

# Food Labeling Bill

(HBxxxx - Doglio)

Addressing food waste by standardizing labels communicating the freshness or expiration of food

## In Washington, food waste is a large component of our landfills

- **17% of the landfill load** (772,555 tons) is food waste annually, according to Ecology's 2016 Waste Characterization report.
- Of that, about half (over 374,490 tons) is **edible food!**
- Organic materials in landfills are known to cause **significant greenhouse gas emissions**.
- Nationally, the effect of processing the food that is wasted is equal to about **3.3 billion tons of CO<sub>2</sub>**.



## Food labels are varied and confusing



- People are **confused** by labels
- Consumer confusion regarding food date labels is well documented and accounts for about **20% of consumer waste** (WRAP 2011)
- Labels are not required except for infant formula
- Walmart surveyed its private label suppliers and found that they were using as many as **47 different kinds of date labels**
- Major brands, such as Kroger, have already adopted standard labels (like the proposed bill)

## What the bill does: creates two standard labels

For food sold in Washington, *if* using label must use:

### Food quality

**Best if used by**  
**or**  
**Best if used or**  
**frozen by**

### Food safety

**Use by**  
**or**  
**Use or freeze by**

Retailers would be required to **post signs** to educate consumers about the new labels

*It is time to reduce food waste in Washington*