REDUCE

DIRECT
Commercialisation

The challenge

Australia currently wastes $20 billion of food each year, and addressing food waste is now seen as a major environmental and economic opportunity for industry. To address the opportunity businesses need to understand where food loss and waste occurs, such at harvest, post-harvest, processing or distribution (food loss), or at retail, food service or by consumers (food waste). From such understanding better business decisions can be made.

The development of a business-ready, digital, cloud-based food waste tool can assist industry to reduce food loss and waste. The tool should integrate with their current data, systems, and processes, and operate at global standards/protocols of assessing food loss and waste.

Our plan

Businesses will be able to self-assess their food waste practices through the development of the online Dynamic Industry Resource Efficiency Calculation Tool (DIRECT). They can use the data to identify opportunities to reduce the food loss and waste and the costs associated with it. New income streams may eventuate, leading to a pivot from food waste costing industry to providing a revenue resource.

DIRECT will help businesses across the entire food supply chain understand the true cost of waste, including how to conduct resource efficiency assessments, identify and calculate resource efficiency, and understand the business value of improving resource efficiency.

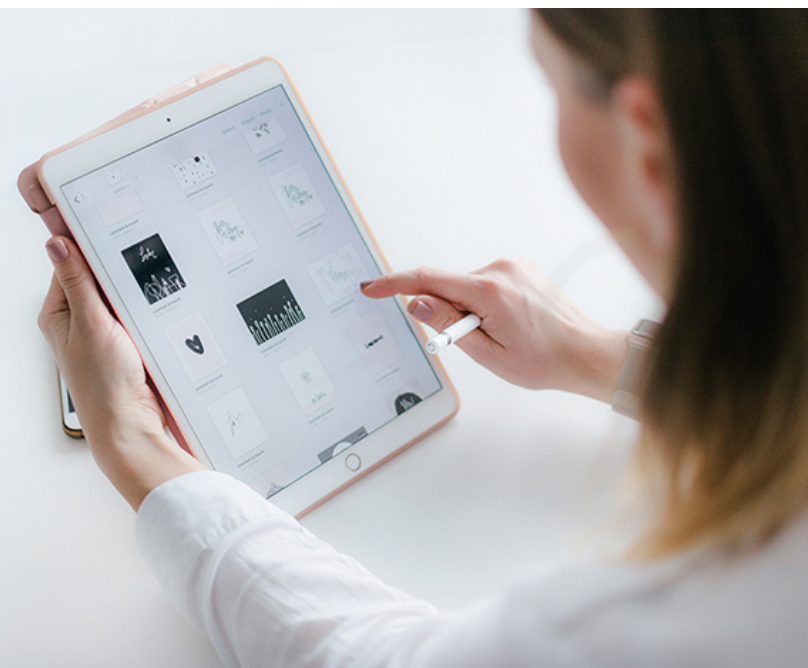"... a business-ready digital cloud based tool to assist industry to reduce food loss and waste."

FIGHT FOOD WASTE
Cooperative Research Centre
REDUCE - TRANSFORM - ENGAGE

Australian Government
Department of Industry,
Innovation and Science

Business
Cooperative Research
Centres Program

DIRECT Commercialisation

The initial version of DIRECT was developed by RMIT University in conjunction with the Plenty Food Group as an Excel spreadsheet and accompanying website www.directool.com.au. It focused primarily on tracking material and energy inputs/outputs, waste streams, and associated business costs at the manufacturing/processing stage.

The next stage of the project will:
· take the excel version of DIRECT and develop it as an online version
· provide enhancements to data capture and reporting, eg link with global standards/ protocols, extra financial data analysis and expanding DIRECT across all stages of the supply chain
· create an online portal so that DIRECT can be accessed as a cloud-based application that will interact with other business systems.
· pilot the new DIRECT online tool with industry
· commercialise the DIRECT online version through Empauer.

More broadly, DIRECT will help inform the planned National Food Waste Baseline monitoring that intends to monitor waste and efficiency across the entire food supply chain. As new data is fed into DIRECT, this national database will be able to, report on industry sectors, monitor state and national resources, and highlight national trends.

DIRECT will be available for similar benchmarking, action and reporting programs internationally. As industry and global standards/protocols change, ongoing enhancements will keep DIRECT up-to-date and ensure the tool is relevant in real-time for all businesses that use it.

Timeline
August 2019 - July 2023

Project leader
Dr Simon Lockrey, RMIT

Participants

empauer
a Selerant company

RMIT
UNIVERSITY

www.fightfoodwastecrc.com.au