

# FOOD WASTE AT DAEMEN COSTS A PRETTY PENNE

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Global & Local Sustainability



## Background Information

- College campuses produce about 22 million pounds of food waste per year.
- The average college student produces about 140 pounds of food waste per year.
- Food contributes to about 20% of waste in landfills.
- Food waste in landfills produces greenhouse gases, such as carbon dioxide and methane. These gases contribute to global warming. Chemicals produced by landfills pollute groundwater.
- Agriculture accounts for about 70% of freshwater used as well as fossil fuels. This means that food waste is a waste of freshwater and energy resources.

## Interviews with Stakeholders

### Ryan Richardson, Director of Dining Services with Hallmark Dining:

- If there are any leftovers after an event, any student can go take the food.
- Food services cleans up the food about 30 minutes after the event ends.
- Daemen also supplies disposable containers on campus.
  - They are eco friendly, compostable molded fiber containers.
- Overproduction of food often occurs in smaller groups.

### Kim Pagano, Assistant Dean for Student Engagement:

- Uses RSVPs to determine how much food to order.
- Usually orders less than needed, but there are still leftovers.
- About 75% of students that confirm their attendance with a RSVP, actually attend the event.
- Students can take leftovers with them.
- Students usually prefer buffet style and finger foods over boxed meals.
- About 90% of students at these events eat there.



Figure 1. Leftovers from a department meeting

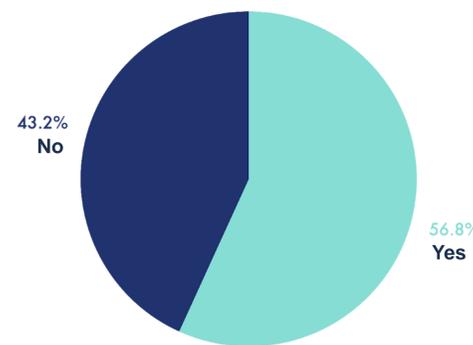
Figure 2. Food waste after a department meeting

## Research Methods

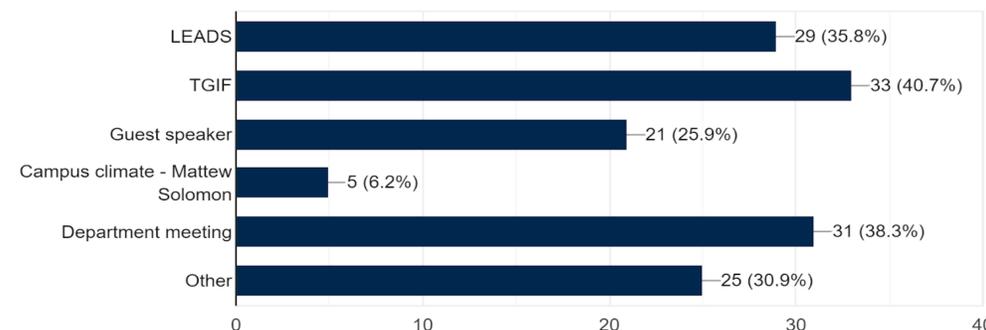
- Created a student survey which had questions about food waste on campus. We also did interviews with key staff members on campus.
- Students were asked about events they attended, preferred foods, and whether they have noticed food waste at events.
- Event organizers are open to learning about their process of choosing types of food and quantify to order.
- Daemen Food Service was asked how leftovers are managed, how long after event concludes does leftover food get picked up, whether staff take leftovers home, and how they estimate amount of food per person.

## Student Survey Results

### Have you observed food waste at an event?



### Which events have you seen create food waste?



## Environmental Impacts of Food Waste



Food loss and waste is responsible for about **8%** of global **greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions**



Volume of **water** used to produce lost or wasted food is equivalent to three times the volume of **Lake Geneva**



Nearly **30%** of the world's **agricultural land** is currently occupied to produce food that is ultimately never consumed



If food use and **distribution** is better managed, **14%** of all **GHG emissions from agriculture** could be avoided by 2050

## Conclusions

- Food waste is a problem that has been observed at catered events.
- Attendees have the option of taking leftovers with them.
- Most events don't ask attendees to RSVP for an accurate estimate of food needed.

### Next Steps

- Bring further awareness to the Daemen College Campus.
- Complete a food waste audit, over time, to see if we are reducing the amount of waste.

### Possible Solutions to Help Reduce Food Waste

- Mandatory RSVP for events
- Make portions smaller
- Create a Daemen alert system to make students aware of leftovers

## Bibliography

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