. Sean engaged his employees by explaining that they would collaborate with local experts to identify edible food that could be donated and inedible food to be composted. Together, they tracked and measured what items were going into Asian Food Center's trash.



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They discovered the main sources of waste included produce, meat and dry goods that had reached their Best-By date and were thrown out. They then identified a solution: they learned that many products including dry goods are suitable for donation after their Best-By date, so they set up a donation partnership with a local nonprofit. Inedible food waste is now composted or sent to farmers to be fed to livestock. They trained the staff to separate foods into these categories, reducing the likelihood that food would be thrown into the garbage.

The Results

In the first six months following the waste audit, Asian Food Center donated more than 3,000 pounds of food to Urban Gleaners, a nonprofit that collects food before it can go to waste and distributes it to dozens of sites throughout the Portland Metro area. They also were able to lower their waste collections bills by about \$500 a month – about 20 percent – and prevented a significant amount of food from being thrown away. This helps Asian Food Center save money while having a positive impact on the community and the environment. To other businesses considering a food waste audit, Sean says: “In the end, it was beneficial to the business, it reduced costs and helped us address food waste. If anybody’s on the fence about it, they should give a try.”

Learn more about how you can reduce food waste.

FoodWasteStopsWithMe.org

