



New ReFED Innovation and Policy Tools prove food waste reduction creates businesses and jobs; reveal opportunity to simplify regulation

- *Innovator Database tracks more than 400 commercial and nonprofit organizations that fight food waste while creating more than 2,000 new jobs. Over the last 5 years, more than 200 organizations have been founded, doubling the pace of innovation in food waste reduction.*
- *Policy Finder identifies opportunities to simplify federal and state policy to prevent food waste. For example, 43 states could remove burdensome date labeling restrictions, saving consumers and businesses more than \$29 billion per year.*

San Francisco, CA (April 18, 2017) – Today, [ReFED](#), a collaborative, cross-sector nonprofit committed to reducing the \$218 billion of food waste in the United States, unveiled two new tools: a database of innovative food waste solutions, and an interactive map that centralizes federal- and state-level food waste policy to assist advocates and policymakers.

“ReFED’s 2016 [Roadmap to Reduce U.S. Food Waste](#) identified concrete opportunities to save money and resources, feed people and create jobs,” said Chris Cochran, Executive Director of ReFED. “The Innovator Database and Policy Finder build on the *Roadmap* by creating a one-stop shop for stakeholders interested in understanding food waste policy and innovation – two levers that have the power to make change across sectors. These tools reveal that food waste reduction is both a source of viable, scalable business enterprise and a potentially significant job generator.”

ReFED’s Food Waste Innovator Database [[refed.com/innovators](#)] – a living compilation of 400+ commercial and nonprofit entities focused on reducing and preventing food waste – enables users to explore the dynamic and expanding food waste innovation sector, with solutions broken down by type and geography. The database will also help connect innovators to the private sector, government, foundations and investors to collaborate, fundraise and accelerate impact.

The fastest growing solution areas include **donations**, **new products**, and **secondary marketplaces** for food that would otherwise be sent to the landfill. Most innovators in ReFED’s database are for-profit (70%) with services offered nationally (55%), representing an emerging opportunity. ReFED will use existing insights and new data gleaned from the database to identify trends, growth areas and gaps in food waste innovation, ultimately helping drive development of more efficient, scalable solutions.

ReFED’s Food Waste Policy Finder [[refed.com/policy](#)] features an interactive map allowing users to navigate the landscape of federal and state laws and policies. Developed in partnership with Harvard Law School’s Food Law and Policy Clinic, the Policy Finder will help food businesses and food recovery organizations better navigate laws on **liability protection**, **date labeling**, **tax incentives**, **animal feed and waste bans**. At the same time, the tool highlights inconsistencies in existing legal frameworks and the opportunities for state and federal action.

“To reach the national 50 percent food waste reduction target, we need supportive policies at all levels of government. This year, more than a dozen states are considering new food waste legislation,” said Emily Broad Leib, Assistant Clinical Professor of Law at Harvard Law School and Director of the Food Law and Policy Clinic. “We hope this tool will help businesses and food recovery organizations better understand the applicable laws so that they can make better food recovery decisions, while also helping policymakers implement better laws and even experiment with new policies to reduce the waste of healthy, wholesome food.”



The tool affords unique insight into the state-level policy landscape, revealing positive trends in implementation, while highlighting clear opportunities for common-sense policy improvements. For instance, nearly half of all states have enacted food donation liability protections above the federal baseline, encouraging businesses to donate foods that might otherwise be wasted. On the other hand, of the ten states that generate the most food waste, California is the only one to offer state-level tax incentives to promote food donation, and is the only of the top ten food waste-generating states to accelerate the adoption of food waste solutions by establishing an organics waste recycling law.

“Tools like the Innovator Database and Policy Finder give public and private sector stakeholders the insights they need to make smart decisions that generate the most impact,” said Devon Klatell, Associate Director at The Rockefeller Foundation. “Food is wasted at every broken link in the supply chain, giving all of us a role to play in tackling this critical issue. Repairing those links depends on collaboration across sectors, and we need organizations like ReFED to identify and encourage the opportunities to do so.”

The new ReFED tools will build upon existing resources by more clearly identifying opportunities for impact. For example, the ReFED *Roadmap* estimates that of the \$18 billion in new financing needed to achieve a 20% food waste reduction in the U.S., \$800 million will come from private early-stage and growth equity, and \$1 billion from philanthropic impact investments.

“Meeting our national food waste reduction goal depends on the entrepreneurial spirit of innovators, action across the food system, and the strong commitment of funders like The Rockefeller Foundation and Walmart Foundation, and many others. We hope these tools will convene stakeholders who haven’t – or otherwise wouldn’t – collaborate on food system challenges, and guide them to use insights, backed by robust economics and data analysis, to identify proven solutions to immediately cut food waste,” said Cochran.

About ReFED

ReFED is a multi-stakeholder nonprofit, powered by an influential network of the nation’s leading business, nonprofit, foundation and government leaders committed to reducing U.S. food waste. It takes a data-driven approach to move the food system from acting on instinct to insights to solve our national food waste problem. Solutions already exist to cut food waste by 20% nationwide as identified from the [Roadmap to Reduce US Food Waste](#). ReFED has revolutionized the way the industry looks at food waste, by going beyond challenges to identify concrete opportunities to save money and resources, feed people and create jobs. In addition to the *Roadmap*, ReFED’s tools and resources help businesses, nonprofits, government, and investors put the most impactful solutions to reduce food waste into action and makes it easier for the food supply chain to meet the national 50% reduction goal by 2030.

Learn more about ReFED and explore the tools [here](#).

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