MI 2030
FOOD WASTE
COALITION

July 13, 2026 Meeting Summary

A huge thank you to the Community Food Club of Grand Rapids for hosting us on a sweltering summer day. This month's Coalition meeting focused on one big question:

How do we grow this movement?

We spent the day talking about how to broaden Coalition membership, accelerate change across different sectors, and bring more attention to the issue of food waste. As always, the conversation was thoughtful, practical, and full of great ideas. We wrapped up the day with a tour of the Community Food Club and learned how their innovative, community-centered model is making healthy food more accessible in a way that can be replicated elsewhere.

Here are a few highlights from the discussion.

Broadening the Coalition

We started by talking about how to engage groups that are currently underrepresented in the Coalition, particularly businesses and schools. Ideas included:

- Forming an outreach committee to tailor messaging and connect with specific audiences
- Meeting people where they already gather, including organizations like MRLA, Michigan Green Schools, chambers of commerce, neighborhood associations, and places of worship
- Increasing outreach to legislators and local governments to build awareness and support
- Using more videos and storytelling to make the issue relatable
- Highlighting organizations that are leading the way so others can learn from their success

Accelerating Change

The group then explored how we can move from awareness to action, especially in schools and businesses where competing priorities can make change difficult. Some of the ideas included:

- Building trust through peer-to-peer learning and industry champions
- Putting students at the center of school-based efforts
- Focusing energy on audiences that are ready to act rather than trying to convince those who are resistant
- Exploring both incentive-based and disincentive-based policy approaches
- Creating a recognizable character or icon to help build a stronger public identity for the movement

Amplifying the Issue

Finally, we discussed how to elevate food waste reduction as an issue that people talk about, care about, and act on. Ideas included:

- Sharing more success stories that inspire action
- Increasing youth involvement and youth voices
- Meeting people where they are with practical, accessible messaging
- Focusing communications on solutions rather than problems
- Investing in peer-to-peer and influencer communications to expand our reach

Next Steps

The Coalition Steering Committee will meet in mid-August to discuss how these ideas can be incorporated into our work moving forward. If you're interested in joining the conversation, we'd love to have you. Contact Danielle at **danielle@makefoodnotwaste.org** for more information.