

Food Waste Awareness and Reduction Bill 2023

A Bill for an Act to establish food waste awareness and reduction procedures. This Bill shall mandate food wastage regulation within schools, businesses, communities and corporations, and shall establish a central Food Bank system. Food waste is a prevalent problem in Victoria, with Sustainability Victoria stating that Victorian households throw away 250,000 tonnes of edible food each year, alone. Moreover, Foodbank Victoria states that food waste is perpetuated by the issue of food insecurity, which is leaving over 540,000 households in Victoria hungry.

The existing system is not adequately responding to the respective issues of food waste and food insecurity. This Bill is introduced for the environmental and social welfare of Victorians and aims to resolve systemic issues. In doing so, it will uphold the basic human right to adequate food, as established by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Further, it seeks to reduce significant damage that is being done to our ecosystems and landscapes, which subsequently occurs because of food waste. The passing of this Bill is a crucial step towards a more sustainable and equitable system, which will protect Victorians' right to access food, and reduce irreversible damage to our ecosystem.

A Bill for an Act relating to Food Waste Awareness and Reduction.

To be enacted by the Y's Victorian Youth Parliament.

Part I - Preliminary

Clause 1 Purpose

The main purposes of this Act are;

- (a) To reduce food waste across the food supply chain;
- (b) To provide greater food security for Victorians experiencing food insecurity;
- (c) To increase regulation of Victoria's food industry;
- (d) To raise public awareness about reducing food waste and promoting sustainable practices.

Clause 2 Commencement

This Bill shall commence upon receiving assent from the Youth Governor of Victoria.

Clause 3 Definitions

In this Bill;

- (a) **Early learning centre** means local council-run Kindergartens and long day childcare centres;
- (b) **FWRB** means the Food Waste Regulation Board;
- (c) **Free items** means food items that are still edible but cannot be resold, which, within this Bill, are distributed for free;
- (d) **Small business** means any food business whose food waste each day does not exceed 20 kilograms;
- (e) **Spoiled food items** means any food items which are passed their marked use-by date, or have begun to visibly spoil due to ill-storage;
- (f) **State Food Bank** means a government funded organisation that collects surplus food waste from businesses, individuals, and government agencies;

- (g) **Recycling Victoria** means a dedicated business unit within the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP), providing strategic leadership for the waste and recycling sector;
- (h) **Re-sellable items** means items that are in good condition and have not reached their expiration date, which can be sold at discounted rates.

PART II — Establishment

Clause 4 Establishment of the Food Waste Regulation Board

- 4.1 The Food Waste Regulation Board (FWRB) shall be established.
- 4.2 The FWRB shall oversee the implementation of the regulation of food waste.
- 4.2 The regulation shall include;
 - (a) Food waste in corporations and businesses;
 - (b) Food waste in communities;
 - (c) Food waste in early learning centres and schools.
- 4.3 The FWRB shall establish a Food Bank in each Local Government Area (LGA);
 - (a) The FWRB shall conduct an annual audit of food waste processed by the State Food Banks.

Clause 5 Regulation of Food Waste for Hospitality Corporations and Businesses

- 5.1 All hospitality corporations and businesses shall be required to;
 - (a) Collect all food waste;
 - (b) Separate spoiled foods from non-spoiled foods.
- 5.2 Spoiled food items held by a hospitality business or corporation shall be composted.
- 5.3 Non-spoiled food items shall be donated to approved food charities.

Clause 6 Establishment of a Central Food Bank System

- 6.1 A state-wide Food Bank system shall be established.
- 6.2 Food banks shall be located in each LGA.
- 6.3 The main purposes of the Food Banks shall be;
 - (a) Collection of donated foods from companies or businesses;
 - (b) Processing of collected foods into;
 - (i) Re-sellable items;
 - (ii) Compostable items among collected food items;
 - (iii) Free items.

- 6.4 The re-sellable items shall be sold at discounted rates;
 - (a) Discounted rates shall generate revenue for the State Food Bank system;
 - (b) Discounted rates shall be reinvested in the operation and expansion of the system.
- 6.5 The compostable items shall be donated to;
 - (a) Community gardens;
 - (b) Schools;
 - (c) Other community-based agriculture initiatives.
- 6.6 The free items shall be distributed to individuals and organisations in need, including;
 - (a) Homeless shelters;
 - (b) Schools;
 - (c) Community-based organisations.
- 6.7 Each State Food Bank shall maintain records of;
 - (a) All food items received and distributed;
 - (b) All audits as mandated by the FWRB;
 - (c) Reports provided to relevant government departments and the public.

Clause 7 Food Compost Systems in Early Learning Centres and Schools

- 7.1 One composter shall be introduced inside every government funded early learning centre and school;
 - (a) The following items shall be compostable;
 - (i) Meat scraps;
 - (ii) Fish scraps;
 - (iii) Fruit scraps;
 - (iv) Dairy scraps.
- 7.2 One staff member shall be designated as the food waste officer. They shall be responsible for;
 - (a) Maintaining the composter;
 - (b) Undergoing training on use and maintenance of the composter upon its installation;

- (c) Applying for a new composter if the existing one is damaged;
 - (d) Training their fellow staff members on proper use of the composter;
 - (e) Overseeing and encouraging the use of the composter for children attending the centre.
- 7.3 All staff members are to undergo sustainability training as determined by the board.
- 7.4 Upon completion of online training, there shall be a shared responsibility to look after the composting system.

Clause 8 Community Composting Initiative

- 8.1 A community composting committee shall be established;
- (a) The committee shall consist of ten community members, including;
 - (i) Five young people between the ages of 12 and 25;
 - (ii) Five people above the age of 25.
 - (b) This committee shall work with the FWRB to ensure sustainable practices.
- 8.2 The community composting committee shall;
- (a) Host an annual sustainability information night;
 - (b) Oversee composting practices within the community;
 - (c) Establish pet waste bins.