

## Waste

Some data?

- Crazy Horse Canyon Landfill received the delivery of 200 tons of “excess, rejected, or misbagged produce everyday until the landfill’s closure in 2009. The dump closed because it was full.” (Bloom 2010, 2)
- “The average U.S. supermarket produce item travels 1,500 miles before it arrives at its destination.” (Bloom 2010, 4)
- If you allow the (unrealistic) estimate that growers of lettuce harvest 90% of the crop, then it is still a huge loss. In 2007, the Salinas Valley produced 153,495 acres of lettuce. So that means it left to rot 15,350 acres (over 13 million pounds). (Bloom 2010, 5)
- The estimate in 2009 was that the US “wastes roughly half of its food” and “40 percent of available calories.” (Bloom 2010, 10)
- In 1995, the USDA estimated “that milk had the second-highest loss rate of any food item: about a third of it isn’t consumed. That year, 16 billion pounds of milk were wasted.” (Bloom 2010, 10)

Some reasons to be a freegan?

- “Many of agriculture’s ill effects on laborers, animals, and the environment could be reduced if we ate what would otherwise be wasted.” (Singer and Mason, *FES*, 223).
- “We’re saving food that would otherwise totally go to waste – perfectly good food.” (*FES*, 221)
- “Even products that contain no animal ingredients can hurt animals, when land is cleared to grow crops or when oil companies go into wilderness areas to provide the fuel needed to truck the goods around the country.” (*FES*, 222)
- “Freeganism is not only about free food. Behind it lies a view about how to live one’s life, one that rejects the priorities set by the consumer society and the lifestyle that results from accepting those priorities. Because most people see their status as linked to wealth and what they can buy, they are locked into working, often unsatisfying jobs, to earn the money to enhance their status....[Freegans] are doubly free – free from the subordination to the consumer ethos and free from the need to work to satisfy their needs.” (*FES*, 223)

MIT OpenCourseWare  
<http://ocw.mit.edu>

24.03 Good Food: The Ethics and Politics of Food Choices  
Spring 2017

For information about citing these materials or our Terms of Use, visit: <http://ocw.mit.edu/terms>.