

Opinion: Throwing away food is not the answer

By Nancy Chang, San Francisco Chronicle

Some 4.9 million Californians face food insecurity – our neighbors, a fellow PTA parent, the children running down your street. Yet, as Californians worry about where they will get their next meal, bags full of groceries end up in dumpsters.

As our state's population rises and the food waste problem is expected to grow, we can't let these precious resources continue to go to the landfills.

Our Legislature has taken an important first step in scaling up food recovery efforts. The California Good Samaritan Food Donation Act, signed into law last October, legalized the donation of food past its sell-by and best-by dates. Most items are good long after these dates, which are proxies of quality and not of safety. These misleading dates are responsible for an estimated 8 billion pounds of food wasted nationwide at the cost to consumers of almost \$30 billion annually.

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