

Letter to the editor: Feeding the 5000 fills mouths – and minds

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I want to thank everyone who brought [Feeding the 5000](#) to [Portland](#) on Oct. 7. It was a wonderful event, with an important message about food.

We live in a place of such abundance that it's all too easy to throw away food that's imperfect, overripe or a day or two past its expiration date. Or we may buy and make more than we need, only to throw out leftovers.

It's also easy to forget how all these odds and ends add up, but they do. According to the pamphlet I got at the event, 40 percent of food produced in this country goes to waste, a total of 133 billion pounds, much of which goes into landfills.

This is especially striking considering how many people in our state, and the world at large, are food insecure. Unfortunately, this is also easy to forget, since so many people struggle with the opposite problem: overeating. It would benefit all of us to find a better balance.

So I applaud the efforts of Feeding the 5000 and everyone who helped bring them here. They had lots of good suggestions for how to reduce waste, which can start right in the home, with all of us being mindful about buying and preparing only as much food as we need.

They also had some information on what U.S. Rep. Chellie Pingree is doing in this area with [the Food Recovery Act](#), which I hope brings some change.

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And it was inspiring to join others in eating delicious soup, knowing that all the food served would otherwise have gone to waste.

I hope the event raised awareness of these issues, and I hope we can all find ways to work toward the goal of making the best use of our food.

Erica L. Bartlett

Portland