**Texas State University**

**Member Information**

**Name                           Year                          Major**

Blake Edwards 2016 Philosophy

Shaula Rocha           2017 English

Travis Stockton 2016 Philosophy

**Advisor(s):** Coleen M. Watson

**Topic:** Addressing Food Waste in Wal-Mart Stores

**Division:** Graduate

**Audience:** Wal-Mart Executive Board

**Executive Summary**

Introduction

We are members of Wal-Mart’s Global Ethics Office called to reassess and re-evaluate our current standards pertaining to the continuing global issue of food waste, from our suppliers to our retail stores across the world, in order to maintain standards in accordance with global environmental initiatives geared toward sustainable business practices. Resources are being wasted across the entire production chain: from farmers throwing away food that is not aesthetically pleasing or conforming to regulations to food being rotated out of the system because of arbitrary expiration dates; from landfills generating methane, a gas that majorly contributes to climate change, due to the massive amounts of garbage being thrown away.

Legal

Many countries Wal-Mart does business with have enacted legislation protecting food donations made in good faith or have not encountered a sufficient need to officially declare legislation on the matter. In addition to laws protecting food donation in countries like the United States and Canada, countries like France and the UK have submitted legislation, with great public support, making food donation mandatory. As this legislation moves forward in those countries and spreads to others, we at the Wal-Mart Global Ethics Office encourage the executive board to re-evaluate the procedures in place to handle food waste.

Ethical

Food waste presents a global crisis of breathtaking magnitude. As the world’s largest company by revenue and the biggest private employer in the world, as well as one of the world’s most valuable companies by market value and the largest grocery retailer in the United States, Wal-Mart has an ethical imperative to address the regional and global concerns posed by the problem of food waste. A considerable amount of waste is generated in the food supply chains of both developing and developed countries. In an increasingly resource constrained world, it is essential to reduce the high environmental, social and economic impacts associated with this type of waste. This necessitates the development and implementation of improved, targeted management practices. Keeping legality and financial practices in mind, we have developed a novel tripartite ethical framework meant to increase the effectiveness of food waste management practices through structured assessment and better informed selection of waste management methodologies.

Financial

The financial benefits provided by our plan include positive brand image and brand recognition at little to no cost, and will generate return customers.  Wal-Mart’s brand has suffered from public scrutiny, and we must continue to move toward sustainable practices and increase public opinion of our company.  Our proposed plan minimizes risk by creating a sustainable practice with little to no cost to our company as a whole, and provide our company with the opportunity to make real changes in the world around us.  Finally, by using marketing tactics discussed in the plan, we can increase foot traffic in our stores and increase our sales in other departments outside of the produce section. The financial strengths of this proposed plan will increase our brand image locally and globally, have the potential to increase sales and customer satisfaction, and costs little to nothing to local owners and our corporation as a whole.