

[First Reprint]

ASSEMBLY JOINT RESOLUTION

No. 174

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

218th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED OCTOBER 29, 2018

Sponsored by:

Assemblyman PEDRO MEJIA

District 32 (Bergen and Hudson)

Assemblyman DANIEL R. BENSON

District 14 (Mercer and Middlesex)

Assemblywoman ANNETTE QUIJANO

District 20 (Union)

Assemblywoman YVONNE LOPEZ

District 19 (Middlesex)

Co-Sponsored by:

Assemblymen Mukherji, DeAngelo, Assemblywomen Vainieri Huttie, Murphy, Assemblyman Verrelli, Assemblywomen Jimenez, Swain, Assemblymen Wirths, Space, Assemblywoman Mosquera, Assemblyman Coughlin and Assemblywoman McKnight

SYNOPSIS

Urges large food retailers in State to reduce food waste.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As reported by the Assembly Human Services Committee on December 3, 2018, with amendments.



(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 12/18/2018)

1 **A JOINT RESOLUTION** urging large food retailers in this State to
2 reduce food waste.
3
4 **WHEREAS**, The United Nations reports that the world population is
5 expected to grow from 7.6 billion to 9.8 billion people by 2050,
6 which makes food security a pressing issue; and
7 **WHEREAS**, Growing food requires water, seeds, labor, machinery,
8 energy, and fertilizer. Therefore, letting food go to waste is a
9 frivolous use of natural resources that drives up costs, inflates food
10 prices, and weakens the food supply chain; and
11 **WHEREAS**, The Institution of Mechanical Engineers estimates that¹,¹
12 annually¹,¹ between ¹**[one third]** one-third¹ and ¹**[one half]** one-
13 half¹ of all food produced is wasted worldwide, and the English
14 newspaper *The Guardian* estimates that approximately 45 percent
15 of all fruits and vegetables, 35 percent of fish and seafood, 30
16 percent of cereals, and 20 percent of meat and dairy products are
17 wasted by suppliers, retailers, and consumers every year; and
18 **WHEREAS**, Large food retailers stand in a unique position to address
19 this global food issue. Because of their direct links with farmers,
20 processors, and consumers, ¹**[they]** retailers¹ have the power to
21 influence every facet of the supply chain¹**[. And]; and**¹ because the
22 traditional supermarket industry is highly concentrated, retailers
23 have considerable market power to make change; and
24 ¹**WHEREAS**, Food retailers have already indicated that they are fully
25 committed to engaging in responsible food waste reduction and
26 diversion practices, through such means as food donation,
27 composting, and effective inventory management; and¹
28 **WHEREAS**, ¹**[One]** Although food retailers are dedicated to reducing
29 food waste, one¹ obstacle to food waste prevention among large
30 food retailers is that the high volume–low margin business model
31 makes these retailers vulnerable to threats such as competition,
32 increasing wholesale prices, and changing consumer demands; and
33 **WHEREAS**, There are ways for large food retailers to ¹further¹ reduce
34 food waste as it occurs in food farming and food production, in the
35 stores themselves, and during consumption, while still managing
36 competitive and strategic challenges by strengthening retail
37 partnerships with food suppliers and connecting with customers’
38 needs and wants in new ways; now, therefore,
39
40 **BE IT RESOLVED** *by the Senate and General Assembly of the*
41 *State of New Jersey:*
42
43 1. Large food retailers in this State are urged to upgrade
44 inventory systems with the latest technology, reduce excess

EXPLANATION – Matter enclosed in bold-faced brackets **[thus]** in the above bill is not enacted and is intended to be omitted in the law.

Matter underlined thus is new matter.

Matter enclosed in superscript numerals has been adopted as follows:

¹Assembly AHU committee amendments adopted December 3, 2018.

1 inventory and handling, and reduce the amount of perishables that
2 ultimately go to waste.

3

4 2. Large food retailers in this State are urged to partner with
5 farmers in the supply chain, and work directly with farmers or
6 encourage their intermediaries to increase collaboration with
7 farmers, in order to reduce agricultural food waste. If retailers treat
8 farmers as partners rather than contractors, they can invest in the
9 long-term sustainability of the supply chain instead of maximizing
10 returns from a product in the short term.

11

12 3. Large food retailers in this State are urged to modify
13 traditional store practices that increase waste¹,¹ and ¹to¹ create new
14 practices to reduce waste, such as: lowering unreasonably high
15 cosmetic standards for fruit and vegetables, and ceasing to reject
16 even marginally imperfect-looking food; building nationwide
17 systems to distribute surplus edible food to charities; urging food
18 manufacturers to ¹drop “best by” labels, which are often mistaken
19 for expiration date labels, and replace them with “best if used by”
20 labels¹ utilize a food expiration date labeling system, which is
21 consistent with the uniform, nationwide expiration date labeling
22 system established by the Food Marketing Institute and the Grocery
23 Manufacturers Association¹; and finding new ways to display
24 produce while reducing stock levels, thereby reducing labor and
25 damage, and permitting produce to stay fresher for longer periods.

26

27 4. Large food retailers in this State are urged to team up with
28 consumers to reduce food waste, by: providing free literature
29 containing waste reduction tips and recipes to utilize leftovers;
30 teaming up with chefs to demonstrate how to utilize leftover
31 ingredients and food; and organizing “waste less” campaigns, that
32 use crowdsourcing and other social media initiatives to interact with
33 consumers and gather ideas for food waste and hunger prevention.

34

35 5. Copies of this resolution, as filed with the Secretary of State,
36 shall be transmitted by the Clerk of the General Assembly to the
37 New Jersey Food Council.

38

39 6. This joint resolution shall take effect immediately.