

Senator George J. Mitchell Center for Sustainability Solutions
Student Internship 2021: “Triple Bottom Line Solutions for Food Waste in Maine”
Solution 1 Track & Measure to Reduce Food Waste

Forty percent of food produced is never eaten, and for Maine’s rural farms and communities the food waste challenge is even greater. Maine’s food waste has high economic costs: the direct cost of food loss plus related costs for water, labor, energy and soil used for uneaten food, the social costs: the 12th highest rate of food insecurity in the US with 1 in 5 children being food insecure; and the environmental costs: negatively impacting precious natural resources and climate change.

In 2019 an interdisciplinary team was funded to help identify triple-bottom-line solutions to end food waste in Maine. The team worked with Maine’s major food business and organization stakeholders including retailers, distributors, farmers, manufacturers, hospitality, hospitals, schools, Congresswoman Pingree’s office, and others to identify food waste solutions that would deliver major economic, social and environmental benefits for Maine.

We identified a strategic plan for six inter-connected solutions that will end food waste in Maine and deliver those important triple bottom line benefits (profits, people, planet). This internship position will help refine, launch and track our “Solution 1 – Track & Measure Food Waste” pilots with stakeholders, Northern Light Health, Portland Pie and others, to ensure that all triple bottom line goals are met or exceeded and that the solution can successfully be expanded statewide. Also continue work on a consumer/home version of the “Track and Measure to Save” system.

Mitchell Center Student Intern – Solution 1 (Track and Measure Food Waste)

- ***Ability to work at least 7 hours per week (AY) or at least 20 hours per week (Summer)***
- ***Passion for triple bottom line based sustainability solutions – food interest a plus***
- ***Strong communication (verbal/interpersonal and written) experience***
- ***Enjoys working with a diverse team***
- ***Curious and creative problem-solver***
- ***Strong Excel, PowerPoint and Zoom***
- ***Good organization skills, detail orientated***
- ***Strong data analytical skills***
- ***Ability to manage a project***
- ***Junior or senior standing or equivalent work/study experience***
- ***Multi-semester option available***

Key Responsibilities:

- Continue best-practice food waste solutions research
- Identify and build relationships with key Maine food system stakeholders
- Prepare reports and presentations to communicate with stakeholder groups as needed
- Help develop, launch and track “Solution 1 – Track & Measure Food Waste” - a best practice-based food waste reduction pilot focusing on triple bottom line goals and statewide scalability
 - Develop and lead food waste tracking pilot with key stakeholders (above)
 - Implement/improve Mitchell Center Excel spreadsheet-based food waste tracking system
 - Provide excellent service and support to stakeholders to insure successful pilots
 - Manage and organize food waste data collection to insure pilot success
 - Complete data analysis to establish triple bottom line results and maximize pilot learning
 - Identify additional stakeholder pilot opportunities
- Work with team to support success of all six solution pilots
- Promote and build awareness for Mitchell Center’s Maine food waste solutions project

Senator George J. Mitchell Center for Sustainability Solutions
Student Internship 2021: “Triple Bottom Line Solutions for Food Waste in Maine”
Solution 2: Maine Food Rescue System

In 2015, a Mitchell Center multidisciplinary team identified eliminating food waste as the single most important issue to ensure a more sustainable waste system in Maine. In 2019, a new interdisciplinary team was funded to help identify triple-bottom-line food waste solutions for Maine.

The team worked with Maine’s major food business and organization stakeholders including retailers, distributors, farmers, manufacturers, hospitality, hospitals, schools, state and congressional representatives, and others to identify food waste solutions that would deliver major economic, social and environmental benefits for Maine.

At this point, six (6) food waste solutions have been identified, and the team is working with key stakeholders to develop and launch specific pilots related to each of the six solution areas. This internship position will help pilot a statewide system to match Maine food available with food need to recover potentially wasted Maine food to feed people (Maine Food Recovery Hierarchy). This pilot will insure that this solution reduces waste while meeting all triple bottom line goals and that the solution can successfully be expanded statewide.

Mitchell Center Student Intern – Solution 2: Maine Food Rescue System - Summer/Fall 2021

Ability to work 7 hours per week (school year) and 20 - 40 hours per week (Summer 2021, Fall 2021)

Has strong passion to recover food to feed people

Likes personal interaction, good communicator and appreciates teamwork

Naturally curious and creative problem-solver

Detail-oriented, organized with strong follow-through

Junior or senior standing or equivalent work/study experience

Available to start immediately and ideally continue through end of Fall 2021

Key Responsibilities:

- Continue best-practice food waste solutions research around food recovery/feeding people
- Identify and build relationships with key Maine food donors, feeding partners, and Food Rescue US
- Prepare reports and presentations to communicate with key stakeholder groups as needed
- Develop, launch and manage our “Solution 2 – Food Rescue System,” pilot focused on reducing waste while achieving triple bottom line goals and statewide scalability
 - Use Food Rescue US software system to develop a Food Rescue MAINE food recovery pilot
 - Initiate, track, measure, and analyze the food rescue activity from new Food Rescue MAINE food recovery pilot
 - Set-up and grow pilot working with a large and diverse stakeholder group (food donors/producers, feeding partners, Maine Feeding Partners, Food Rescue US, volunteers)
 - Utilize Mitchell Center food donation toolkit to increase food recovery/donations
 - Provide excellent service and support to key stakeholders to insure successful pilot
 - Collect, organize and analyze pre/post food waste/food rescue data to insure pilot success
- Support success of all six solution pilots and teams
- Promote and build awareness for Mitchell Center’s food waste solutions

Skills Needed:

- Strong written/verbal communication
- Organization and detail orientation
- Critical thinking
- Strong people and customer service orientation
- Comfortable with and enjoy using computer organizational software - PowerPoint and Zoom
- Project management
- Teamwork

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Student Internship 2021: “Triple Bottom Line Solutions for Food Waste in Maine”
Solution 3: Create A Maine Food Waste Consumer Education Campaign

Forty percent of food produced is never eaten, and for Maine’s rural farms and communities the food waste challenge is even greater. Maine’s food waste has high economic costs: the direct cost of food loss plus related costs for water, labor, energy and soil used for uneaten food; social costs: the 12th highest rate of food insecurity in the US with 1 in 5 children being food insecure; and environmental costs: negatively impacting precious natural resources and climate change.

In 2019 an interdisciplinary team was funded to help identify triple-bottom-line solutions to end food waste in Maine. The team worked with Maine’s major food business and organization stakeholders including retailers, distributors, farmers, manufacturers, hospitality, hospitals, schools, Congresswoman Pingree’s office, and others to identify food waste solutions that would deliver major economic, social and environmental benefits for Maine.

We identified a strategic plan for six inter-connected solutions that will end food waste in Maine and deliver those important triple bottom line benefits (profits, people, planet). The proven most cost-effective of these six solutions is our Solution #3 – Create and implement a Maine consumer food waste awareness/education/action communication campaign. Changing “hearts and minds” of Maine people will be key to ending food waste in Maine.

Mitchell Center Student Intern – Solution 3 Create A Consumer Communication/Marketing Campaign

- ***Ability to work at least 7 hours per week (AY) or at least 20 hours per week (Summer)***
- ***Has a strong passion for triple bottom line based sustainability solutions – food interest a plus***
- ***Enjoys working with a diverse team***
- ***Curious and creative problem-solver***
- ***Junior or senior standing or equivalent work/study experience***
- ***Multi-semester option available***

Key Responsibilities:

- Develop, implement and track “Solution 3 – Maine Consumer Education Campaign” - a best practice-based food waste communication/marketing campaign to deliver triple bottom line goals:
 - define target audience and story/message
 - share compelling food waste data
 - identify what consumers/communities can do to solve the problem
 - provide tangible reinforcement/benefits for changing behavior
 - share successes to create larger statewide momentum and create a new “norm”
 - develop the effective communication “tools”: ads, postcards, brochures, magnets, website/Facebook page, Instagram, blogs, community events, and challenges
 - create a strategic channel plan to build maximum education
- Work with team to support success of all six solution pilots
- Promote and build awareness for Mitchell Center’s Maine food waste solutions project

Skills Needed:

- Strong written/verbal communication
- Customer or people-focus
- Organized and attention to details
- Critical thinking
- Design and creative ability
- Zoom, PPT, Excel and Google suite
- Project management
- Teamwork

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Student Internship 2021: “Triple Bottom Line Solutions for Food Waste in Maine”
Solution 4: Build Maine’s Food Processing Infrastructure

Forty percent of food produced is never eaten, and for Maine’s rural farms and communities the food waste challenge is even greater. Maine’s food waste has high economic costs: the direct cost of food loss plus related costs for water, labor, energy and soil used for uneaten food; social costs: the 12th highest rate of food insecurity in the US with 1 in 5 children being food insecure; and environmental costs: negatively impacting precious natural resources and climate change.

In 2019 an interdisciplinary team was funded to help identify triple-bottom-line solutions to end food waste in Maine. The team worked with Maine’s major food business and organization stakeholders including retailers, distributors, farmers, manufacturers, hospitality, hospitals, schools, Congresswoman Pingree’s office, and others to identify food waste solutions that would deliver major economic, social and environmental benefits for Maine.

We identified a strategic plan for six inter-connected solutions that will end food waste in Maine and deliver those important triple bottom line benefits (profits, people, planet). This internship position will help refine, launch and track our “Solution 4 – Build Maine’s food processing infrastructure” which seeks to develop simple, flexible fresh food processing solutions that creatively re-imagine Maine’s ag food surplus not as potential “waste” but as potential new shelf-stable, value-added local products = “upcycled food” that can help end Maine’s food waste, reduce food insecurity, and build our economy – a win-win-win!

Mitchell Center Student Internship 2021 – Solution 4 “Build Maine’s Food Infrastructure”

- ***Ability to work at least 7 hours per week (AY) or at least 20 hours per week (Summer)***
- ***Passion for triple bottom line based sustainability solutions – food interest a plus***
- ***Enjoys working with a diverse team***
- ***Curious and creative problem-solver***
- ***Strong written/verbal communication skills; interpersonal and group***
- ***Good quantitative skills***
- ***Organized and detail oriented***
- ***Comfortable with Zoom, PPT, Excel and Google suite***
- ***Junior or senior standing or equivalent work/study experience***
- ***Multi-semester option available***

General Learning Objectives

- To identify specific and measurable triple-bottom-line (economic, social, and environmental) goals to achieve real results to challenging problems.
- To apply academic learning to real-world problem-solving
- To develop critical thinking skills through use of stakeholder insights, best-practice research, and diverse teams for real-world problem-solving
- To develop teamwork skills as part of UMS interdisciplinary faculty/student teams
- To translate passion into positive results through a systematic human-centered (stakeholder-driven) approach to problem-solving
- To develop real-world business and organizational skills and insights
- To develop valuable career relationships and networks
- To learn to “lead” without authority in order to achieve project goals
- To strengthen communication skills - both written and verbal

Project Objectives:

- Build a sustainable, circular “upcycled” food processing infrastructure that promotes Maine economic growth, community resilience, and natural resource protection.
- Identify key circular food system infrastructure and supply chain elements – raw materials suppliers (farms/ag groups, transportation, processing, retailers/wholesalers
- Engage with stakeholders across key target sectors – Maine farms, manufacturers, food service buyers, grocery retailers, grocery, feeding agencies – to gain feedback and results
- Work with Mitchell Center student/faculty team to share ideas that strengthen your specific solutions and more effectively reduces food waste in Maine.
- Develop food processing infrastructure recommendation that meets goals
- Develop PPT, grant funding, partnerships, research as needed to further project
- Represent the Mitchell Center as a student intern and expert on Maine Ag Food Surplus & Processing
- Work with team to support success of all six food waste solution pilots
- Promote and build awareness for Mitchell Center food waste solutions

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Student Internship 2021: “Triple Bottom Line Solutions for Food Waste in Maine”
Solution 6: Pursue Landfill Diversion for Maine Food Waste

In 2015, a Mitchell Center multidisciplinary team identified eliminating food waste as the single most important issue to ensure a more sustainable waste system in Maine. In 2019, a new interdisciplinary team was funded to help identify triple-bottom-line food waste solutions for Maine.

The team worked with Maine’s major food business and organization stakeholders including retailers, distributors, farmers, manufacturers, hospitality, hospitals, schools, Congresswoman Pingree’s office, and others to identify food waste solutions that would deliver major economic, social and environmental benefits for Maine.

At this point, six (6) food waste solutions have been identified, and the team is working with key stakeholders to develop and launch specific pilots related to each of the six solution areas. This internship position will help refine, launch and track our “Solution 6 – Food Recycling” pilots in select Maine communities (Kennebec Valley and others) to ensure that all triple bottom line goals are met or exceeded and that the solution can successfully be expanded statewide.

Mitchell Center Student Intern – Solution 6: Food Recycling - Summer/Fall 2021

Ability to work 7 hours per week (school year) and 20 - 40 hours per week (Summer 2021, Fall 2021)

Passion for triple bottom line (profit, people, planet) sustainability solutions – food interest a plus

Likes personal interaction, good communicator and appreciates teamwork

Naturally curious and creative problem-solver

Detail-oriented, organized with strong follow-through

Junior or senior standing or equivalent work/study experience

Available to start immediately and ideally continue through end of Fall 2021

Key Responsibilities:

- Continue best-practice food waste solutions research
- Identify and build relationships with key Maine community and food recycling stakeholders
- Prepare reports and presentations to communicate with stakeholder groups as needed
- Develop, launch and manage our “Solution 6 – Food Waste Recycling,” pilots focused on achieving triple bottom line goals and statewide scalability
 - Track, measure, and build new food recycling pilots in Winslow and other KV communities
 - Gather and analyze pre-launch town MSW/food waste data to develop economic models to establish target participation rates, food waste diversion rates, and triple bottom line benefits
 - Manage pilots working with a large and diverse stakeholder group (KVCOG, town leadership, public works, transfer station/site operators, DEP, haulers/composters/AD)
 - Insure consistent food waste education and awareness campaign to support pilots
 - Provide excellent service and support to stakeholders to insure successful pilots
 - Collect and organize pre/post MSW and food waste data to insure pilot success
 - Analyze post-pilot data to establish triple bottom line results and pilot scalability
- Support success of all six solution pilots and teams
- Promote and build awareness for Mitchell Center’s zero food waste solutions

Skills Needed:

- Strong written/verbal communication
- Organization and detail orientation
- Critical thinking
- Strong people and customer service orientation
- Strong Excel skills as well as PowerPoint and Zoom
- Project management
- Teamwork