



MEDIA RELEASE 19 MAY 2020

Diverting food waste from landfill is gold for local councils and residents

A new research project aims to understand household behaviours around food waste in order to reduce the amount of food sent to landfill. It will promote a circular economy where the nutrients from food waste go back into the compost industry, and ultimately save greenhouse gas emissions from damaging our climate further when food waste rots in landfill.

The project is a collaboration between the Fight Food Waste CRC, East Waste, the University of Adelaide, Green Industries SA and sub-contractor Rawtec.

East Waste Chair Fraser Bell says that diverting food waste from landfill represents the single biggest financial and environmental opportunity for councils.

“Food waste is a valuable commodity and we hope to improve household bin disposal behaviour,” Mr Bell said.

“Through this new research, we will build a picture of the behaviour of our residents, including the levers that can influence positive and sustainable changes in their practices moving forward.”

University of Adelaide Executive Director Professor Wendy Umberger from the Centre for Global Food and Resources, said the project will use micro-waste auditing, ongoing waste disposal monitoring technology including waste-weighing, and novel household surveys to understand behaviour from a broad-section of the community.

“The improved understanding of food waste behaviour will ultimately allow research partners to design efficient programs to reduce household food waste from entering landfill.”

Typically, organic waste constitutes between 30-50% of what is placed in household landfill bins for collection. Australian’s generate 2.3 million tonnes of household food waste each year that currently goes to landfill according to the National Food Waste Baseline report.

Fight Food Waste CRC Chief Executive Officer Dr Steven Lapidge says this exciting SA project complements the Fight Food Waste CRC’s national research efforts focused on household food waste behaviour change.

“This is a big opportunity for Australians to save money through reducing household food waste, as well as to divert as much unavoidable food waste from landfill.

“Local governments across Australia can learn from this leading research project.”

END

The Fight Food Waste Cooperative Research Centre launched in July 2018, and brings together industry, research and the community to capitalise on Australia's food waste opportunities. Winning this fight can save Australia \$20 billion per annum in wasted food. Through its three research and development programs, the Fight Food Waste CRC will REDUCE food waste throughout the supply chain, TRANSFORM unavoidable waste into innovative products, and ENGAGE with industry and consumers to deliver behavioural change.

The Fight Food Waste CRC is funded by the Australian Government's Department of Industry, Science, Energy and Resources as part of the CRC Program that supports industry-led collaborations between industry, researchers and the community.

The University of Adelaide is a world-class research and teaching institution, centred on discovering new knowledge, pursuing innovation and preparing the educated leaders of tomorrow. Proudly ranked in the top 1% of universities in the world, the University of Adelaide attracts academic staff who are global leaders in their fields, along with the best and brightest students.

Green Industries SA is internationally recognised for improving resource efficiency and business productivity and helping South Australians to reduce consumption, waste and costs. Green Industries SA promotes the circular economy, resource efficiency and the conservation and recovery of scarce resources.

Further information please visit the Fight Food Waste CRC website www.fightfoodwastecrc.com.au. Interviews can be arranged through Tanya Wilkins, Communication Manager - 0439 958 824 or tanya@fightfoodwastecrc.com.au