WORKING FOR A HEALTHIER TN

Wellness Council Webinar

March 2023

/WFHTN

@WorkingForAHealthierTN

@wfhtn

Encouraging and enabling state employees to lead healthier lives

Today's Agenda

- Guest Speaker:
  TDEC Office of Sustainable Practices
- Quarterly Activity List
- What's New from WFHTN
- Wellness Council Spotlights
- Upcoming Schedule

WORKING FOR A HEALTHIER TN

Guest Speaker

Kelsey Davis,
TDEC Environmental Consultant,
Office of Sustainable Practices

ZERO WASTE TENNESSEE

KELSEY DAVIS
ENVIRONMENTAL CONSULTANT
OFFICE OF SUSTAINABLE PRACTICES

WHAT IS ZERO WASTE?

- A PERCEPTION CHANGE
- RETHINKING THE VALUE OF ITEMS
- MORE CONSCIOUS PURCHASING
- MAXIMIZING MATERIALS
- ELIMINATING WASTE AT THE SOURCE
- DIVERTING WASTE FROM LANDFILLS

PRODUCING LESS WASTE

ZERO WASTE TN PROGRAM

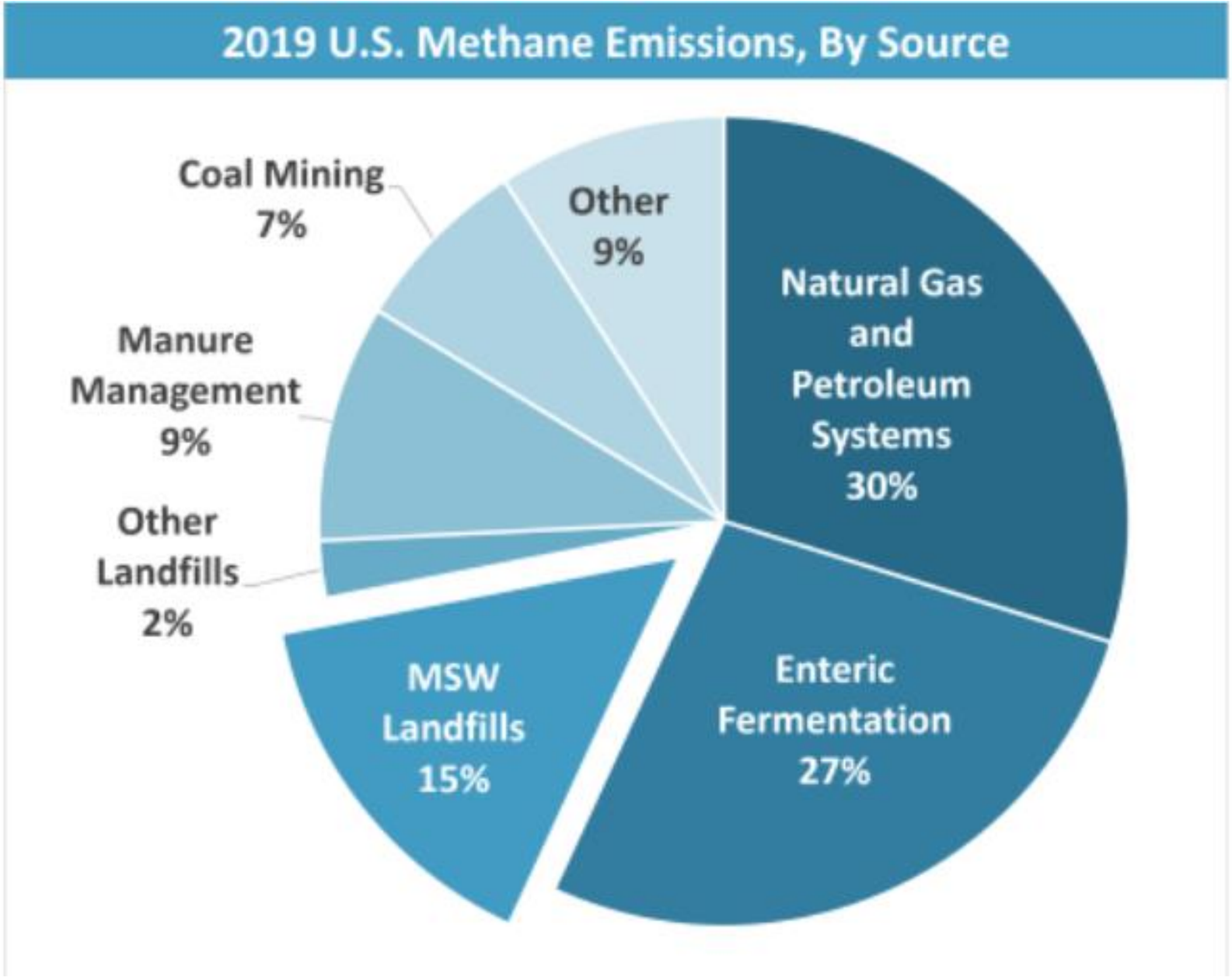
In response to increasing waste management challenges and the need for change, TDEC's Office of Policy and Sustainable Practices has developed the Zero Waste TN program. This program is designed to help inform businesses and citizens on how to make better choices and rethink the way we manage waste. TDEC is working to expand the Zero Waste TN Program to include Zero Waste Partners across the state, including manufacturers, businesses, institutions, and organizations, that take the initiative to consciously reduce their waste.

WHY IS ZERO WASTE IMPORTANT?

- Americans make up 4% of the world's population but generate 40% of the world's total waste.
- Landfill waste breaks down anaerobically, releasing harmful greenhouse gases
- Tennessee's landfills release the equivalent of 2,524 tons of CO2 daily

METHANE AND LANDFILLS

- Methane is **25 times** more potent than carbon dioxide at trapping heat in the atmosphere
- The largest sources of methane emissions in the United States are oil and gas systems, livestock enteric fermentation, and **landfills.**
- Municipal solid waste (MSW) landfills are the third-largest source of methane emissions in the United States, accounting for approximately 15.1 percent.



Tennessee's annual waste tonnage is the equivalent of:

2,524 tons

of CO_2 daily

284,010

gallons of gasoline consumed

427

homes' electricity powered for one year

536

passenger vehicles on the road for one year

94%

of landfill emissions in the U.S. are emitted by MSW landfills

HOW TO GO ZERO WASTE

RETHINK

The first and most important step towards zero waste is to “re-think” purchasing behaviors and implement conscious purchasing. The key notion consists of purchasing only what is truly needed, choosing local products, items with no or minimal packaging when possible, and choosing durable, recycled, and recyclable materials. As a consumer, every purchase made is an opportunity to vote for zero waste.

REDUCE

Be mindful of unnecessary wasteful items in our every-day lives and learn to do without them. Eliminating or finding alternatives to items such as disposable straws and plastic shopping bags can prevent large amounts of waste. Also, consider switching to online magazine subscriptions and unsubscribing from junk mail. These simple acts can prevent large amounts of waste by simply avoiding it in the first place.

REUSE

Reuse can mean physically modifying an item, or simply using the item again or in a new way. Use a glass condiment jar as a storage container, make art out of discarded items, or transform old t-shirts into shopping bags. Take care of belongings and use them to their fullest potential, and repair everything possible to extend its useful life. Shop at thrift stores and other used product stores to save money and donate any items you may no longer need so that others may reuse them.

RECYCLE

Recycling items such as paper, plastic and aluminum is typically available through curbside services and county convenience centers. To recycle right and avoid contamination, properly clean items and only dispose of accepted materials. You can recycle miscellaneous items like light bulbs or batteries by finding a vendor locally or online and partner with friends, neighbors, and coworkers to share costs and collection effort.

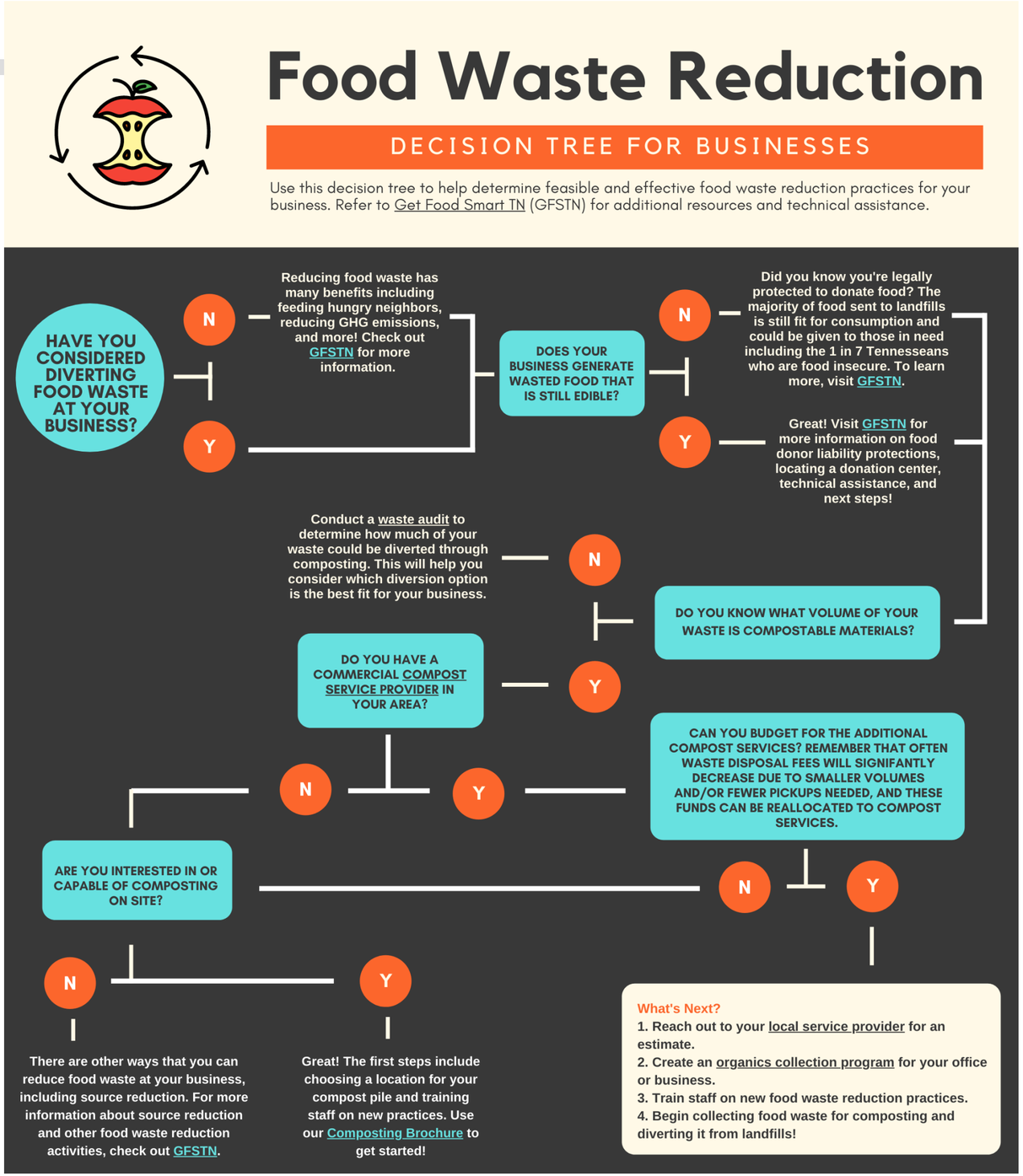
RE-EARTH

Composting is one of the most important steps in the zero waste hierarchy because it addresses 22% of waste that ends up in landfills unnecessarily – food waste. Composting food waste is a more environmentally friendly option to landfilling because it avoids greenhouse gases and produces a beneficial soil amendment.

Residential composting options are available in larger cities, and backyard composting is a viable option for those who live in rural or suburban areas.

Zero Waste Resources

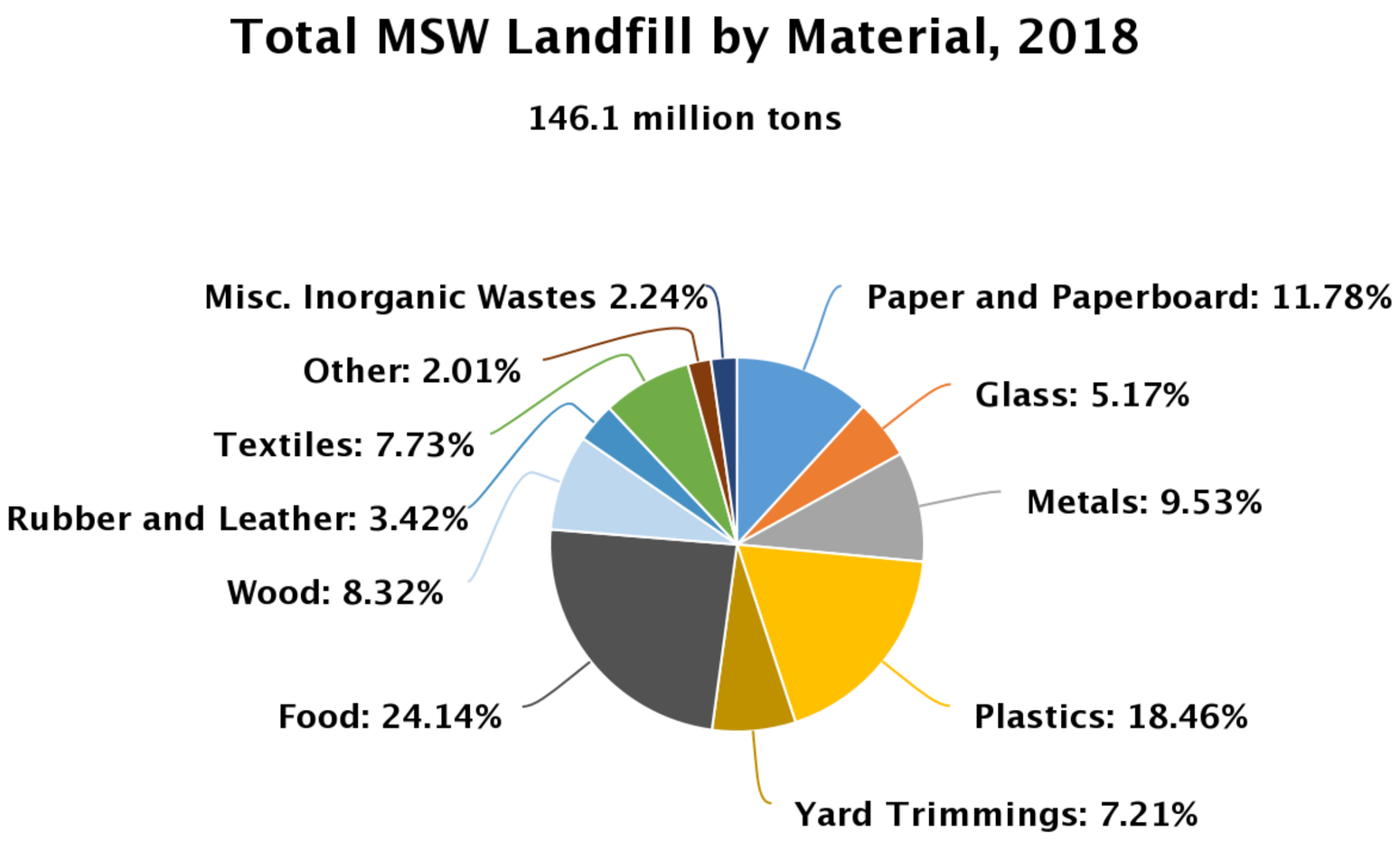
- How to Conduct a Waste Audit
- Food Waste Reduction Decision Tree
- A Guide to Create an Organics Collection Program for Your Office
- Organics Collection Guide
- Compost Service Providers
- Deciphering Product Labels
- Biodegradable vs. Compostable
- Composting at Home



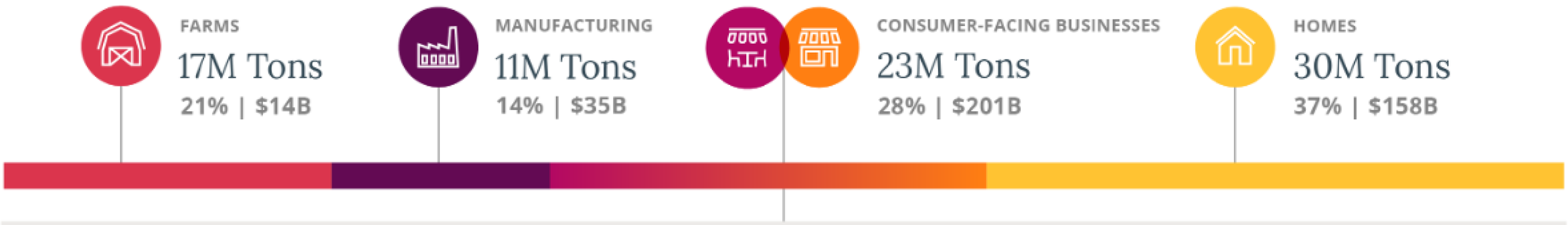
SO WHERE DO I START?

IN YOUR KITCHEN!

For many homes, the kitchen is the largest generator of waste. From food packaging to food waste, our kitchens have the greatest opportunity to reduce our waste!



Surplus Food Occurs Across the Supply Chain:



CONSUMER-FACING BUSINESSES INCLUDE:

*Other Foodservice Includes Healthcare, Assisted Living, Military, and Other

Source: ReFED

ZERO WASTE KITCHEN

CUT BACK ON KITCHEN WASTE

Kitchens are the source of a lot of waste, which means that there are numerous opportunities to implement zero waste habits in kitchens. From purchasing decisions to prepping, cooking, storing and preserving, our daily habits can get pretty wasteful. Reaching a true zero waste kitchen may seem like an impossible task, but there are many quick and easy tips that can save you time and money and cut out your kitchen waste!

ZERO WASTE FACT:

Food waste represents the largest percentage of waste landfilled in the US, with over 75% of food waste generated being landfilled, while only 6% is composted.

Benefits

- Zero waste kitchen practices can save you money from avoided purchasing costs of single-use disposable items, and through better food storage and preservation, meaning less kitchen and food waste.
- Zero waste kitchen practices help keep recycling streams clean by avoiding unwashed, soiled, or unrecyclable single-use plastics and aluminum foil.

Challenges

- Implementing new cooking and storing habits and changing traditional kitchen behaviors can be intimidating.
- Finding alternatives to traditional storage and preserving methods might pose a learning curve.
- Finding locations to purchase items in bulk and with preferred packaging options may be challenging.

ACTION ITEMS

1. RETHINK

Many staple kitchen items that we have grown accustomed to for convenience are actually unnecessary and generate a lot of waste and reoccurring expenses. Rethink your kitchen staples and determine which items are easy to do without or replace with a durable, reusable option. Often zero waste replacements work just as well or better than their disposable counterparts.

What traditional kitchen items and behaviors can you rethink to reduce or eliminate waste?

- Zip loc bags can be replaced with reusable silicone baggies or other reusable storage containers.
- Plastic wrap can be replaced with reusable silicone stretch lids or cloth bowl covers.
- Aluminum foil for baking can be replaced with silicone baking sheets or mats.
- Aluminum foil for storage can be replaced with reusable cloth beeswax food wrap.
- Single-use muffin or cupcake liners can be replaced with silicone baking cups.
- Paper towels can be replaced with reusable cleaning cloths.
- Paper napkins can be replaced with reusable cloth napkins.
- Disposable coffee cups can be replaced with a travel thermos or tumbler.
- Plastic water bottles can be replaced with a filter pitcher.
- Dish sponges can be replaced with a washcloth, bamboo or wooden scrubbing brush, or natural fiber scourer.
- Single-use or disposable storage containers replaced with glass, stainless steel, or reusable plastic preserve ware.

2. REDUCE

There are many easy, effective, and cost-saving ways to reduce and eliminate unnecessary kitchen waste simply by avoiding it in the first place.

What items do you use in your kitchen that may not be needed at all, or only needed infrequently?

- Paper plates
- Disposable silverware
- Disposable straws

What kitchen staples do you purchase that have a waste-reducing alternative?

- Purchase meats from your local meat market or your grocery butcher to reduce Styrofoam and plastic wrap waste (most butchers wrap fresh cuts in paper).
- Avoid pre-cut produce wrapped in Styrofoam and plastic wrap and instead opt for whole, loose fruits or vegetables. This reduces unnecessary waste and saves you money.

ACTION ITEMS

- When shopping in the produce section, bring your own reusable produce bags and avoid the plastic produce bags.
- Bring your own containers and purchase in bulk whenever possible such as loose grains, nuts and seeds, coffee, nut butters, herbs and spices, dried fruit etc. (remember to know your tare weight!).
- Instead of tea bags, opt for loose leaf tea. You can use a reusable tea infuser or your French press to make fresh tea.
- Single-serve brewing pods can be replaced with a French press, or switch to a compostable/recyclable option.

3. REUSE

Consider reusability and durability of items that you may already have in your kitchen. Instead of purchasing new storage containers or kitchen accessories, consider reusing or repurposing items that you already have. The most sustainable and waste-free items are the ones you already own.

What items do you already have that could be reused to reduce your kitchen waste?

- Glass jars make great storage or to-go containers.
- IBulk packaging jars from wholesale stores can be used as reusable containers for freezing or storing food or pantry items.
- Old t-shirts can be repurposed to make grocery bags or kitchen cloths.
- Old pillowcases can be repurposed to make grocery bags or bulk bin bags.
- Reuse food scraps or leftovers in new recipes. You can make homemade stocks, croutons, sauces, or pesto.

4. RECYCLE

Be conscious about your kitchen waste recycling and be sure you're following local protocols. Contaminated recyclables that have food residue on them can ruin an entire load of recycling, so it is important to recycle properly to achieve the associated environmental benefit. Additionally, be sure you are only placing accepted items in your bin.

Which remaining items in your kitchen waste are usually recyclable?

- Glass drink bottles
- Aluminum cans
- Plastic packaging labeled 1-7 (check which plastics are accepted locally)
- Paper bags
- Paperboard and cardboard boxes
- Metal food cans
- Brita Filters (Brita Recycling Program)
- Wine Corks (ReCORK, Cork Club)

ACTION ITEMS

5. RE-EARTH

22% of waste that ends up in landfills is food. Composting food waste is a more environmentally friendly option to landfilling because it avoids greenhouse gases and produces a beneficial soil amendment. Residential composting options are often available in larger cities, and backyard composting is a viable option for those who have the space to do so. There are even indoor composting options for those with limited outdoor space!

What kitchen waste items are remaining that can be composted instead of landfilled?

- Any soiled paper products not coated in wax or film.
- Scrap kitchen produce such as veggie caps, peelings, stems, etc.
- Leftover or spoiled fruits and vegetables that are no longer edible.

ZERO WASTE KITCHEN KIT

- Beeswax wrap
- Silicone baggies
- Stainless steel containers
- Glass containers
- Natural fiber scourers, compostable sponges, natural fiber scrubbers and brushes
- Refillable dish soap options
- French press (for coffee, tea, etc.)
- Produce bags
- Veggie bags and produce preservers
- Reusable grocery or tote bags
- Silicone baking cups
- Silicone baking sheets
- Cloth bowl covers
- Reusable silicone bowl covers
- Up-paper towels
- Cloth napkins

*this is not an inclusive list

WHAT ABOUT FOOD WASTE?

Our Get Food Smart TN Program has many excellent resources to help teach you how to prevent food waste in your home. These resources include:

- Rethink - Meal Planning
- Reduce - Proper Food Storage
- Reuse - Repurposing Food
- Re-Earth - Composting

RETHINK – MEAL PLANNING

Planning beforehand can reduce the amount of food you waste at the end of the week.

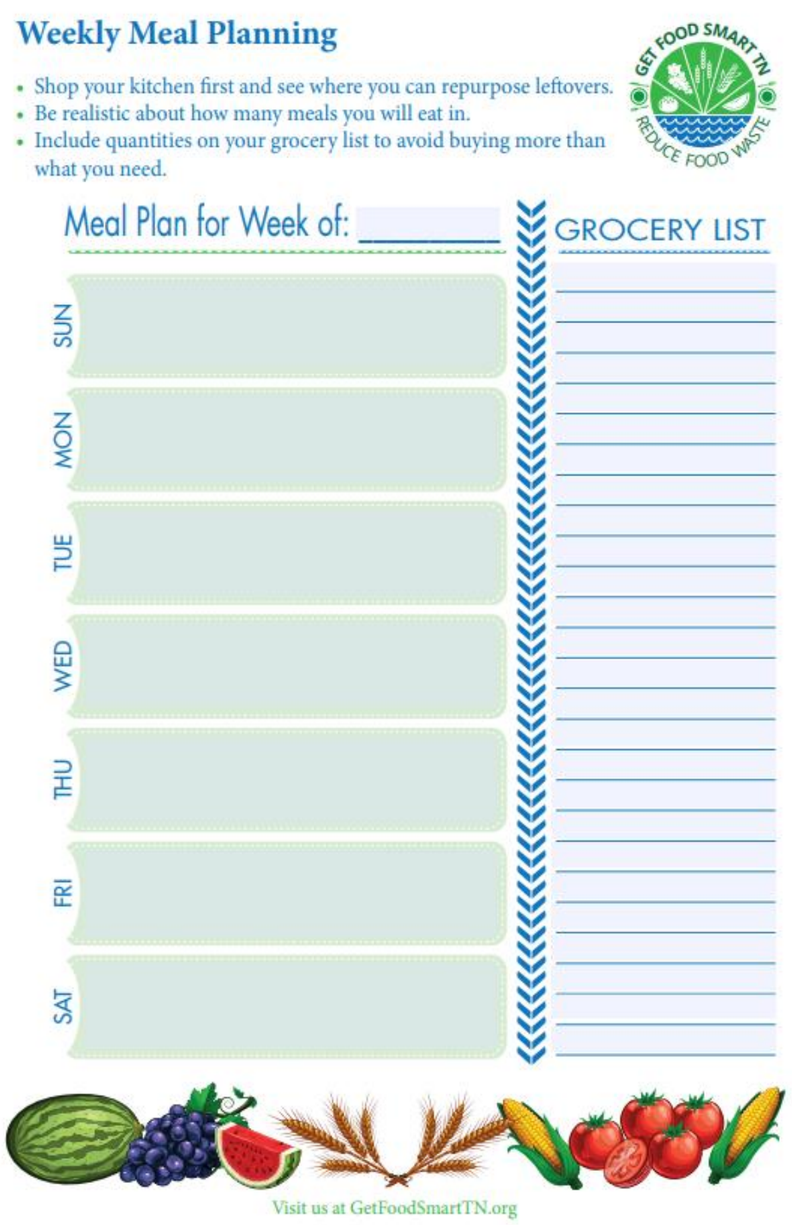
Plan your meals before grocery shopping, so you purchase only what you need.

Include quantities on your shopping list to keep from buying too much.

Keep a running list of foods that are frequently enjoyed in your house.

Check your refrigerator and pantry when making your shopping list to avoid buying items you already have. Don't forget to mine the freezer for items as well.

When preparing for a large gathering, plan ahead to prevent from preparing too much food. Use the Guest-imator from Save The Food to help you decide how much food to buy and prepare.



Weekly Meal Planning

- Shop your kitchen first and see where you can repurpose leftovers.
- Be realistic about how many meals you will eat in.
- Include quantities on your grocery list to avoid buying more than what you need.

GET FOOD SMART TN
REDUCE FOOD WASTE

Meal Plan for Week of: _____

SUN
MON
TUE
WED
THU
FRI
SAT

GROCERY LIST

Visit us at GetFoodSmartTN.org

Meal Planning Notepad

REDUCE –
PROPER FOOD STORAGE

Storing your produce in the right place and at the right temperature can reduce the chance of waste.

Freeze, preserve, or can surplus fruits and vegetables.

Store bananas, apples, and tomatoes by themselves and store fruits and vegetables in separate bins.

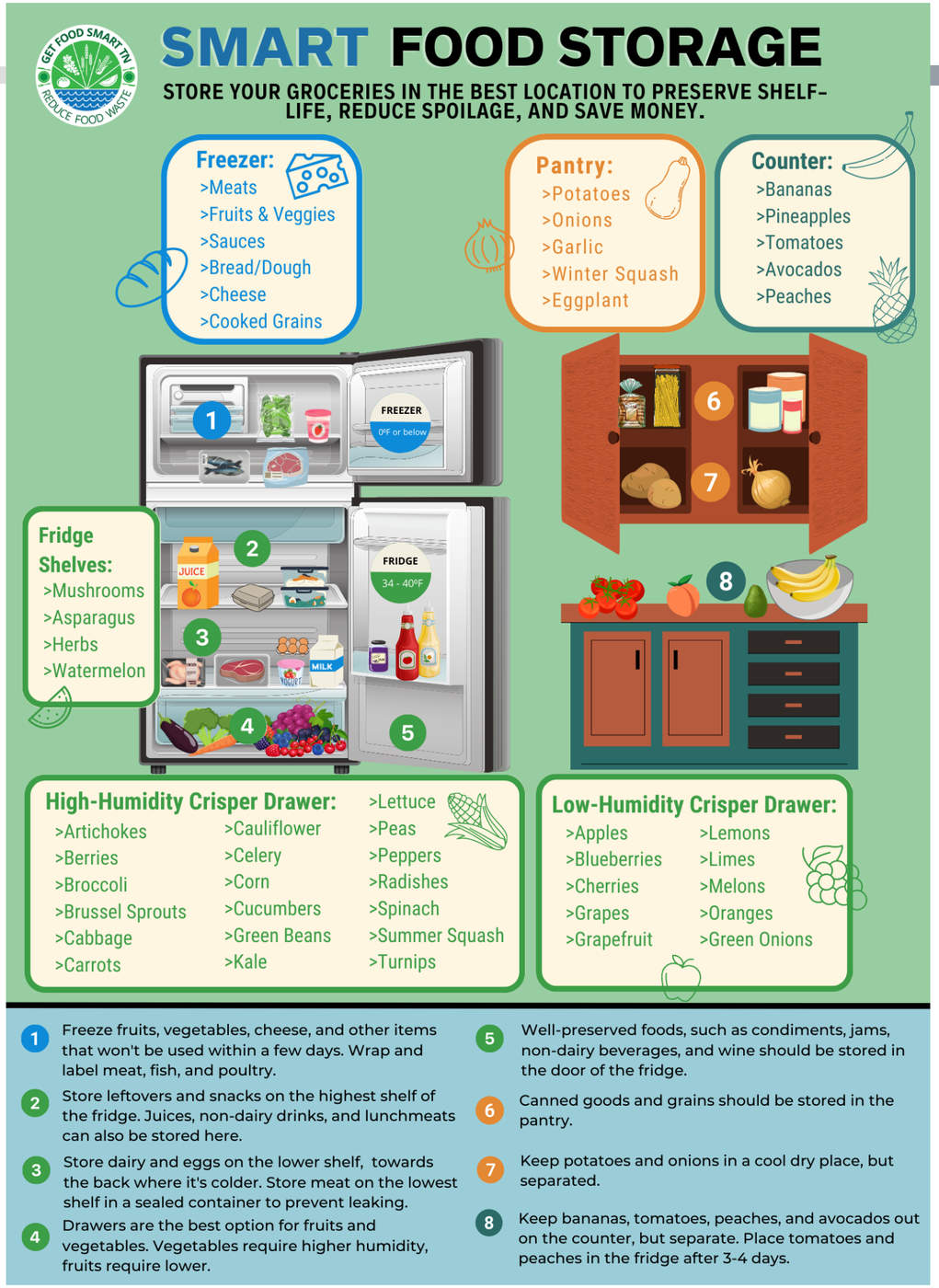
Wait to wash berries until you are ready to eat them to prevent mold.

Store fruits and vegetables at the right temperature to ensure freshness.

When unpacking groceries, move older products to the front of the fridge, freezer, or pantry, and put new products in the back. This is the First In, First Out plan.

Refer to this storage guide for more tips on proper storage of various fruits, vegetables, and herbs.

Additional tips for safe food storage and preservation are available from USDA.



REUSE – REPURPOSING FOOD

- Using leftover or excess food can save money and reduce waste
- Creatively repurpose leftovers and trimmings to efficiently use excess food
- Menu planning to accommodate the use of excess food from previous meals is key to success

Leftover Fruit

Smoothies or dessert topping

Day-old Bread

Croutons or breadcrumbs

Vegetable Trimmings

Base for soups, sauces and stocks

Re-Earth

Composting is one of the most important steps in the zero waste hierarchy because it addresses 24% of waste that ends up in landfills unnecessarily – food waste. Composting food waste is a more environmentally friendly option to landfilling because it avoids greenhouse gases and produces a beneficial soil amendment.

RE-EARTHING AT HOME

Composting at home allows residents to take charge of their food and organics waste. Refer to this brochure to learn everything you need to know to begin composting in your own back yard.

A
ZERO WASTE
LIFE

WORKING FOR A HEALTHIER TN

Quarterly Activity List

March Suggestions

Share information related to:

- *National Nutrition Month*
  - **Healthy Recipes**
  - **Eat Your Veggies Word Scramble**
  - **Frozen Food Myths & Facts**

March Suggestions

Activities and webinars to promote:

- **WFHTN Scavenger Hunt** for Employee Spirit Month!
- **I'm Too Busy to Eat Healthy** *(Presented by Here4TN)*
  Tuesday, March 7 from 10:30-11 a.m. CT
- **Healthy Eating Trivia**
  Thursday, March 16 from 1-1:30 p.m. CT
- **Green Plate Challenge**
  In honor of St. Patrick's Day (Friday, March 17)
- **Stretches for Better Sleep**
  Friday, March 24 from 10-10:15 a.m. CT
- **Green Smoothie Demo with Lindsey**
  Thursday, March 30 from 12-12:15 p.m. CT

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What’s New?

March Daily Wellness Calendar & Virtual Events

MARCH INTO HEALTHIER HABITS

WEEK	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
March 1-3	**Please note:** All times listed are in the Central time zone.		It's National Nutrition Month! Celebrate by completing this **Eat Your Veggies Word Scramble**.	Take a **Fitness Break** with DCS from 11-11:15 a.m. (Calendar invite)	Skeptical about **Black Bean Brownies**? Watch Communications Coordinator Natalie's honest review!
March 6-10	Get into the (employee) spirit & complete the **WFHTN Scavenger Hunt** by Friday, March 31.	Attend "**I'm Too Busy to Eat Healthy**" (presented by Here4TN) from 10:30-11 a.m. (Register)	**Practice Relaxation and Sleep Well** from 11:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. (Register)	**Stephen lost more than 100 pounds** & is looking forward to a healthy future with his grandchildren!	Join **Yoga: Core & More** from 12:15-12:45 p.m. (Calendar invite)
March 13-17	Join **Yoga for All** from 12-12:15 p.m. (Calendar invite)	Shake it off at our **Tuesday Dance Break** from 11:45 a.m. - 12 p.m.! (Calendar invite)	Join **Meditation with Nat** to give your mind a break from 11:30 a.m. – 12 p.m. (Calendar invite)	Celebrate National Nutrition Month by testing your knowledge at our **Healthy Eating Trivia** from 1-1:30 p.m.! (Calendar invite)	Join our one-week Green Plate Challenge in honor of St. Patrick's Day! Submit your participation by Friday, March 31.
March 20-24	Ever wonder if frozen foods have a lot of preservatives? Learn more in these **Frozen Food Myths & Facts**!	National Waffle Day is March 25! Celebrate with these **Freezer-Friendly Oatmeal Waffles**.	Take a **10-Minute Fitness Break** with DHS from 11-11:10 a.m. (Calendar invite)	Give your mind a refresh with **TDOE's Meditation Break** from 11:15-11:30 a.m. (Calendar invite)	Relieve some tension with these **Stretches for Better Sleep** from 10-10:15 a.m. (Calendar invite)
March 27-31	Did you know that bad posture can lead to more than an achy back? Learn more in this 1-minute video!	National Hot Chicken Day is happening March 30! Try this delicious **Air-Fryer Nashville Hot Chicken**.	**Yoga for All** is relaxing for all fitness levels. Join us from 12-12:15 p.m. (Calendar invite)	Blend-a-long in our **Green Smoothie Demo with Lindsey** from 12-12:15 p.m. (Calendar invite)	This tasty **Healthy Yogurt Cake** calls for yogurt (which adds protein) and is lower in sugar.

UPCOMING EVENTS

MARCH 2023

WORKOUTS

Yoga for All
Mondays from 12-12:15 p.m.
Link to join. Calendar invite.

Dance Break
Tuesdays from 11:45 a.m.-12 p.m.
Link to join. Calendar invite.

DHS 10-Minute Fitness Break
Wednesdays from 11-11:10a.m.
Link to join. Calendar invite.

Stretches for Better Sleep
Friday, March 24 from 10-10:15 a.m.
Link to join. Calendar invite.

Yoga for All
Wednesdays from 12-12:15 p.m.
Link to join. Calendar invite.

DCS Fitness Break
Thursdays from 11-11:15 a.m.
Link to join. Calendar invite.

Yoga: Core & More
Fridays from 12:15-12:45 p.m.
Link to join. Calendar invite.

WEBINARS & ACTIVITIES

TDOE Meditation Break
Thursdays from 11:15-11:30 a.m.
Link to join. Calendar invite.

I'm Too Busy to Eat Healthy
(Presented by Here4TN)
Tuesday, March 7 from 10:30-11 a.m.
Register

Meditation with Nat
Wednesday, March 15 from 11:30 a.m.-12 p.m.
Link to join. Calendar invite.

Healthy Eating Trivia
Thursday, March 16 from 1-1:30 p.m.
Link to join. Calendar invite.

Green Smoothie Demo with Lindsey
Thursday, March 30 from 12-12:15 p.m.
Link to join. Calendar invite.
Supplies & Ingredients Needed:

- Blender
- 2 cups raw spinach leaves
- 2 cups water
- 1 cup frozen mango
- 1 cup pineapple
- 2 frozen bananas, sliced

Please note: All times are listed in the Central time zone.
For more information about these events, visit www.tn.gov/wfhtn/challenges/wellness-events.html.

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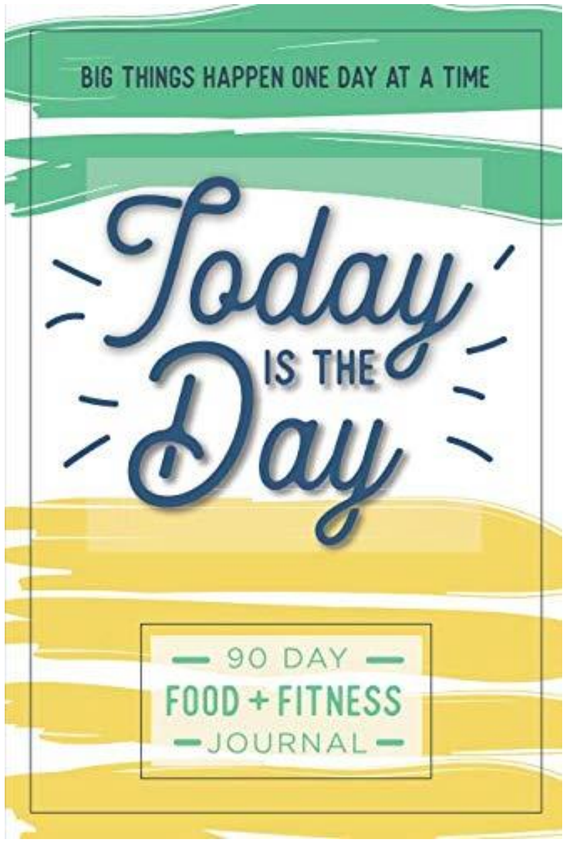
New Swag Available!



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2023 Annual Celebration

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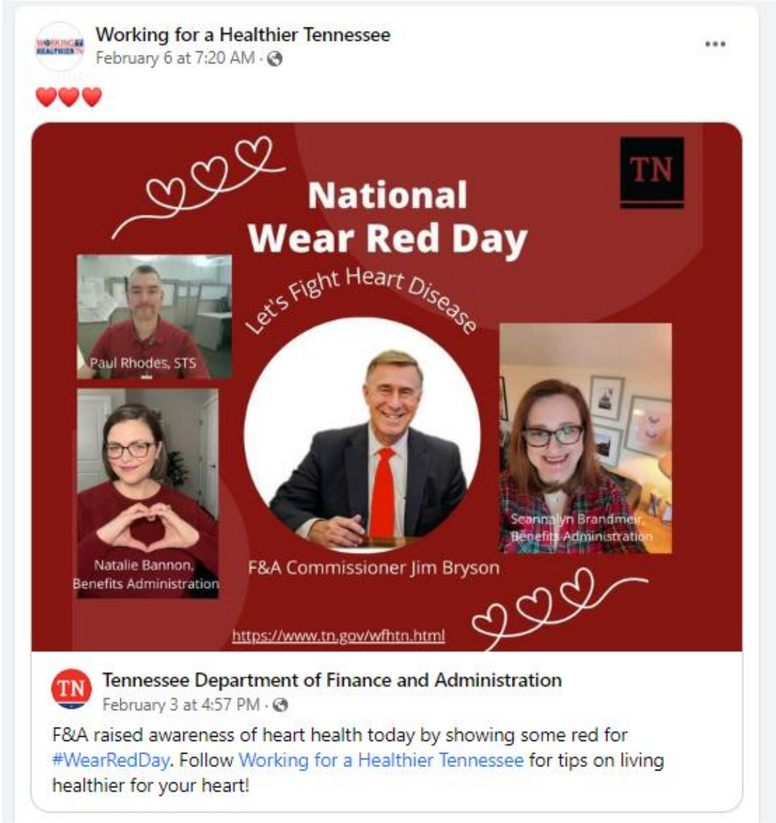
New YouTube Videos

Healthy Eating on a Budget: 4 Tips

Social Media Shoutouts



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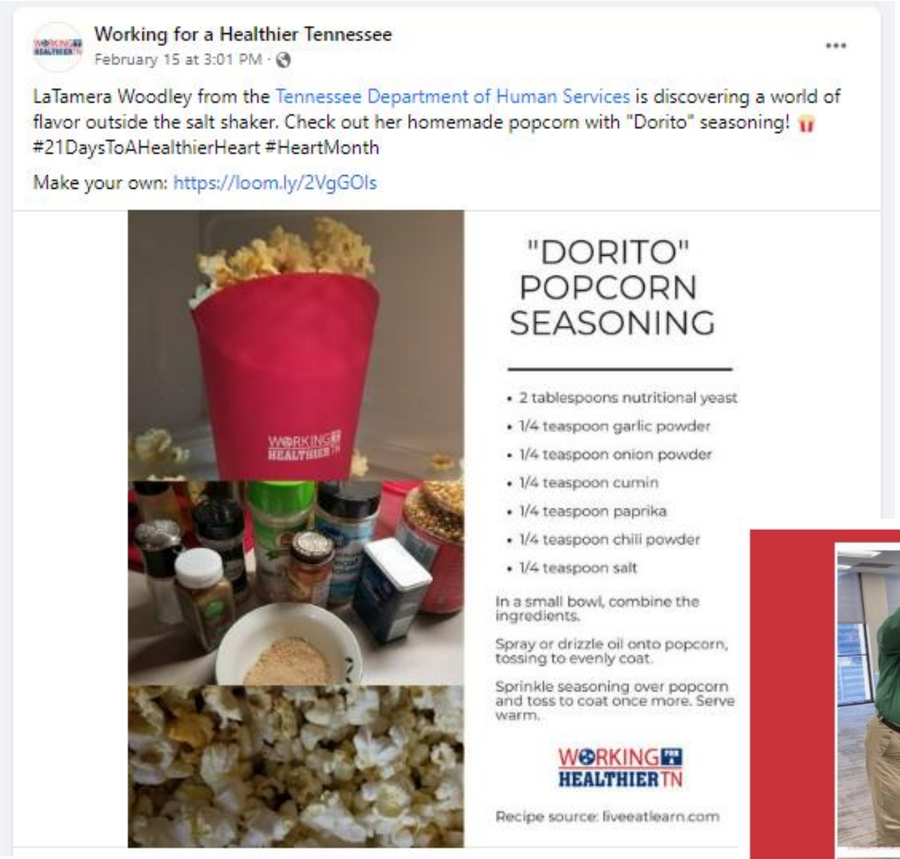
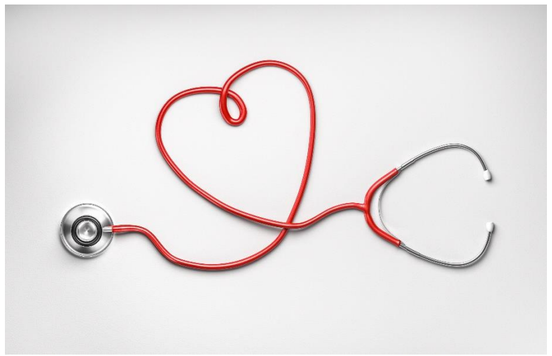
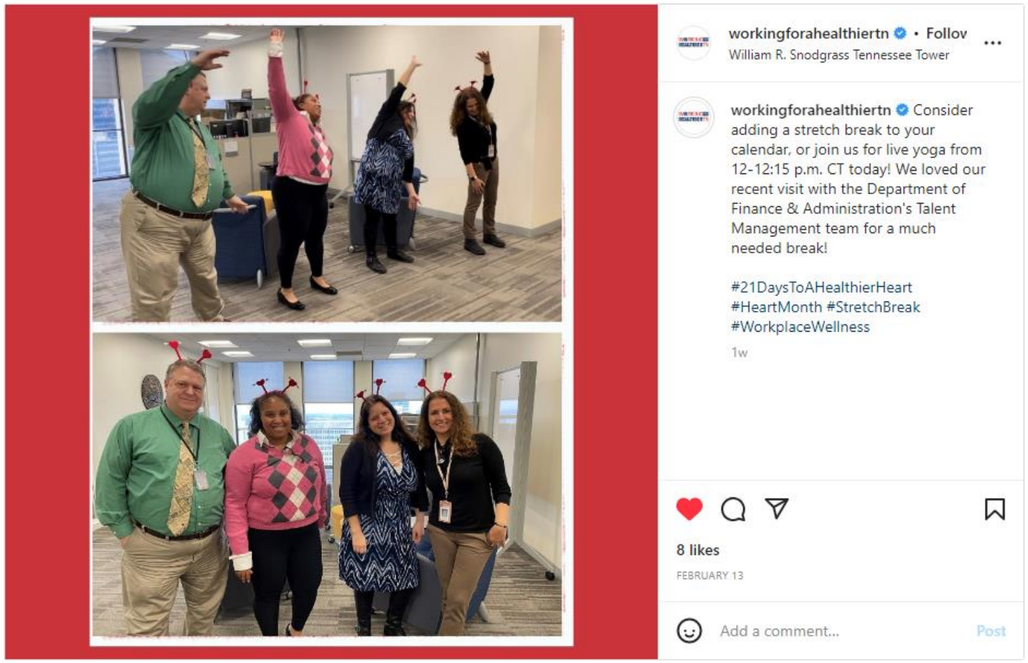
Wellness Council Spotlights

21 Days to a Healthier Heart





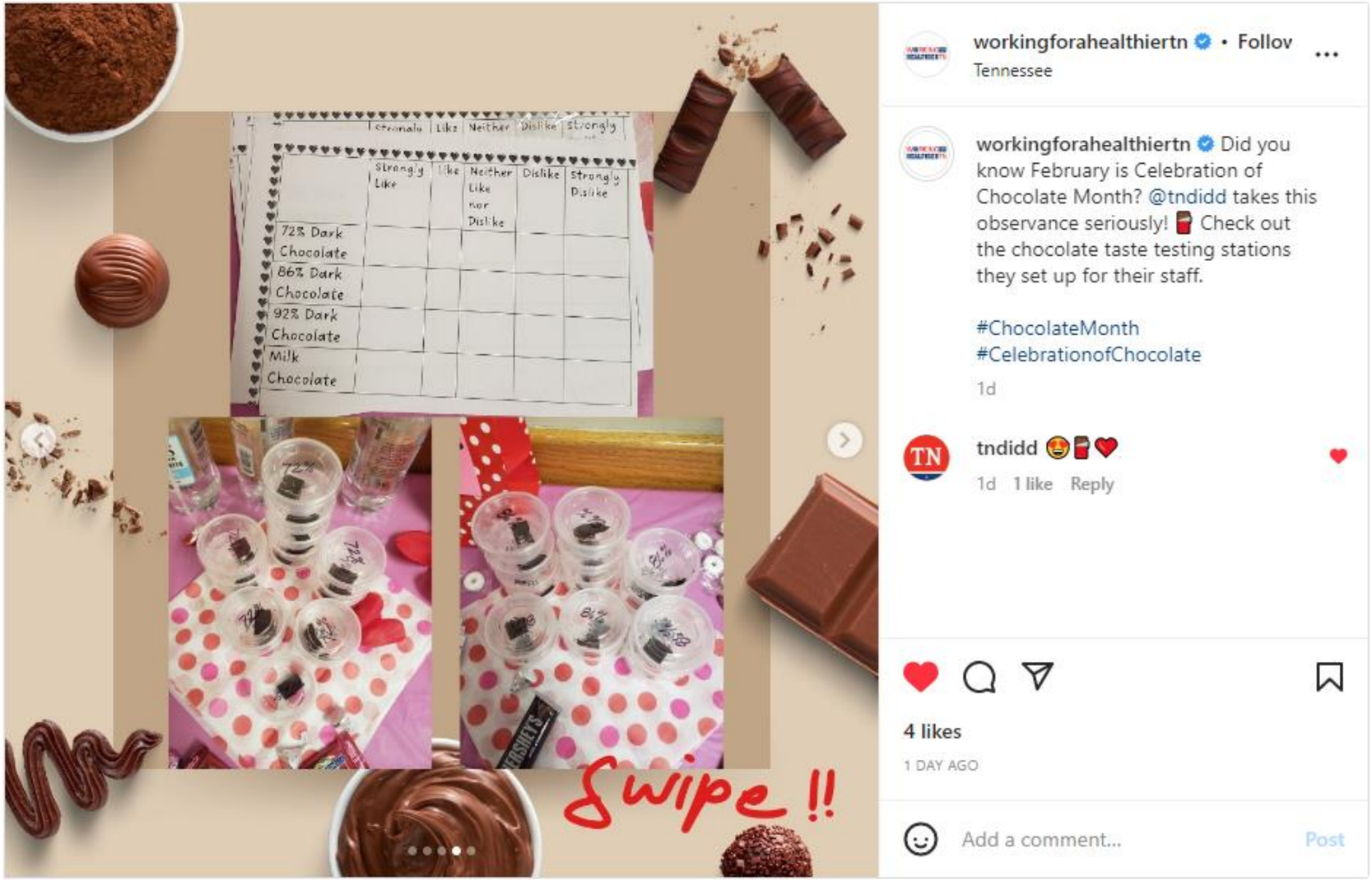


Trivia Breaks

General Services
and
Economic & Community Development

Chocolate Taste Testing

Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities



WORKING FOR A HEALTHIER TN

Upcoming Schedule

April Wellness Council Webinar

Thursday, April 6 from 9-9:45 a.m. CT

Quarter 3 Activities

We encourage you to contact your Wellness Coordinator for assistance with planning and tracking.

For our full virtual event list, please visit
https://www.tn.gov/wfhtn/challenges/wellness-events.html

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Your Updates!

Questions

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