

U.S. House Representatives Work with USDA to Address Food Waste

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- As previously covered on this blog, food waste is a major issue in the United States. Government estimates indicate that Americans waste between 30 and 40% of the overall food supply on an annual basis. According to the [USDA](#), consumers are responsible for nearly 90 billion pounds of food waste each year, which equates to 20% of the U.S. food supply. And while perfectly good food goes to waste, approximately [40 million Americans](#) are food insecure.
- On April 30, 2018, Congressman David Young (R-IA) and Congresswoman Chellie Pingree (D-ME) launched a [House Food Waste Caucus](#) to explore opportunities to reduce food waste. The bipartisan Caucus will explore ways to promote food waste reduction across the food supply chain, provide educational opportunities to congressional members and staff, support efforts to reduce food waste at federal agencies including USDA and EPA, and collaborate with diverse stakeholders to highlight food waste success stories.
- In connection to the Caucus, on May 8, 2018, USDA Secretary Sonny Perdue hosted a food waste roundtable with Reps. Pingree and Young, food industry leaders, and non-profit groups to raise awareness around food waste and to discuss solutions with leaders throughout the entire food supply chain. Secretary Perdue stated the need to “change the culture and adopt a holistic approach” to tackle food waste.
- The House Caucus is not the first attempt by Congress to address food waste. In 2016, Rep. Pingree and Senator Richard Blumenthal (D-CT) introduced H.R. 5298 – [The Food Date Labeling Act](#), which aimed to establish a uniform national system that distinguishes between foods bearing a label indicating peak quality from foods bearing a label that indicates a potential safety risk if they are consumed after the listed date. The bill would also ensure that food is allowed to be sold or donated after a quality-based date. And while the bill was not enacted, the House Caucus demonstrates Congress’s continued effort to reduce food waste.

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