

Food Waste Reduction at Concordia College

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Taste Not Waste (TNW) was a food waste reduction campaign launched in 2016 that aimed to reduce food waste in Concordia College's dining center by 50% by fall 2020. In spring 2020, the campaign was interrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic, resulting in an early ending. Today, the knowledge and attitudes toward food waste among Concordia community members are unknown. The purpose of this needs assessment was to examine the overall knowledge and attitudes toward food waste and food waste reduction efforts on campus among Concordia community members. Concordia students, staff, faculty, and administrators were invited to complete an online survey, which included knowledge-based questions on food waste, questions about participant perceptions of food waste, knowledge-based questions regarding the previous TNW campaign, and participant thoughts on the future of food waste reduction efforts on campus. Results revealed the while overall knowledge of food waste within the Concordia College community is lacking, the majority of participants believe that food waste is a preventable problem, feel positively about food waste reduction efforts, and are enthusiastic about potential future efforts to reduce food waste on campus. Many participants reported frustration with the perceived lack of effort on the part of Dining Services to mitigate food waste during food production. Such findings indicate a need for renewing food waste reduction efforts on Concordia's campus by providing factual information about efforts already underway by Dining Services, engaging community members in hands-on experiences related to food waste, and communicating via email practical tips for reducing food waste.