



For Immediate Release

Second Harvest and Value Chain Management International release The Avoidable Crisis of Food Waste Report

New research shows 58% of food produced in Canada is wasted

(Toronto – January 17, 2019) Nearly 60 percent of food produced in Canada – amounting to 35.5 million metric tonnes – is lost and wasted annually. Of that, 32 percent – equalling 11.2 million metric tonnes of lost food – is avoidable and is edible food that could be redirected to support people in our communities. The total financial value of this potentially rescuable lost and wasted food is a staggering \$49.46 billion.

These unprecedented findings are the result of a year-long research project undertaken by Second Harvest, Canada's largest food rescue organization, and Value Chain Management International, a leading public and industry voice in the area of food waste. This ground-breaking report is being released today in Toronto.

The report, funded by the Walmart Foundation, is the first to use front-line, primary data from the entire food supply chain. It is also the first to create a standardized system of measurement that can be used by any food business – in Canada and globally – to track and reduce their food loss and waste.

"There is no social, environmental or business case for food waste, and yet it has become standard operating procedure in the food industry, not just in Canada but globally," said Lori Nikkel, CEO, Second Harvest. "But with this research, we all now have the data and the tools to transform this crisis into a triple-bottom-line win across the value chain."

Based on responses from more than 700 food industry leaders across Canada, The Avoidable Crisis of Food Waste identifies approximately 30 root causes of food loss and waste, including:

- The acceptance of waste by the food industry as the cost of doing business, a belief sustained by low tipping and landfill fees;
- Conservative best before dates that lead to industry and consumers throwing away food that is still safe and edible;
- Pressure on producers to provide 100 percent on-shelf availability and aesthetic perfection, particularly with fruits and vegetables, leading to over-production; and
- Reluctance in the food industry to donate safe, edible surplus food despite Good Samaritan legislation that already exists to facilitate donation.

The Avoidable Crisis of Food Waste also provides more than 100 actions for industry, industry organizations and government to begin to quantify food loss and waste, address the negative economic and environmental impacts, and support community food programs.

“There is more than enough food produced in Canada and the world that no one ever needs to be hungry. This report provides us with concrete solutions that will allow food to get to those who need it,” said Nikkel.

The Avoidable Crisis of Food Waste is available as a solution-focused Roadmap and a 122-page Technical Report from www.SecondHarvest.ca/Research.

About Second Harvest:

Second Harvest is Canada’s largest food rescue organization and expert in perishable food recovery. Every year food rescue expands to include more farms, manufacturers, distributors and retail. We work with hundreds of businesses across the food supply chain, reducing the amount of edible food going to waste, which in turn stops millions of pounds of greenhouse gases from damaging our environment. The food Second Harvest recovers is redirected to social service organizations and schools, ensuring people have access to the good food they need to be healthy and strong. Second Harvest is a global thought leader and continually innovates processes and shares methods, to create a better future for everyone.

www.SecondHarvest.ca

About Value Chain Management International:

Value Chain Management International (VCMi) has authored/co-authored several publications on food loss and waste and is a leading public and industry voice in bringing awareness to the opportunities and solutions surrounding food waste reduction, traceability, and the environment. VCMi measures waste within the overall analysis of food systems to create pragmatic and sustainable solutions for businesses and industry organizations along the value chain. VCMi applies specialized value chain diagnostic tools to detect where waste occurs and to determine how to eliminate it. VCMi then participates in the implementation of new practices to solve the issues and ensure successful outcomes. www.VCM-International.com

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