

Food Waste at Tennessee State Universities Main Café

Food waste management is a critical challenge in the food service industry, with significant environmental, economic, and social implications. This project will be investigating food waste at Tennessee State University's main café aiming to identify the primary sources of food waste, evaluate current mitigation strategies, and propose sustainable solutions suitable for the university's operational environment. Using a mixed-methods approach, the research combines quantitative data collection through waste audits with qualitative insights from staff and student surveys.

The objective of this study is to analyze food waste generation at Tennessee State University's main café by identifying key sources, evaluating the effectiveness of existing waste reduction strategies, and proposing sustainable solutions. This research aims to provide data-driven recommendations that enhance waste management practices, improve resource efficiency, and promote sustainability within the university's dining services. Preliminary findings reveal that overproduction, improper portion control, and lack of awareness among diners are the major contributors to food waste. While existing practices such as composting and donation of surplus food have shown to have a positive impact, their implementation faces challenges including logistical constraints.

Key words: Food waste, mitigation, waste reduction, sustainability