

BJ's Wholesale Club Becomes First Wholesale Club to Commit Nationwide to EPA's Food Recovery Challenge

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EPA

(Boston) – The U.S. EPA announces that BJ's Wholesale Club is the first wholesale club and the most recent participant in EPA's Food Recovery Challenge, a national initiative aimed at encouraging businesses and institutions to actively participate in food waste prevention, surplus food donation and food waste diversion from landfill or incineration. [EPA's Food Recovery Challenge](#) targets College and Universities, Supermarkets, Wholesale/Membership Clubs, Healthcare Facilities, Hospitality and venues that traditionally manage large quantities of food and food waste.

“Sending food waste to a landfill represents a missed opportunity to reduce costs, protect the environment and help our neighbors,” said Curt Spalding, regional administrator of EPA's New England office. “Through EPA's Food Recovery Challenge, New England Institutions like BJ's Wholesale Club are rethinking opportunities to reduce food waste going to landfills, and they are making a real difference for the environment and for their communities.”

According to EPA's [Municipal Characterization Report](#) Americans are wasting more than 36 million tons of food per year, 96 percent of which is thrown away into landfills or incinerators. The National Resource Defense Council estimates that this translates into a loss of approximately \$165 billion annually. At the same time, 14.9 percent of households in the U.S. were food insecure in 2011, meaning they did not know where their next meal would come from.

“Nationally, food waste contributes to approximately 13% of greenhouse gas emissions. Our partnership with the United States Environmental Protection Agency under the Food Recovery Challenge will help keep food out of the landfill and minimize greenhouse gas emissions in the communities we serve,” said Bill Peters, Assistant Vice President of Safety & Regulatory Compliance at BJ's Wholesale Club.

BJ's is headquartered in Westborough, Mass, and currently operates 203 Clubs in 15 states from Maine to Florida, and employs more than 25,000 Team Members. The company launched a chain-wide initiative, BJ's [Feeding Communities Program](#), in 2011 to help in the fight against hunger. In partnership with Feeding America, the nation's largest food bank network, BJ's Clubs donate unsold but still wholesome and nutritious produce, meat, poultry, fish and dairy to food banks and local agencies within the BJ's footprint. As of August, 2014 BJ's has donated over 22 million pounds of frozen meat, poultry and fish, produce, dairy and bakery products to food banks, which is the

equivalent of 18 million meals.

BJ's Feeding Communities Program aligns with the EPA's Food Recovery Hierarchy to Feed Hungry People.

"BJ's Wholesale Club is proud to join the United States Environmental Protection Agency's Food Recovery Challenge; we have a vested interest in addressing and helping to solve the very real problems of hunger prevention in our local communities," said Jessica Newman, assistant vice president of community affairs at BJ's. "At BJ's, what is not sold, is shared. Helping our neighbors gives us a chance to put our values into action while helping to save the environment. This work is something that our Members have come to expect and value."

EWPA's Food Recovery Challenge is part of EPA's Sustainable Material Management Program, which is based on the simple fact that wasted food has economic, environmental, and social impacts. Much of this [waste](#) is not waste at all, but actually safe, wholesome food that could potentially feed millions of Americans. Excess food, leftovers and scraps that are not fit for consumption and donation can be recycled into a nutrient-rich soil supplement. A full list of our 600 participants can be found at [Food Recovery Challenge](#).

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