North American Workshop on Food Waste Reduction and Recovery

Perspectives on Opportunities to Reducing Food Loss and Waste

March 2, 2017
Background

• VCMI team
  » International practitioners with focus on food waste
  » Expertise within numerous sectors – industry and policy

• FLW is an outcome
  » Determined by how businesses operate
  » Consumer FLW partly results from industry behaviour
  » Never occurs in isolation
  » Has multiple root causes

• Impact of government and industry misalignments
  » Environmental
  » Increased FLW
  » Differs by sector
The Complexity of Food Waste

"For every complex problem there is a solution that is simple, neat, and wrong."

Henry L. Mencken
FLW Indicates Business Model, Performance

- Market dysfunctions
- Value chain dysfunctions
“Consumers are picking off deals while retailers and suppliers are picking off each other.”
Changing Behaviour by Increasing Motivation to Act

Causal (vs. defensive) reasoning

- Genuine understanding
- Enthusiasm for action
- Sense of empowerment
- Enhanced confidence
- Increased opportunities
- Enriched human experience

Adapted from Fell & Russell (2000)
Three Broad Policy Options

1) Ad hoc
   » Opportunistically engage groups and individuals

2) Government driven
   » Promote need to reduce FLW, introduce tax and legislation

3) Partner with industry
   » Engage 3rd party expertise to assist implementation of voluntary agreements

• Common excuses for doing nothing
  » Insufficient data
  » Problem too great
  » Competing priorities and agendas
Top-Down Policy and Regulations

- Prescriptive limits, punitive symptom-driven legislation
- Unconstructive defensive dialogue

Dysfunctional Government and Value Chain Systems
- Lack of leadership / accountability
- Poor information
- Distrusting relationships
- Misaligned objectives
- Limited communication
Bottom-Up Policy and Regulations

• Descriptive targets, enabling focused legislation/regulations
• Constructive solution-driven dialogue

Functional Government and Value Chain Systems
• Industry/government/NGO cooperation and leadership
• Aligned objectives
• Collaborative value chain partnerships
• Information flows create transparency
• Commitment to continuous improvement
Further Considerations

• Ministerial policy and regulations audit
  » Map misalignments in roles, policies, legislation and regulations
  » Enable development of smarter regulations

• Effective measurement and reporting
  » Conduct value chain analysis, business case reporting
  » Common measurement and reporting standards
  » Engage industry
  » Household participation

• Target more effective/efficient use of resources
  » Align policies and regulations
  » Collaborate with industry
  » Consult academia, researchers
Thank you

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