



Jen Jordan, Resource Management Superintendent

# **IOWA CITY: SUCCESSES, LESSONS AND NEXT STEPS IN FOOD WASTE REDUCTION**

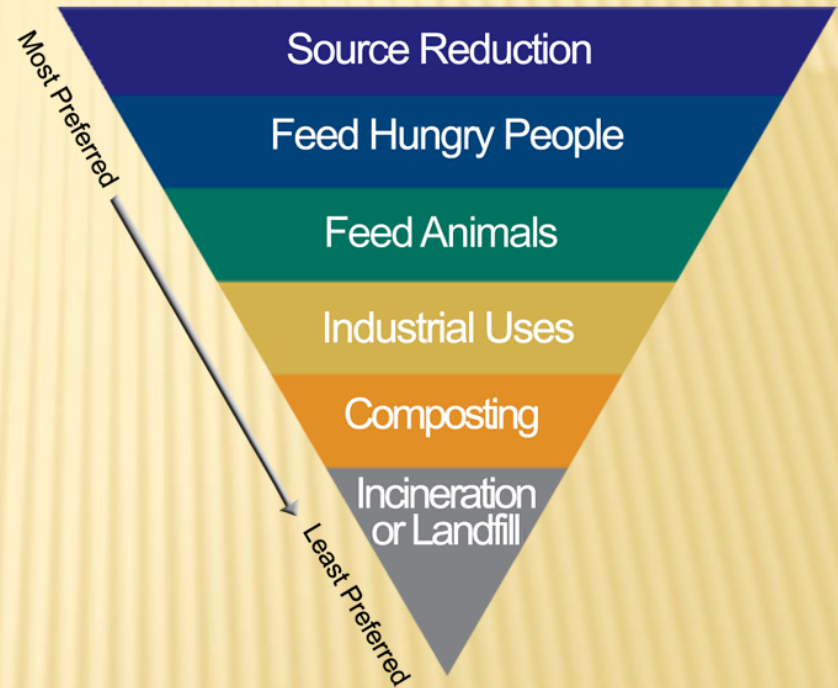
# BACKGROUND

- ✘ Yard waste composting program in place since late 1980s via state yard waste ban at landfills
- ✘ Began to include commercial food waste in composting program in 2007 through U of I pilot program
- ✘ Began talking about residential food waste reduction and food waste collection

# RESIDENTIAL

- ✘ Began talking about residential food waste reduction and food waste collection in 2012/2013
- ✘ Invited by EPA in late 2013 to pilot *Food: Too Good to Waste*
- ✘ Pilot ran June & July 2014

## Food Recovery Hierarchy





# GOALS & OBJECTIVES OF FTGTW

- ✘ Teach Iowa City residents what the larger social and environmental impacts are of food waste
- ✘ Begin to change social norms regarding food/waste and share the new social norm
- ✘ Gain experience implementing FTGTW
- ✘ Utilize the opportunity to pilot a curbside organics collection program

# THE PILOT: FTGTW

- ✘ Invited 300 homes in five neighborhoods selected for mix of age and income
  - + Letters with SASE to return survey
  - + Yard signs in neighborhood
  - + Door hangers
- ✘ Open house in each neighborhood
  - + Counter top collection bins and bags
  - + Kitchen scale
  - + Information packets
  - + Face-to-face contact
- ✘ Received pre-surveys from 52 households

# 6 WEEKS

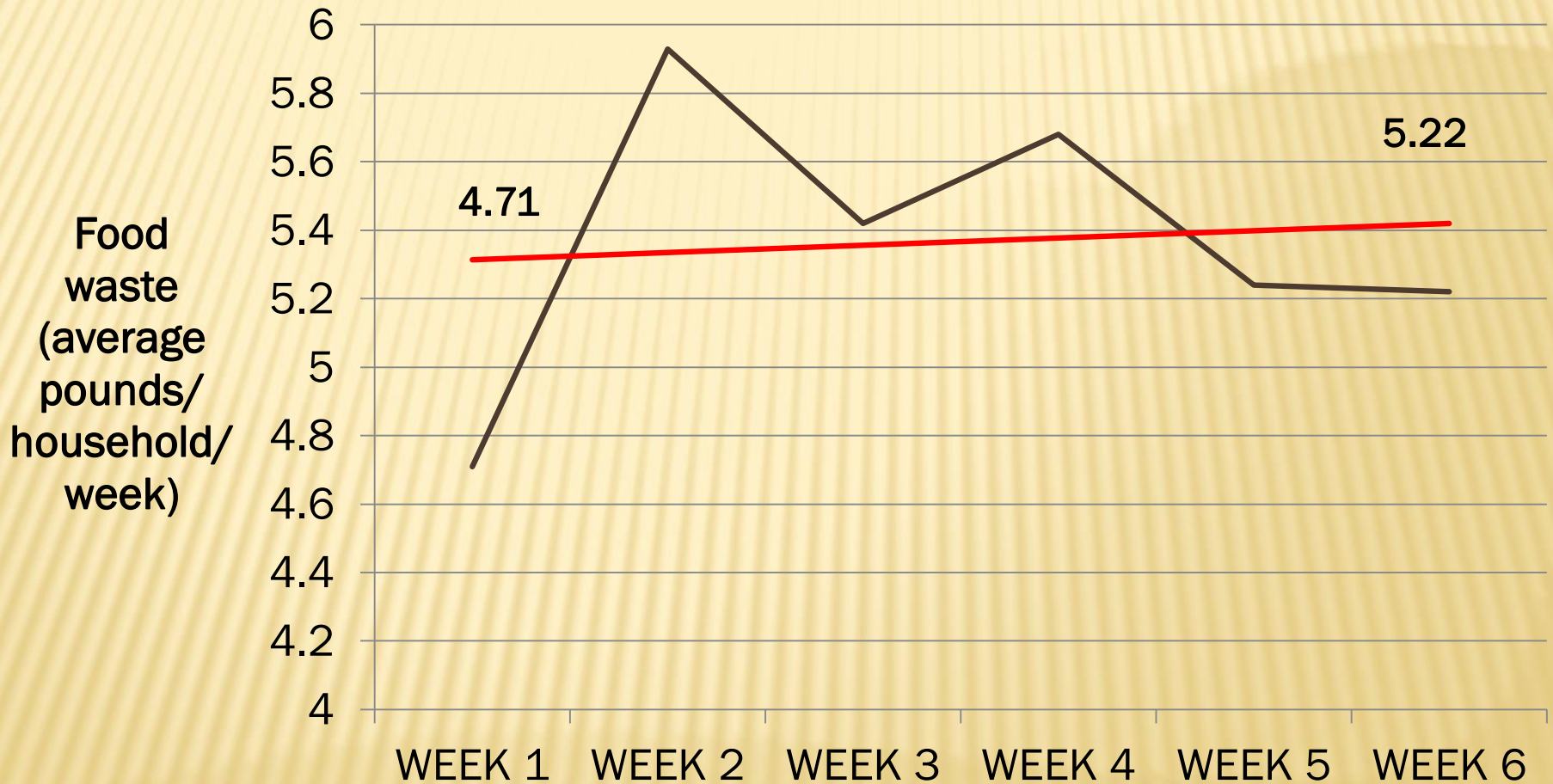
- ✘ Measured preventable & inedible waste combined \*\*
- ✘ 1 week baseline \*\*
- ✘ Weeks 2-6
  - + FTGTW strategies via weekly email
  - + Facebook page prompts
  - + Yard signs: encouragement
  - + Data collection: weekly weight

# DATA

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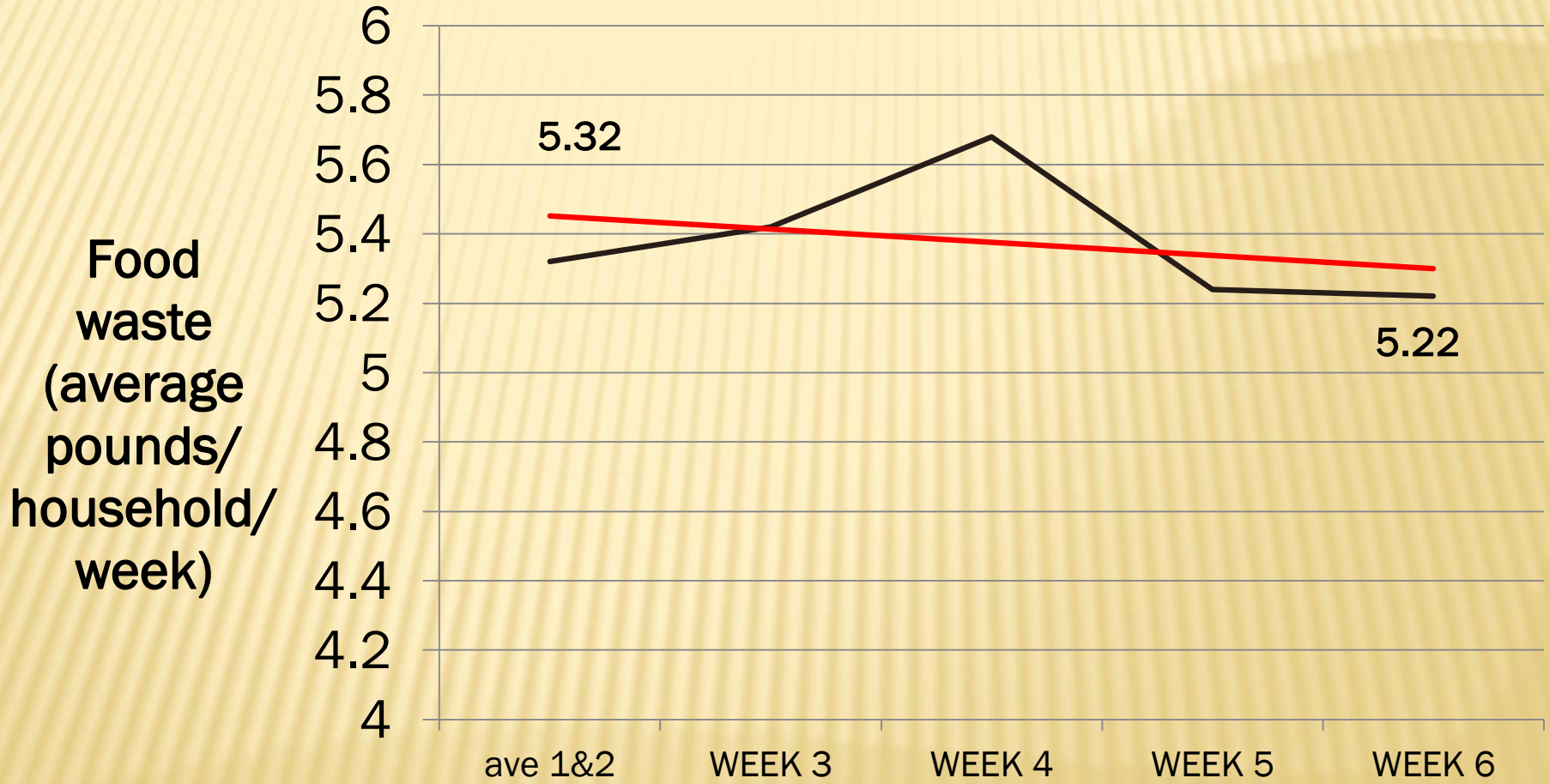
- ✘ Post-survey
  - + Emailed, sent in mail with SASE, option to drop at envelope in their neighborhood
  - + Received 27/52
- ✘ Weight data
  - + 32/52 returned weekly weight data
- ✘ Entered to win gift card from New Pioneer Food Co-op

# AVERAGE WEEKLY FOOD WASTE MEASUREMENT (1 WEEK BASELINE)





# AVERAGE WEEKLY FOOD WASTE MEASUREMENT (AVERAGED WEEKS 1 & 2 FOR BASELINE)



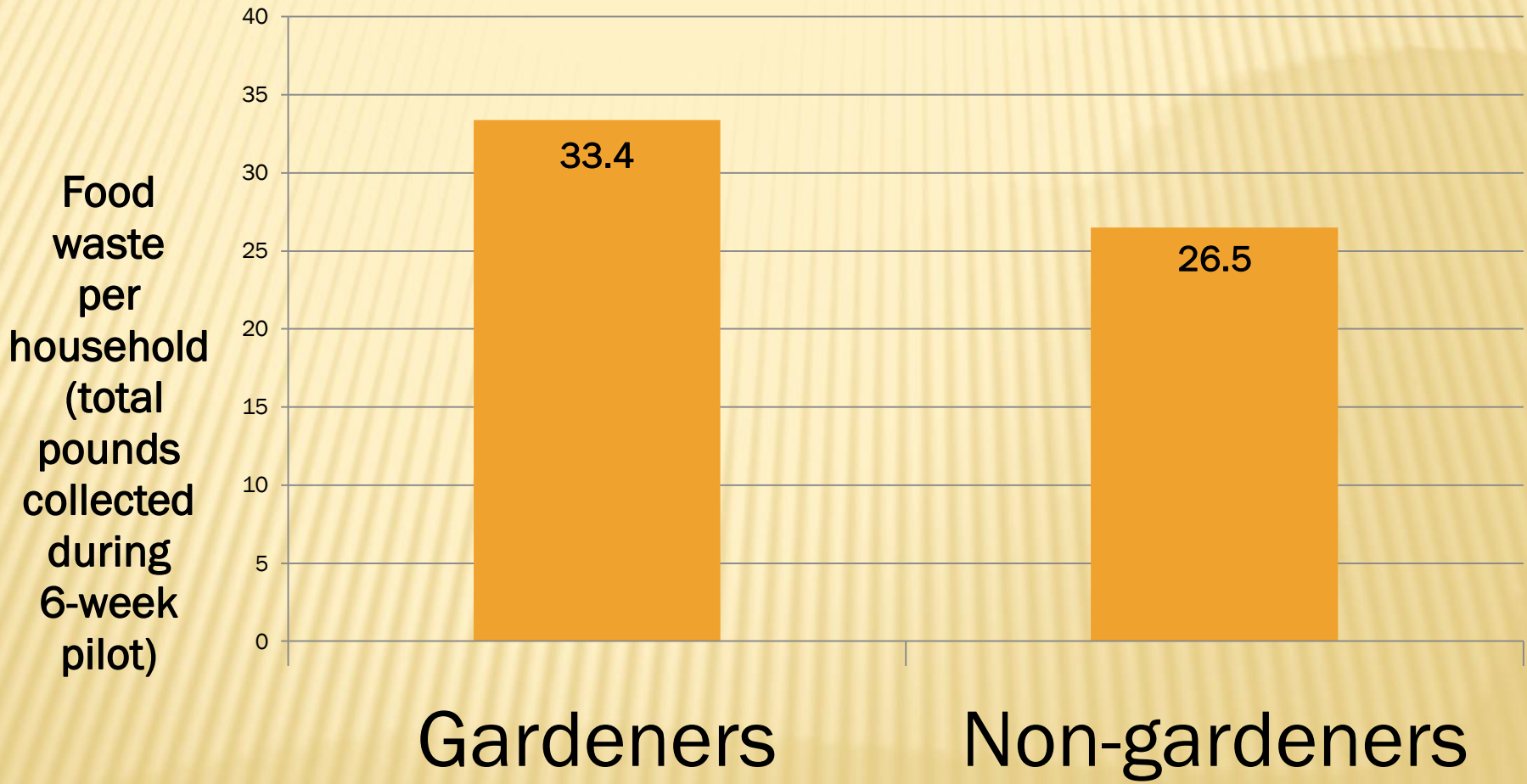
# DEMOGRAPHIC INDICATORS

## Annual Income vs. Food Waste Produced





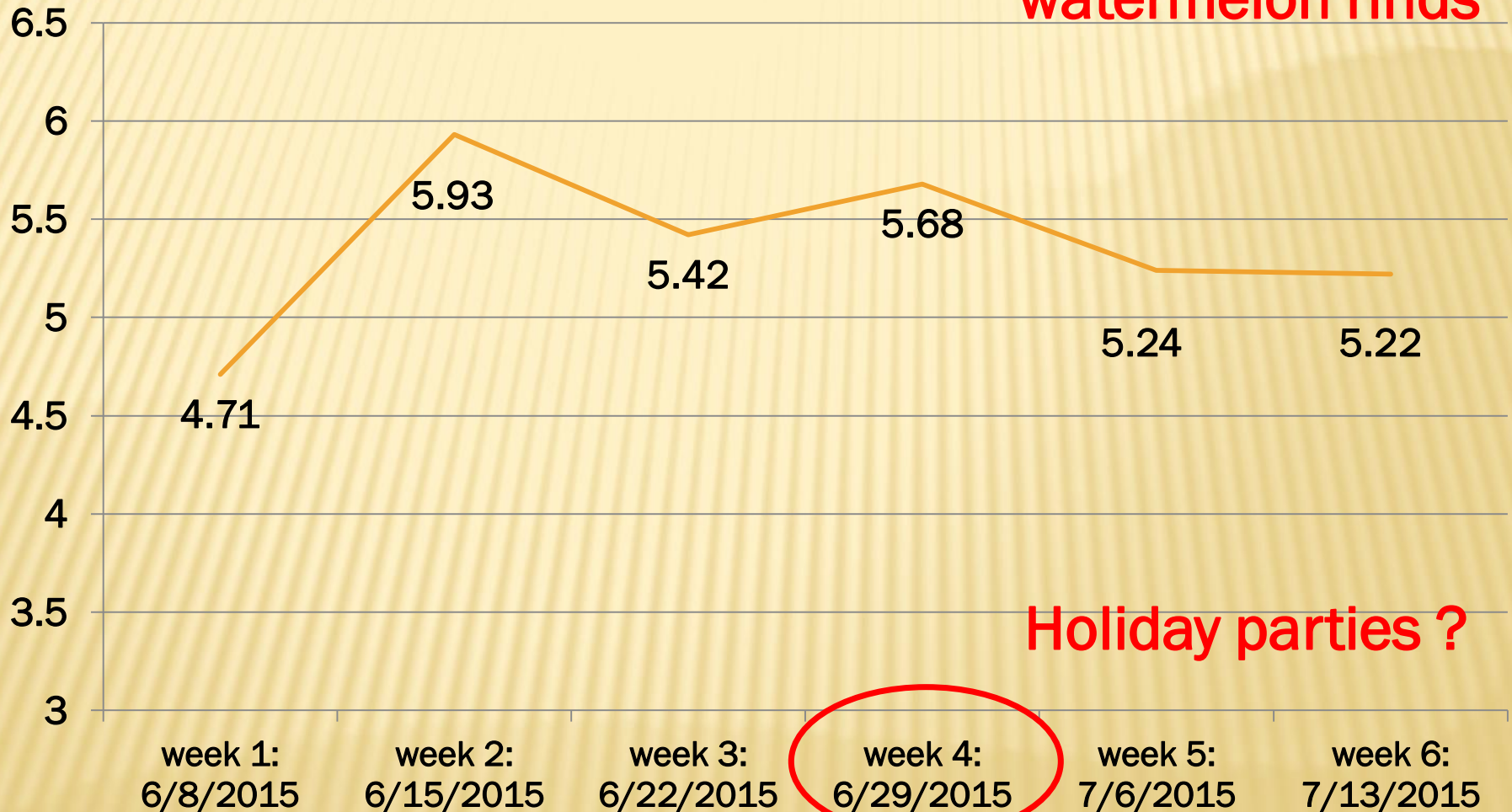
# DEMOGRAPHIC INDICATORS



Note: We did not have participants separate out inedible vs. preventable wasted food

# SEASONALITY ?

Summer in Iowa  
sweet corn husks  
watermelon rinds

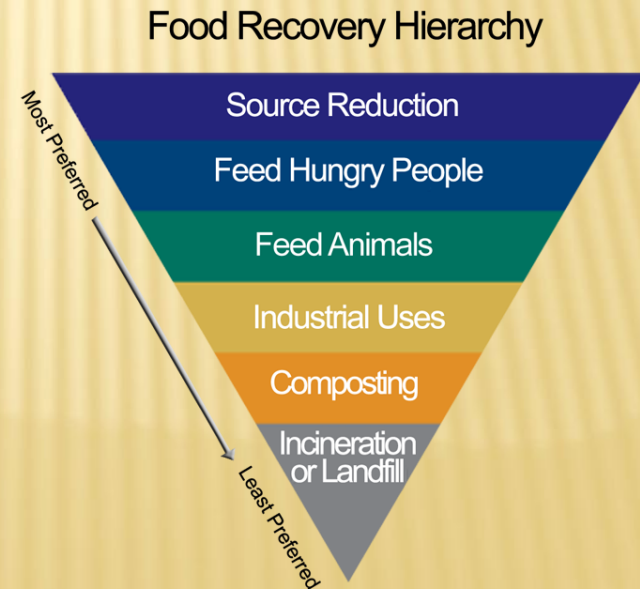


**Holiday parties ?**

Note: We did not have participants separate out inedible vs. preventable wasted food

# CURBSIDE COLLECTION

- ✘ Tried several collection containers
  - + Received positive helpful feedback on potential program and container types
- ✘ Key message
  - + REDUCE *then* compost!
  - + Keep it CLEAN!





# COSTS

item	est. costs	actual cost	cost per household (based on 52 initial participants)	source
staff time	\$ 10,000	\$ 9,178.50	\$ 176.51	ICLF
education	\$ 750	\$ 1,018.27	\$ 19.58	ICLF
containers & bags	\$ 750	\$ 517.27	\$ 9.95	Refuse Division, ICLF
scales	\$ 2,500	\$ 390.00	\$ 7.50	ICLF
TOTAL costs	\$ 14,000	\$ 11,104.04	\$ 213.54	

# FEEDBACK & LESSONS

## ✘ Feedback

- + strategies: “easy” or “somewhat easy” to use
- + “I am now more aware of food going to waste in my household.”
- + “Much of my household’s food waste was inedible.”

## ✘ Lessons

- + \*\*\* Do longer baseline and measurement periods
- + \*\*\* Separate inedible food waste from preventable wasted food

# ONGOING STEPS

- ✘ Ongoing outreach for food waste reduction
  - + [www.icgov.org/foodwaste](http://www.icgov.org/foodwaste)
  - + Social media
  - + Rap: Love your Mother!  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=65AMXyzEhd8>
  - + Programs at Senior Center, Iowa City Public Library
  - + Farmers Market tabling
- ✘ Curbside collection began in March 2017