

Best Before Date (BBD): the expected amount of time that an unopened product, stored under conditions appropriate for that specific product, will retain its freshness, nutritional value, and/or taste

Community Partner

City of Vancouver

Planning, Urban Design, and Sustainability Department

About:

Zero Waste 2040 Action Plan - Initiative to reduce waste to zero by 2040

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The Issue



BBDs are misunderstood as indications for food safety³ i.e. Confused with "Expiration date", "Use by", etc.

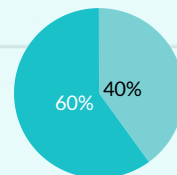


Resulting in one of the top 3 reasons for wasted food at home³



We've been asked to provide our community partner with public perceptions of BBD within the city of Vancouver

Why it Matters?



60% of food produced in Canada is wasted = 35.5 million metric tonnes!⁴

32%

\$49.46 billion

of wasted food is edible & could be used to nourish food insecure populations

= 11.2 million metric tonnes!⁴

OUR APPROACH:

Review Literature

Identify survey items to ask public on their misconceptions



Create Survey

Q1: Asks respondents to choose the correct definition of BBDs



Q2: Relates respondents' perception BBDs with their food wasting behaviour

Conduct Survey



For higher-income populations in active pursuit of a healthier lifestyle



Cheapest Grocery Store in Vancouver



Increase number of responses!

FINDINGS:

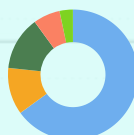
60 Responses Total!

Sources



Whole Foods (21.67%)
Sunrise (58.33%)
Online (20%)

Age



18-34 (65%)
35-45 (11.67%)
46-54 (13.33%)
55-64 (6.67%)
65+ (3.33%)

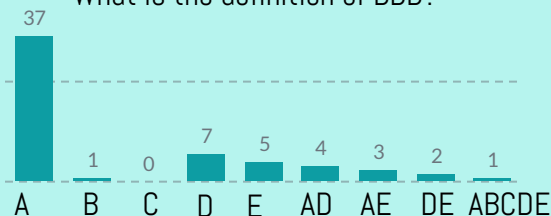


Studies have shown that: younger adults have more food waste than older adults



To get more diverse responses from Consumers shopping discounted items nearing expiration dates vs. High-standard quality items

What is the definition of BBD?

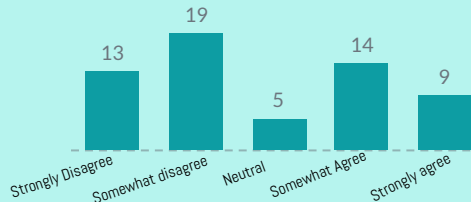


98.3% Did not choose B, unaware that items that last 90 days or less must have BBDs

61.67% Chose A, understanding that BBDs indicate quality, and not food safety

100% Did not choose the correct answer, [AB]

What is the definition of BBD?



53.3% of respondents overall disagree with discarding food past the BBD

38.3% of respondents overall agree with discarding food past the BBD

NEXT STEPS:

Expand Survey to a larger sample size to better understand the range of misconceptions

Create targeted educational strategies

Reflect on impact of educational strategies to reduction of food waste

References:
1. Canadian Food Inspection Agency. (2019, December 12). Date labelling on pre-packaged foods. Retrieved February 17, 2020, from <https://www.inspection.gc.ca/food-safety-for-industry/information-for-consumers/fact-sheets-and-infographics/date-labelling/eng/1332357469487/1332357545633>
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3. CityStudio: How Does the Public Understand "Best Before" Dates? (n.d.). Retrieved from <https://ifs350.landfood.ubc.ca/community-projects/2020-winter-projects/28-2/>
4. Second Harvest. (n.d. The Avoidable Crisis of Food Waste. Retrieved from <https://secondharvest.ca/research/the-avoidable-crisis-of-food-waste/>
5. About CityStudio Vancouver. (n.d.). Retrieved February 6, 2020, from <https://citystudiovancouver.com/what-we-do/3>. About CityStudio Vancouver. (n.d.). Retrieved February 6, 2020, from <https://citystudiovancouver.com/what-we-do/>

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