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Can you taste the waste of water?

By Faith Attaguile



In an earlier [post](#) we talked about how much water it takes to make the food we eat. But do you know how much water is in the food we throw away?

Take a look at this graphic and see:



Think about it.

We throw away almost half of all the food we buy. Forty percent!

When we use 80 percent of our available freshwater to grow our food ... and trash 40 percent of what we buy ... well, that's a lot of wasted food and water.

Today, we waste food each year [equal to](#):

- **240 pounds** for every American
- **\$2,275** for the "average" American family of four
- **\$165 billion** in the U.S.

And when we throw away all that food ... worth so much money ... we're also throwing away **25 percent** of our precious and limited freshwater resources.

That's how much water it takes to make the food we throw away.

Why do we trash so much food and water?

First, companies profit from this waste

It's actually quite simple: The more food people buy, the more the food industry profits.



**Money in the pocket
comes first.**

**Caring for the planet
comes last.**



In this system, growing really good food is an afterthought. Their motto could be, "Sell food to the people who have the money to buy it ... and forget the others."

Second, "Food comes from the grocery store. Who cares what we do with it?"

Thing is, food doesn't really come from the grocery store. It comes from farmers. It used to be we knew the farmers who grew our food. We understood how much work it took to grow it.

So we didn't buy more than we needed and ate what we had. And what we didn't eat, we composted to make better soil for the next harvest!

Nowadays, "food" is just one more thing we buy at the store. We don't think about how it grows. Or what would happen if it weren't there anymore.

We don't think about why we throw so much of it away.

Third, we forget the people who can't afford it

While we trash 40 percent of the food we buy, many people go hungry:



Some say that's because there's not enough food to go around. But the [World Hunger Education Service](#) disagrees.

They say we have enough food for everyone. People are hungry because they simply can't afford to buy the food they need.

This video tells the real story:

[VIDEO] [Taste the Waste of Water](#)

How to fix the broken system

We live in a "one-crop-shop" world.

Regions don't grow a variety of crops to feed themselves like before. Instead, they grow just one crop (like corn) for export. And depend on imports to feed their families.

That has created great food insecurity in poor countries, but now rich countries are feeling the pinch, too.

How much of a pinch? Well, if food imports were suddenly cut today, our cities and towns have about three days' food supply to live on. Kind of scary, right?

So the system is broken. What can we do?

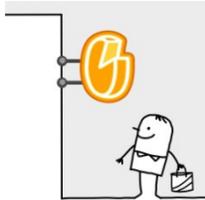
Well, we can begin by rebuilding local food economies ... right in our own neighborhoods.

Three ways to begin the change

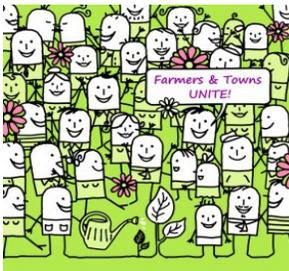


1. Grow food in our own gardens.

But reach out and help others discover how to grow food sustainably in their backyards or community gardens, too. (This is important!)



2. Support small community businesses. Connect with and promote shops providing local food like cheeses, breads, preserves, soaps, etc. (Don't buy from chains like Starbucks. Set up your own local café using Fair Trade coffee!)



3. Make friends with your local farmers.

Network with and support farmers growing a variety of organic produce, meat and poultry. Create strong strong links between food and fork right where you live.

A town that's "just doing it"

If you think changes like these are impossible, think again.

Tired of "tasting the waste of water" (along with some other bad stuff), many towns worldwide (just like yours) are making these changes, and more.

Check out this great video to see how one town in the UK is doing this. Then begin changing things in your own community, too:

[VIDEO] [My town in transition](#)

Totnes is an exciting example of what can be done when people decide to begin the ride and *be the change*.

Why not start where you live, too?

Faith spends most of her time at FrontlineCopy.com writing for the Green World. Connect with her on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), and [Google+](#)