

Submission to: **Accelerating SA's transition to a circular economy: South Australia's waste strategy 2025–2030**

On behalf of: **End Food Waste Australia**

Thank you for this opportunity to provide feedback on the Green Industries SA [GISA] draft strategy "Accelerating SA's transition to a circular economy". Establishing a new paradigm of total circularity will be key to creating a more sustainable and prosperous future for South Australia and achieving our national sustainable development targets. We strongly recommend this work, whilst laser-focused on South Australia, is co-ordinated with National approaches to develop an over-arching and research-based program for behaviour change messaging around food waste and is aligned to the [National Food Waste Strategy](#).

End Food Waste Australia (EFWA) is Australia's leading organisation working across the supply chain to end food waste. We are improving the productivity, resilience and sustainability of the Australian food system; guided by our [EFWA Strategic Business Plan](#). EFWA is comprised of four pillars - Research and Development (End Food Waste CRC), Industry Action (Australian Food Pact and Sector Action Plans), Behaviour Change (The Great Unwaste), and Policy. Overseas experience tells us that all four pillars are essential for a country to halve food waste by 2030, which is the goal of the Australian National Food Waste Strategy. By providing ongoing research and development, we deliver evidence-based solutions to enterprises throughout the food supply chain, working toward a more sustainable future from paddock to plate.

We would like to acknowledge and congratulate the South Australian team for their leadership in this space, having already set ambitious goals and targets, and identifying priority areas in their 2020-2025 strategy which was the benchmark at the time. During that period EFWA/FFW CRC has worked closely with GISA and throughout the State to deliver outcomes and impact together. Some examples of this collaboration to address food waste includes:

- Supporting the Household Research which now underpins The Great Unwaste National Consumer Behaviour Change Campaign
- The Up-cycling project on Apples/Pears
- Date Labelling and Storage Advice research
- Smart Compost formulations
- Support for the national Catering Sector Action Plan [SAP].

In addition, there has been active involvement and support for

- The National Policy Workshop in Canberra
- The Hospitality SAP

## Comments on [Food Waste] Priorities

Given our remit as the lead agency for the reduction of food waste across the entire supply chain, we would like to focus our comments around Focus Area 2: Reduce Food Waste, noting these comments may also relate to other focus areas.

- *Preventing wastage of edible food*

We support the priorities as defined, but would suggest that prevention of waste for households should highlight the higher-level intervention of consumer behaviour change to have the best chance to address the 30% of food waste that occurs in the home. It has long been agreed by the States and Federal bodies working in this space that to have the best chance of success, one common and aligned program (built on robust research and insights) needs to connect and over-arch individual State programs. The Great Unwaste campaign aims to inspire and empower Australians to make small changes in their daily lives that can significantly reduce food waste. It is research-backed and addresses the 7 key behaviours that cause food waste (and goes beyond just storage and usage as highlighted). Without necessarily specifying the campaign, we would suggest that the strategy takes a similar approach along these lines, combining the best of local with the best of the National approach.

- *By supporting households to make small changes in their daily lives to significantly reduce wastage, food waste can be minimised.*

We support and endorse the other prevention strategies around industry action and food rescue. These align directly with our efforts.

- *Minimising pre-farm gate losses*

We are actively working in this space and see this a critical area. We would support the inclusion of a second point here that highlights the important role of regulatory change to help drive action in this area.

- *Diverting unavoidable waste from landfill*

This is an important 3<sup>rd</sup> priority on the list and as described has already been delivered successfully in the first stage of the SA Strategy [83% of discarded organics are diverted from landfill] which is a credit to all involved. It appears that the key focus here should be extension/optimisation of the existing systems with commercial partners and an increased focus on household behaviour change (per the first priority).

## Comments on the Actions and Partners

- **2.1:** The Food Donation Tax Incentive is a project which was founded on research commissioned by End Food Waste Australia. We continue to support and advocate for this as one of a number of key policy levers to reduce food waste; for example, [Date code labelling](#), Whole crop purchase and [Trade Practices review](#), which we are also actively

engaging to advance through the **Policy pillar** in End Food Waste Australia, which should partner in this work.

- **2.2:** Behaviour change in the home is probably the most important single activity to reduce food waste and enable us to achieve our objective as a State and a Nation. Given our long history of working with the team on this to date, we would like to see a continued key role for End Food Waste to partner with GISA on this work. We reiterate our previous discussions suggesting a nationally consistent research-backed program as an essential element to ensure the highest chance of delivering meaningful change against this challenging target.
- **2.3:** The Australian Food Pact was established in 2021 and supports food businesses to reduce food waste and related emissions through a tailored food waste action plan and site visits, maximise opportunities for food donation to help reduce food insecurity, and collaborate on food chain transformation and innovation. The strategic intent we shared in our 2025-2030 plan is to extend the reach by focussing on SME and hospitality businesses which seems totally aligned to this intention and we should combine resources to extend our collective impact.
- **2.4:** The End Food Waste CRC and the Australian Food Pact have carried out nationally-recognised work (Hort Connections 2024 Awards) in this space in conjunction with a number of our research partners including SARDI. Based on that we are about to undertake a major program of work which is anticipated to have significant co-investment from Hort Innovation Australia and would provide direct outcomes relevant to this action.

Regarding the remaining actions around recovery [5 – 8], and outputs and end-markets [9-12] we would endorse the approaches as listed but leave detailed feedback to those stakeholders more focussed on these areas.

In summary, we applaud this draft strategic plan to increase circularity and reduce food waste within South Australia. End Food Waste Australia has also outlined how it intends to support this charge towards circularity while delivering our own goal of reducing food waste by 50% by 2030. We believe both objectives are fully intertwined and would strongly support a suite of combined and aligned actions specifically around food waste avoidance and reduction.

Thank you for your consideration.



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End Food Waste Australia