

# FOOD WASTE SUMMIT 2026

FEBRUARY 2-4, 2026 | PALM SPRINGS, CA  
Westin Rancho Mirage Golf Resort & Spa

## EVENT SCHEDULE



7AM-5PM- Registration Open

8AM-2PM- Golf and Greet

2:30PM-3PM- Welcome Session

3PM-4PM- Breakout Sessions

4PM-6PM- Welcome Reception



• 8:00 AM - 2 PM:

### Golf and Greet

Tee off with Purpose- Start your summit experience on a high note with our Golf & Greet - a morning of fresh air, light-hearted competition, and intentional networking. This relaxed yet energizing event invites attendees to connect over shared passions and visionary thinking while enjoying a round of golf amidst scenic views. Whether you're swinging for birdies or simply enjoying the walk, this is a chance to build meaningful relationships, spark collaborations, and set the tone for a summit focused on impact and innovation.

• 2:00PM-2:30PM

### Break

• 2:30 PM - 3:00PM:

### Welcome Session

Welcome to a gathering of visionaries and changemakers. Dive into a world of innovation, where ideas flourish and collaborations ignite the future of the circular economy. Let's shape sustainability together.

• 3:00PM-4:00 PM:

### Breakout Session 1

#### From Surplus to Solution: Unlocking the Power of Food Donation

Power of Food Donation- Food waste and food insecurity are two sides of the same coin—and this session explores how smarter systems can bridge the gap. We'll dive into the economic and social value of food donation, unpack the infrastructure behind food rescue, and highlight the software platforms making it easier than ever to redirect surplus to those who need it most.

With food insecurity rates rising and millions of pounds of edible food going to waste, this conversation will spotlight the organizations, technologies, and partnerships that are turning excess into impact. Whether you're a retailer, distributor, nonprofit, or policymaker, you'll leave with actionable insights on how to build or support a donation strategy that's efficient, scalable, and deeply human-centered.

• 3:00PM-4:00 PM:

## Breakout Sessions 2

### Tackling SB1383 | Panel & Interactive Q&A

This session will focus on the strategies and regulations related to SB1383, a California bill aimed at reducing organic waste and increasing recycling efforts. The discussion will cover the requirements and implications of SB1383, including mandatory organic waste collection, food recovery programs, and compliance measures for businesses and municipalities. Participants will gain insights into how to effectively implement these regulations and the benefits of reducing organic waste.

• 3:00PM-4:00 PM:

## Breakout Sessions 3

### Healing the Waste – Food Recovery in Healthcare | Interactive Discussion

Hospitals and nursing homes are places of healing—but behind the scenes, they're often generating more food waste than you'd expect. From overproduction and storage challenges to patient-specific dietary needs, food waste in healthcare facilities adds up quickly—impacting both sustainability goals and operating budgets. This session unpacks how hospitals and care centers are tackling the issue head-on with smarter meal planning, waste tracking, staff education, and storage/disposal innovations. Discover how reducing food waste isn't just good for the planet—it's a strategic move toward healthier systems, lower costs, and more resilient healthcare operations.

• 3:00PM-4:00 PM:

## Breakout Sessions 4

### Shelf Life, Real Life – Rethinking Retail Waste from Product to Package | Showcase and Discussion

In the retail world, what doesn't sell can quickly become what gets tossed. This session explores how grocers, convenience stores, and retail brands are flipping that script—reducing shrink, rescuing surplus, and reimagining packaging for a circular future. We'll unpack innovations across the supply chain: smarter forecasting, dynamic pricing, donation programs, and compostable packaging that's built for both sustainability and shelf appeal. Whether you're in operations, merchandising, or sustainability strategy, this is your chance to see how retail is getting real about waste—and winning.

• 3:00PM-4:00 PM:

## Breakout Sessions 5

### Rooted in Renewal: The Future of Regenerative Agriculture

Dig deep into the transformative power of soil. This session explores how regenerative agriculture and soil health are reshaping the future of farming—from carbon sequestration to biodiversity and beyond. Join leading experts and innovators as we uncover practical strategies and bold ideas that nourish the land and sustain our communities. You will leave inspired and equipped to cultivate change from the ground up.

• 4:00PM-6:00 PM:

## Welcome Reception

### Kick Off the Summit in Style

Join us as we open the Food Waste Summit 2026 with an evening of vibrant connections and celebratory spirit. The Welcome Reception sets the stage for an inspiring week of dialogue, innovation, and collaboration. Mingle with fellow changemakers over locally sourced bites and refreshing beverages, enjoy lively entertainment, and toast to the shared mission of driving systemic change in the food waste industry. This reception is your invitation to connect, recharge, and get excited for what's to come



• 8:00AM-5:00 PM: **Registration Open**

• 9:00AM-10:00 AM: **Rising Collection Costs & Setbacks | Panel & Interactive**

Discussion- In recent years, the issue of food waste has become increasingly prominent, posing significant challenges for institutions and municipalities alike. This session will delve into the escalating costs associated with the collection and disposal of food waste, examining the financial strain it places on organizations. Additionally, we will explore the institutional setbacks that hinder effective waste management, including logistical hurdles, regulatory constraints, and the need for innovative solutions. Join us as we discuss strategies to mitigate these challenges and pave the way for a more sustainable future.

• 10:00AM-11:00 AM:

### Exhibition Hour and Coffee

• 11:00AM-12:00 PM:

### Breakout Session 1

#### Greenwashed & Glossed Over: Unpacking the Illusions in Food Waste Solutions

Not all that glitters is green. In this eye-opening session, we'll peel back the layers of food waste management to expose practices that look sustainable on the surface—but fall short in impact. From hauling scraps two hours in a diesel-powered dump truck to underutilized composting services, we'll explore how well-intentioned efforts can miss the mark when logistics, emissions, and true circularity are overlooked. Join industry leaders and skeptics alike as we challenge assumptions, spotlight misleading claims, and empower attendees to ask the hard questions that drive real change.

• 11:00AM-12:00 PM:

### Breakout Session 2

#### • Waste Not, Warm Not: Re-imagining Food Systems for Climate Action | Keynote

Food waste isn't just a bin problem—it's a climate problem. This session puts wasted food front and center in the sustainability conversation, exploring how reducing surplus and recovering nutrients can slash emissions, support soil health, and drive systemic change. From landfill diversion and methane reduction to regenerative practices and resource efficiency, we'll unpack the climate math behind every meal that doesn't go to waste. Join us to learn how small shifts in waste strategy can add up to big wins for the planet.

• 11:00AM-12:00 PM:

### Breakout Session 3

#### How Travel & Entertainment Are Tackling the Food Waste Crisis | Showcase & Interactive Discussion

From stadiums to cruise ships, airlines to concert halls—some of the world's most dynamic industries are getting creative about food recovery. This session dives into the bold strategies travel and entertainment leaders are using to minimize waste, improve operations, and make sustainability part of the show. Attendees will hear real-world success stories, explore scalable solutions, and uncover how this sector is driving circularity behind the scenes—one meal at a time.

• 11:00AM-12:00 PM:

### Breakout Session 4

#### From Back-of-House to Bold Moves: Tackling Food Waste in Restaurants | Showcase & Discussion

Top restaurants are adopting innovative approaches to handle their waste effectively. This session covers various methods that restaurants are using to manage waste, such as composting food scraps to reduce waste and create nutrient-rich soil, recycling materials like glass, plastic, and cardboard to minimize their environmental footprint, implementing better inventory management and portion control to reduce food waste, and partnering with local food banks and charities to donate surplus food. These practices not only help in reducing waste but also promote sustainability and environmental responsibility.

• 11:00AM-12:00 PM:

### Breakout Session 5

#### Game Day, Zero Waste: Tackling Food Waste in Sports Venues | Showcase & Interactive Discussion

Stadiums feed tens of thousands in a single afternoon—and often send just as much food to the landfill. This session dives into the playbook of sports venues, franchises, and concession operators who are rewriting the rules. From food recovery programs and composting efforts to innovative vendor partnerships and fan engagement, we'll explore how the sports industry is turning big waste into big impact. Whether you're in operations, sustainability, or sponsorship, discover how game day can be a win for both fans and the planet.

• 12:00PM-1:00 PM:

### Lunch Break

• 1:00PM-2:00 PM:

### Plenary Session 1

#### Tech That Transforms: Innovations in Food Waste Processing & Recovery | Showcase & Keynote Panel

From waste to resource—technology is redefining how we manage food waste across the supply chain. This session spotlights cutting-edge and proven solutions including drying operations, bioenergy systems, composting innovations, aerobic digestion, and advanced grinding, shredding, and separation equipment. Discover how these tools are driving efficiency, reducing environmental impact, and unlocking new value streams for manufacturers, processors, and municipalities. Whether you're exploring scalable infrastructure or upgrading existing systems, this session offers a front-row seat to the technologies shaping the future of sustainable waste recovery.

• 2:00PM-3:00 PM:

### Breakout Session 1

#### On the Move — Food Waste Hauling & Collection Strategies | Showcase & Discussion

From curbside bins to cross-country rail, this session dives into the tools and tactics that keep food waste flowing efficiently. We'll unpack the pros, cons, and practical use cases for dumpsters, roll-offs, dry vans, rail systems, and more—giving attendees a clear picture of what works best, where, and why. Whether you're scaling collection routes or just starting out, you'll leave with grounded insights and smarter options for moving organics with purpose.

• 2:00PM-3:00 PM:

## Breakout Session 2

### Compostables That Deliver – Real Products, Real Impact | Showcase and Q&A

Curious about what compostable products actually work in the real world? This session goes beyond theory and dives straight into what's available, practical, and ready to use. Featuring insights from industry leaders, we'll spotlight innovative packaging, plateware, and materials designed to meet operational needs and sustainability goals. Attendees will get a firsthand look at what's on the market today, how it performs in different environments, and how to start making smarter, more regenerative product choices right now.

• 2:00PM-3:00 PM:

## Breakout Session 3

### De-pack and Recycling | Showcase & Discussion

This session will delve into the methodologies and strategies for de-packing and recycling materials to minimize waste and enhance sustainability. The discussion will encompass the de-packing of cased goods and the subsequent recycling of these materials. Additionally, the session will address the best practices for recycling super sacks and Gaylord boxes, ensuring that these materials are processed in the most efficient and environmentally friendly manner.

• 2:00PM-3:00 PM:

## Breakout Session 4

### From Waste to Feed: Unlocking the Nutritional Power of Food Byproducts | Showcase & Interactive Discussion

What if yesterday's manufacturing waste could become today's animal nutrition solution? In this session, we'll explore how food processors are transforming byproducts into high-value feed ingredients—turning surplus into sustenance and waste into opportunity. Hear directly from experts about the science, safety, and supply chain behind this practice, and discover how it's fueling livestock performance, lowering feed costs, and closing the loop on food waste. This is circular economy thinking in action—with benefits that ripple from farm to processor to planet.

• 2:00PM-3:00 PM:

## Breakout Session 5

### Government approach to food waste/recent and upcoming regulations | Panel & Discussion

This session will focus on the government's strategies and regulations to address food waste. The discussion will cover recent and upcoming regulations aimed at reducing food waste, promoting sustainability, and ensuring compliance with environmental standards. Participants will gain insights into how these regulations impact various sectors and what measures can be taken to align with these policies.

• 3:00PM-5:00 PM: **Exhibition, Hors d'oeuvres & Networking Opportunities**

• 4:00PM-6:00 PM: **VIP Mixer Event- Invite Only**

• 8:00AM-11:00 AM: **Registration Open**

• 9:00AM-10:00 AM: **Plenary Session**

### Creating a Circular Economy | Showcase and Discussion-

This session will focus on the principles and practices of creating a circular economy, where resources are reused, recycled, and repurposed to minimize waste and environmental impact. The discussion will cover strategies and technologies that can be implemented to support a circular economy, including innovative waste management practices, sustainable product design, and efficient resource utilization. Participants will gain insights into how these practices can be adopted to create a more sustainable and resilient economy 1.



• 10:00AM-11:00 AM:

## Coffee and Exhibition

• 11:00AM-12:00 PM:

## Breakout Session 1

### Smart Moves – How Robotics & AI Are Powering the Future | Showcase & Discussion

From warehouses to restaurants and beyond, robotics and AI are transforming how work gets done. In this session, we'll explore real-world applications where automation is boosting efficiency, streamlining decision-making, and helping businesses innovate smarter—not harder. Attendees will get a front-row look at the latest tech, from intelligent sorting and predictive analytics to adaptive systems shaping the next wave of sustainability solutions. It's not just the future—it's happening now.

• 11:00AM-12:00 PM:

## Breakout Session 2

### - Fueling the Future: Funding Sustainability & Food Waste Innovation

Money meets mission in this dynamic session focused on unlocking financial pathways for sustainability. From federal grants and private funding to innovative financing models, we'll explore how organizations can secure support for food waste programs, green infrastructure, and circular economy initiatives. Whether you're launching a pilot project or scaling a proven solution, discover the tools, trends, and partnerships that can turn vision into impact—and ideas into action.

• 11:00AM-12:00 PM:

## Breakout Session 3

### Beyond the Numbers: Turning Scope 3 and Offsets into Climate Strategy

Climate leadership means looking beyond your own footprint. This workshop explores how companies are tackling Scope 3 emissions and leveraging carbon offset tracking to drive meaningful change across their value chains. From smarter sourcing and travel policies to emissions reporting and offset portfolios, we'll unpack how indirect impacts can become measurable wins.

The session will also showcase software and platforms designed to help organizations build and execute well-rounded sustainability plans—ones that are scalable, data-driven, and built for real-world impact. Whether you're just starting or refining your strategy, you'll leave with tools and insights to turn metrics into momentum.

• 11:00AM-12:00 PM:

## Breakout Session 4

### Chlorine Dioxide in Action: Safe, Effective Pathogen Control for Food & Produce

Food safety starts with smart sanitation. This session dives into the science and application of chlorine dioxide—a powerful, FDA-approved antimicrobial agent proven to eliminate *Listeria*, *E. coli*, *Salmonella*, and other harmful pathogens in food manufacturing and produce environments. Learn how this solution can be safely integrated into your operations without compromising product quality or consumer health. Experts will share case studies and data demonstrating how chlorine dioxide reduces contamination risks, minimizes costly recalls, and protects brand reputation—potentially saving companies hundreds of thousands annually.

• 12:00PM-1:00 PM:

## Breakout Session 5

### Smart Trays, Smarter Strategy – Tackling Food Waste in Education | Showcase & Discussion

-- From elementary cafeterias to campus dining halls, food waste in education adds up fast—and so do the opportunities to cut it. This session dives into the root causes of food waste in schools and universities, from overproduction to storage gaps and shifting student preferences. But beyond the back-of-house fixes, we'll also explore the funding strategies, data tools, and ROI stories that help sustainability leaders win over boards and unlock operational budgets. Join us to learn how districts and campuses are designing waste-smart programs that reduce costs, lower emissions, and reshape what sustainable food service can look like in education.

• 12:00PM-1:00 PM:

### Lunch Break

• 1:00PM-2:00 PM:

### Networking and Exhibition

• 2:00PM-3:00 PM:

### Closing Panel

#### - Implementing Change and Positively Impacting our Future | Panel, Keynote and Interactive Discussion

This closing panel will focus on the strategies and actions required to implement meaningful change and positively impact our future. The discussion will cover various approaches to sustainability, innovation, and community engagement. Participants will gain insights into how these practices can be adopted to create a more sustainable and resilient future.



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