



Jen Jordan, Recycling Coordinator

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
- ✘ Began talking about residential food waste reduction and food waste collection
- ✘ Pilot ran June to mid-July 2014



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

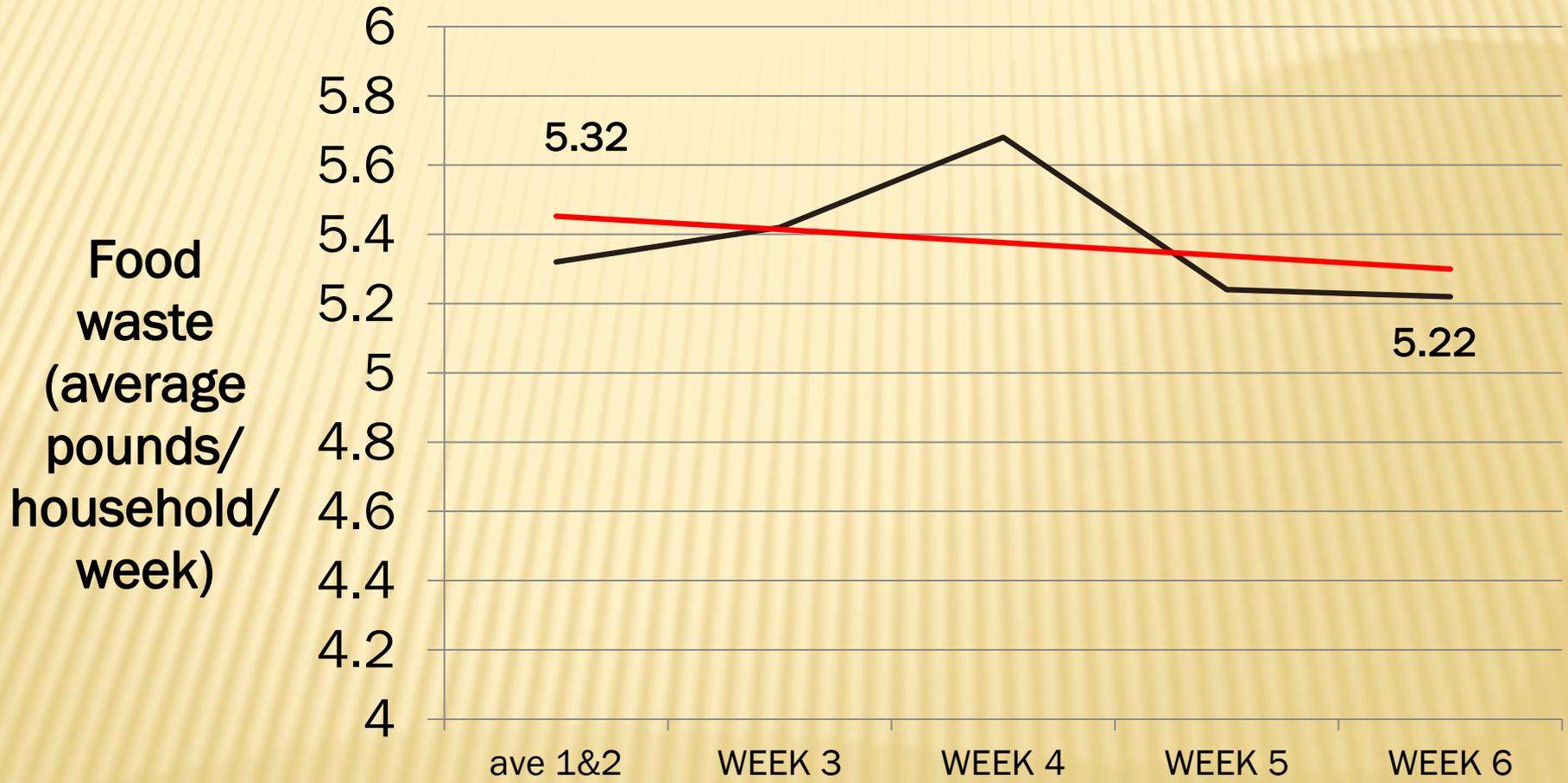
DATA

- ✘ 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)

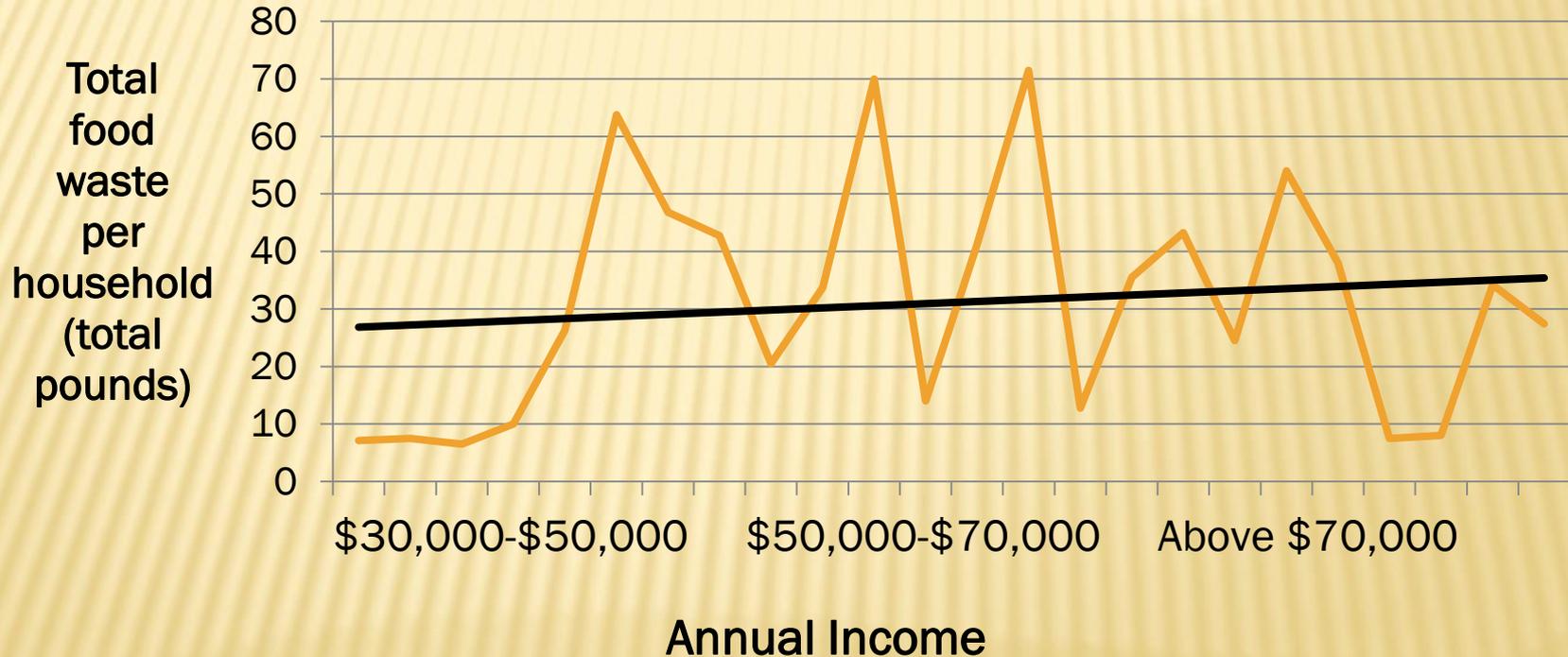


AVERAGE WEEKLY FOOD WASTE MEASUREMENT (AVERAGED WEEKS 1 & 2 FOR BASELINE)

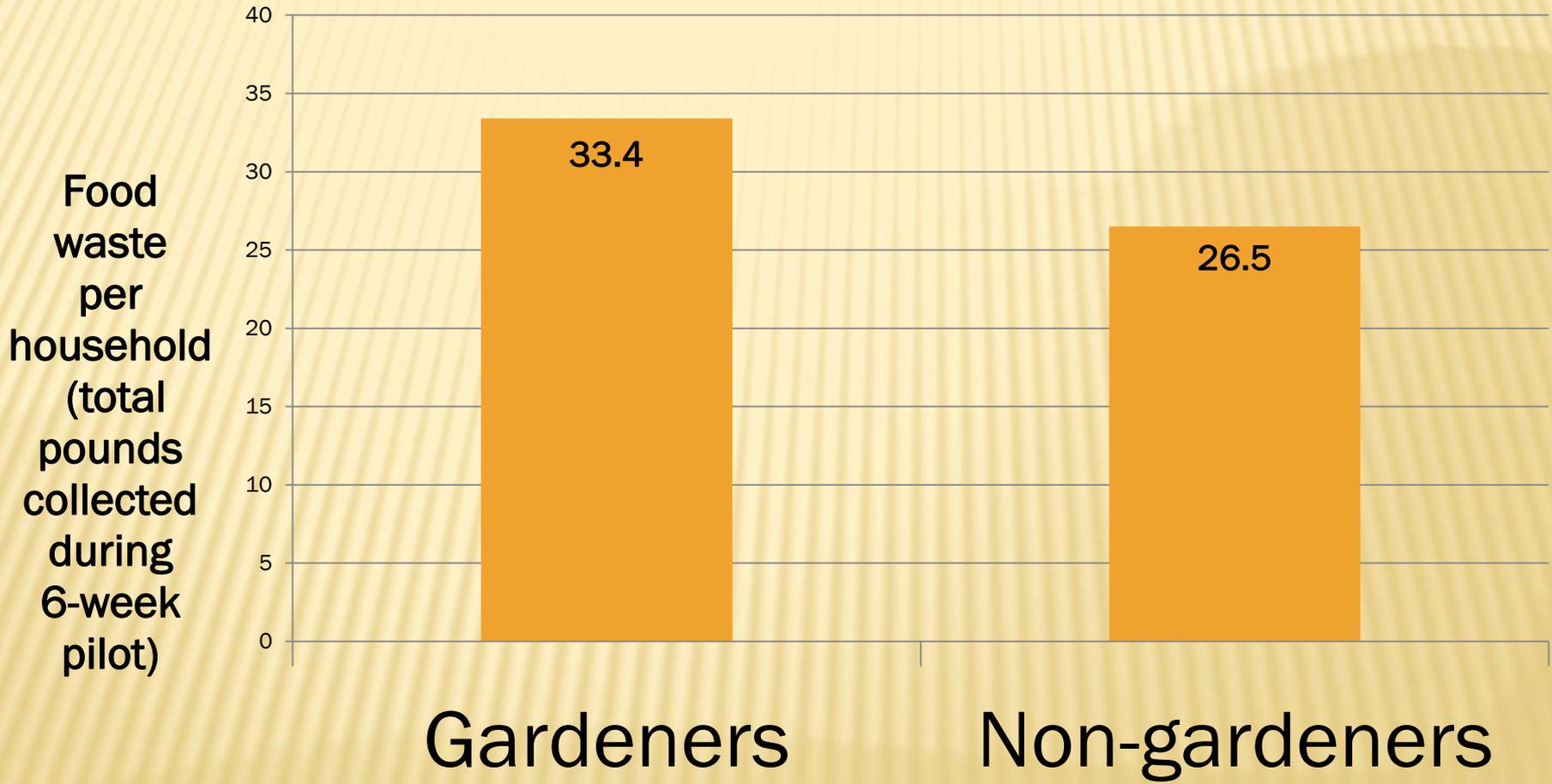


DEMOGRAPHIC INDICATORS

Annual Income vs. Food Waste Produced



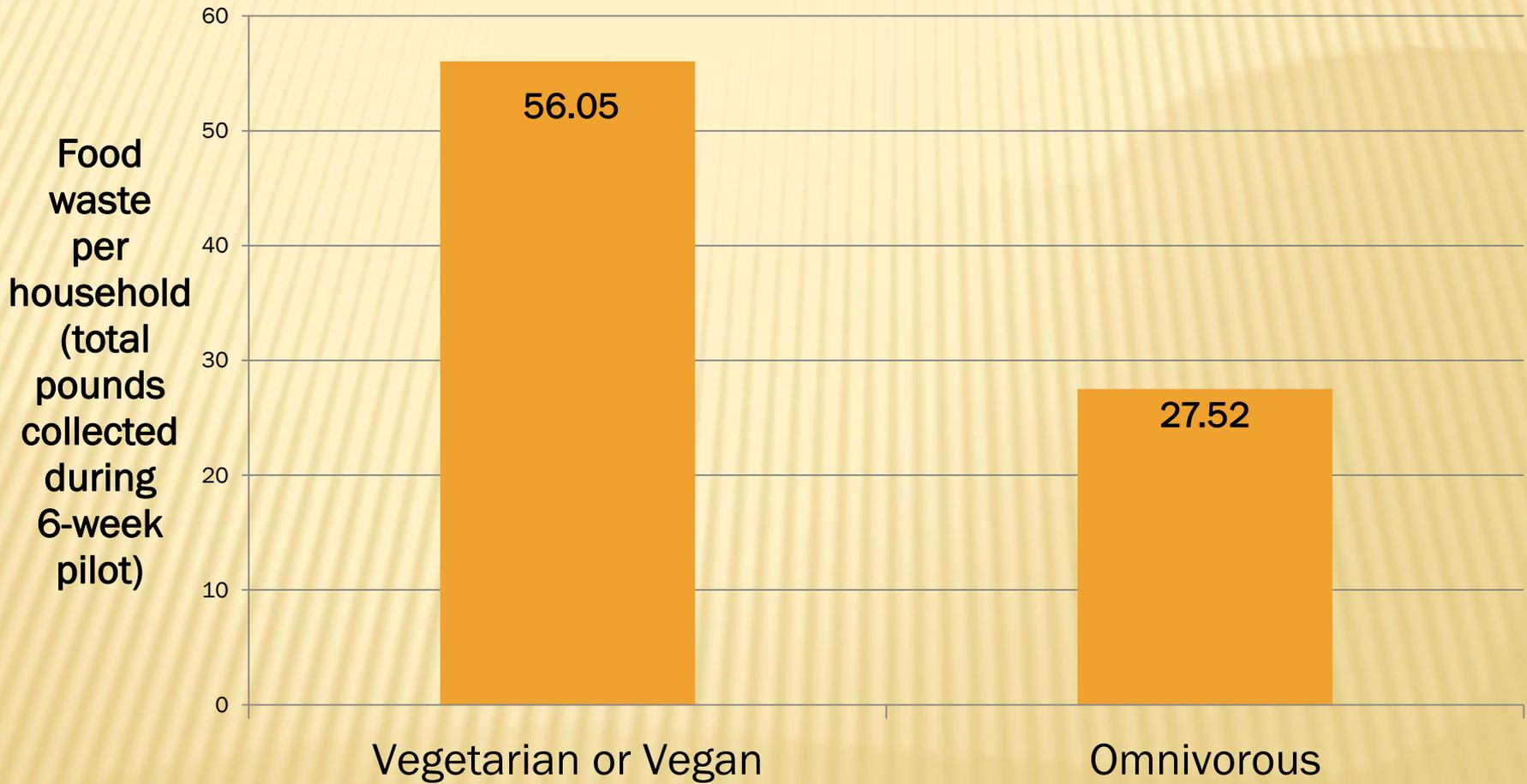
DEMOGRAPHIC INDICATORS



Note: We did not have participants separate out edible vs. preventable food waste



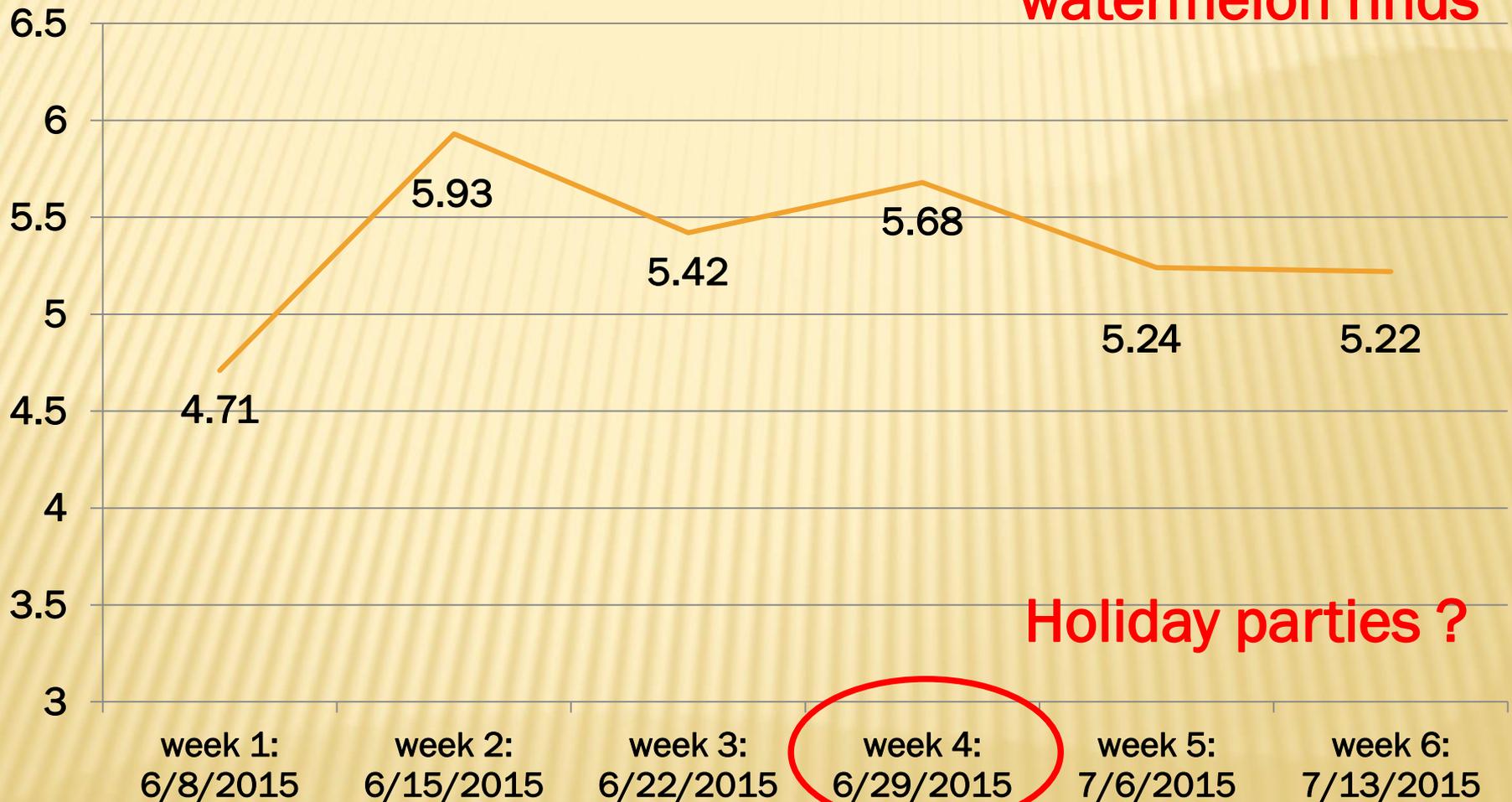
DEMOGRAPHIC INDICATORS



Note: We did not have participants separate out edible vs. preventable food waste

SEASONALITY ?

Summer in Iowa
sweet corn husks
watermelon rinds

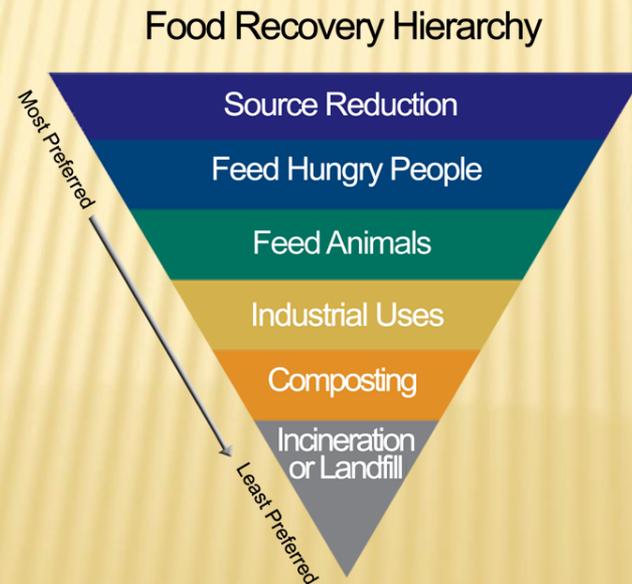


Holiday parties ?

Note: We did not have participants separate out edible vs. preventable food waste

CURBSIDE COLLECTION

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





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.”

✘ Lessons

- + *** Do longer baseline and measurement periods
- + *** Separate edible from preventable food waste

ONGOING STEPS

- ✘ Ongoing outreach for food waste reduction
 - + Rap: Love your Mother! (complete)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=65AMXyzEhd8>
 - + Program at Senior Center (completed)
 - + Food films with Iowa City Public Library (planned for fall)
 - + Farmers Market tabling (planned for fall)
- ✘ Presented plan to City Council in June 2016
- ✘ Curbside collection roll-out: September goal