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The statistics are sobering: In the United States, 63 million tons of food are wasted every year. Food waste accounts for 21 percent of all fresh water used in the United States, and takes up 21 percent of landfill volume. Waste happens at every stage of the supply chain between farm and table.

With this in mind, Sub-Zero launched Fresh Food Matters, an initiative to empower people to think fresh about the food they eat—and to educate and inspire them on food's far-reaching impact. [The first article in this series](#) explored some of these causes in depth, and we look here at effective, actionable solutions.

To address this problem on a micro and a macro level, we need innovative, multi-faceted solutions. Fresh food matters for our own health and for the health of our

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HOW THE COLD CHAIN CUTS FOOD WASTE

One third of food produced globally is wasted. That's more than enough to feed every hungry man, woman and child—800 million people worldwide. An important way to reduce food waste is to stop it from spoiling as it travels from the farm to the store to your kitchen.

Enter the Cold Chain.

This remarkable unbroken (and unseen) system of refrigeration keeps perishable foods from going bad and ending up in the trash. And food that stays fresh longer has a better chance of reaching everyone who needs it.

Keep scrolling to learn more.



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WE CAN DO

Waste reduction starts at the source, where food originates. Sixteen percent of food waste originates at farms because of loss during harvesting, storage, packing and transportation. One way to cut this waste is by adjusting agricultural subsidies that encourage excess production. Another is to use real-time technology to monitor storage and temperature conditions and communicate with retailers and wholesalers. As part of the Food Safety Modernization Act, recently passed by the Food and Drug Administration, by 2018, all food transport fleets will have to prove they maintained proper temperatures during shipping.

An additional source of agricultural waste is consumer preference for perfectly uniform vegetables—farms throw away what they know they can't sell. Finding outlets for unconventional-looking produce will reduce some of this waste. In India, for example, Rainbow Agri bills itself as "the internet of farmers," and, among other things, allows farmers to reach out directly to customers with their unsold produce.

THE NEED TO CHILL

Finally, longer term, changing our diets so we eat less meat (which requires enormous quantities of water to produce) and consume more local vegetables will also help agriculture become more sustainable, and encourage less waste.

Wipe away the frost to see the answers



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How much food loss is caused by improper temps?

How much food do cold chains cool in America?

WHAT
Business
CAN DO

In both the non-profit and for-profit sectors, organizations are innovating to address the problem. The retail/wholesale stage of the supply chain accounts for 40 percent of food waste, or 25 million tons a year in the United States. "Much of the food supply goes wasted not because the food is rotten or spoiled," said Ricky Ashenfeller, chief executive of Spoiler Alert, "but because food manufacturers,

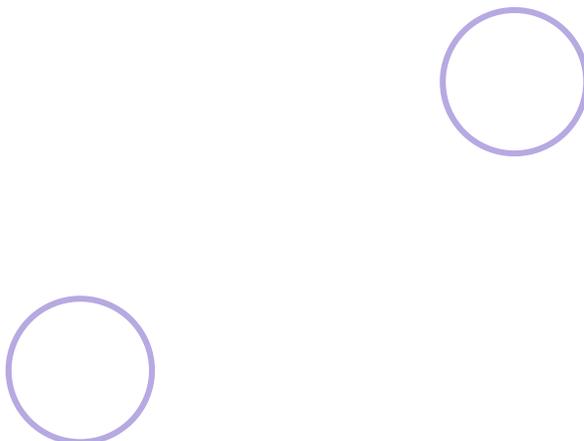
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to-business platform that connects suppliers and outlets, allowing businesses to quickly find ways to sell, donate or give away unsold food to nonprofits, including food banks, food kitchens and charities. Food Cowboy, an app that diverts extra catered food to charities, uses location-based technology to route food to users. After companies input specifics about the food they can donate and charities share what they need, the app makes the most efficient match. Another innovative company is Zero Percent, an online food donation marketplace that simplifies the process for commercial kitchens to donate unused food to soup kitchens.

These innovations are aimed squarely at food waste. Other companies have created products that have the end effect of reducing waste, even if that's not the business's primary goal. For example, mail-order kits that deliver exactly the right amount of ingredients for each meal have the net effect of reducing waste, because consumers who plan their meals realistically throw away less food.

From farm to road to market

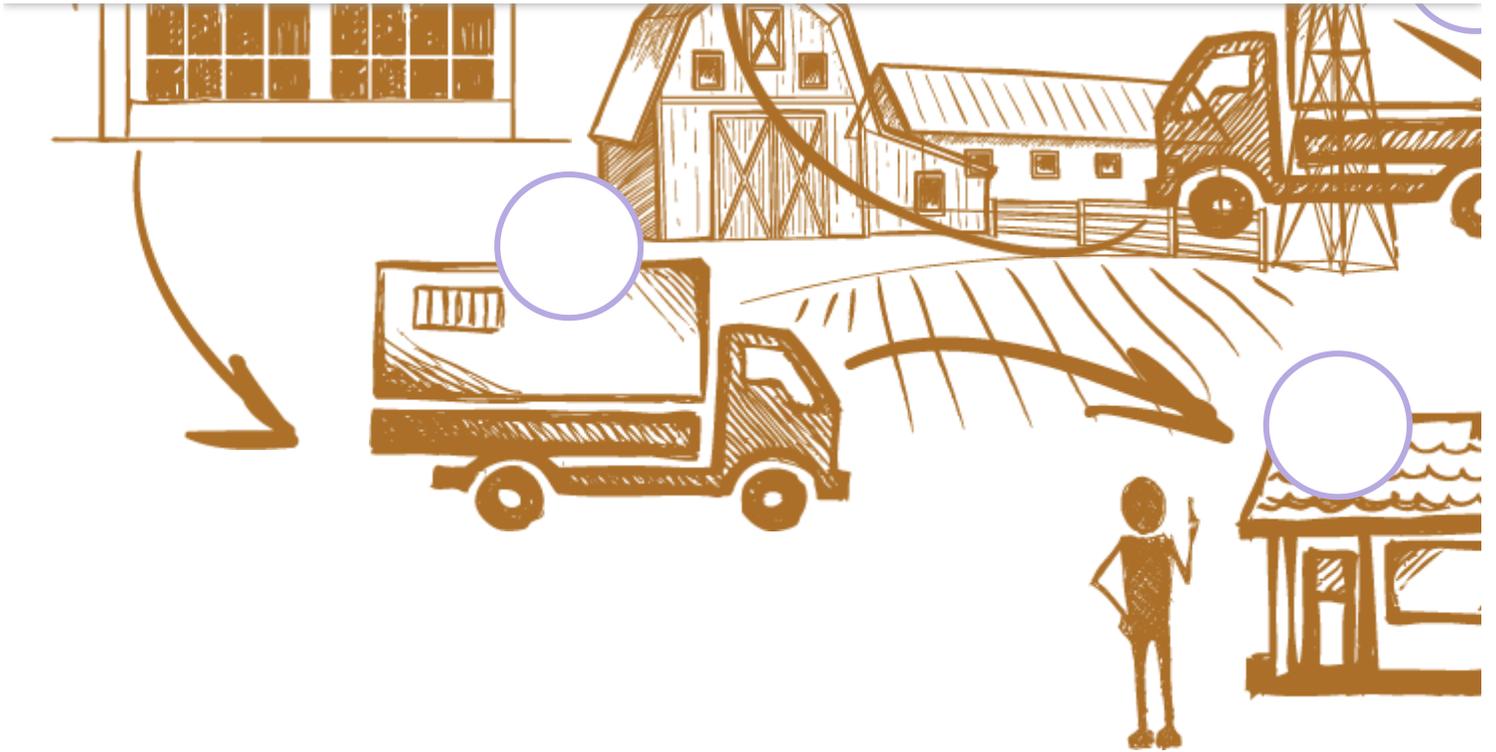
To keep food fresh each step of its journey, refrigerated warehouses, portable storage units and vehicles cool everything from Alaskan salmon to organic kale.



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COWBOYS TO THE RESCUE

“More than 14 loads of bananas, all in perfect condition, were waiting at a port for distribution to anyone who would accept them. We used our app to help identify some potential charities who were able to drive to the port (a few hours’ drive for some) and accept the bananas. Cold chain technologies allowed those loads to be held for a long time—keeping the bananas in good enough shape to donate or resell.”

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WHAT *Government* CAN DO

Government requirements, incentives and penalties play a role in reducing food waste as well. For example, one strategy with big impact is centralized composting, which is already starting to happen in cities like New York. Not only does this reduce the environmental effects of food waste by diverting food away from landfills, but it also stimulates an ecosystem of waste generators, haulers and processors—companies that will create new jobs as they move to meet requirements.

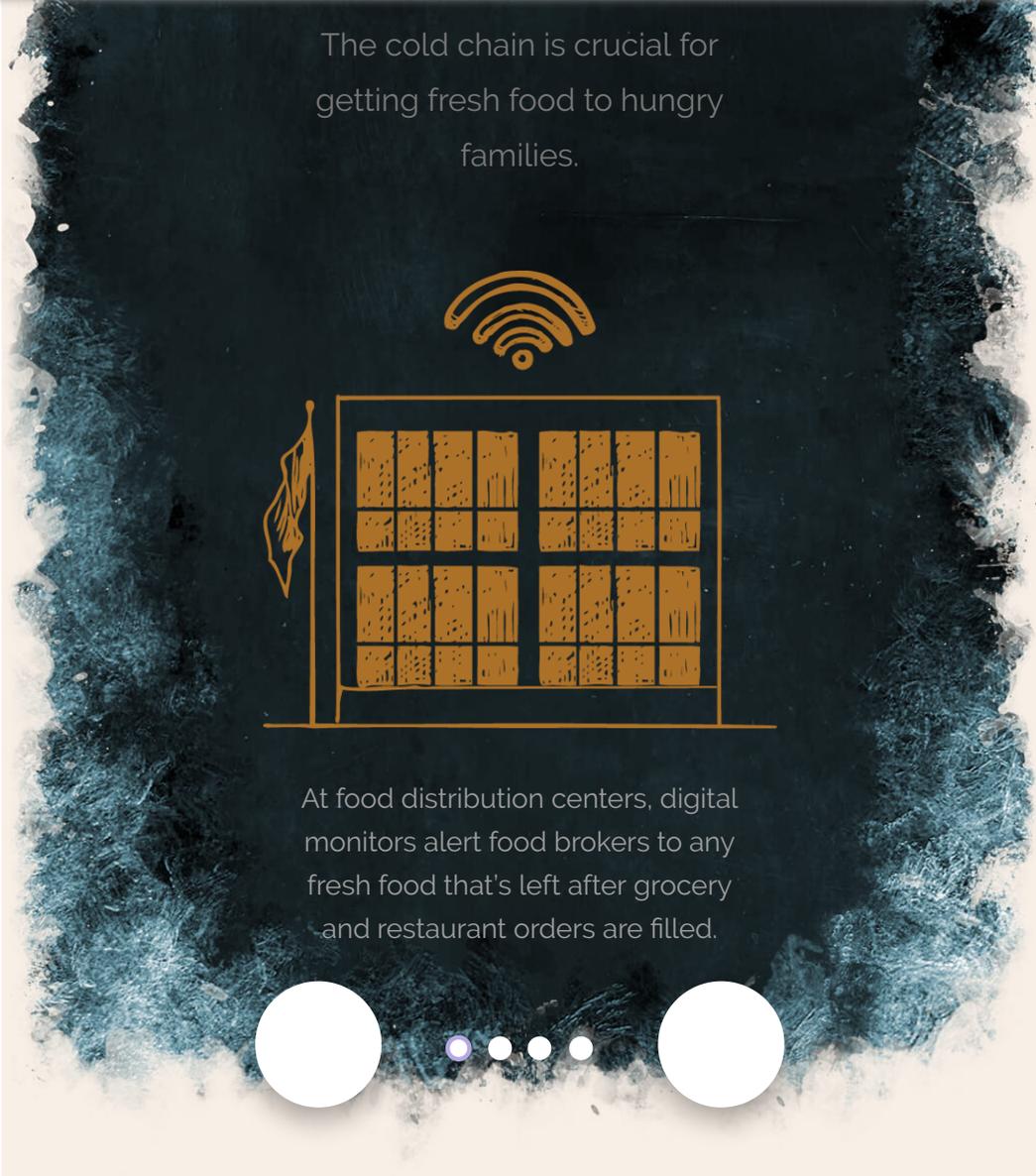
Centralized composting is not the only way that government can make a difference. In France, for example, supermarkets are banned from throwing away food; they must compost or donate leftovers. Germany's minister of agriculture recently announced the goal of cutting the country's food waste in half by 2030. Plans to achieve that goal are in their infancy, but one idea is to reform expiration dates so that consumers don't toss still-edible food.



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WHAT
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CAN DO

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adopting some better habits in our daily lives," said Dana Gunders, senior scientist at the Natural Resources Defense Council. "Every little bit counts."

For example, one website—savethefood.com—offers dozens of easy tips to help consumers reduce their food waste footprint. These include storing herbs in water to extend freshness, freezing individual meal servings, and trusting smell and taste more than "sell by" dates when deciding whether food is safe to eat.

Shopping with an awareness of food waste is another way consumers can make a difference. "Be realistic," Gunders said. "We have a tendency to live out our aspirations to eat well and cook more when in the grocery store aisle, but then don't follow through. If possible, shopping in smaller quantities more frequently can help."

The silver lining of a big problem is that it provides many opportunities for innovation, from all sectors. As farms, governments, businesses and individuals continue to educate themselves about the problem, we will find a way to not only reduce food waste but also divert food to those who need it.



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