

# The Commoditization of Food Waste: A Case Study in the Province of Québec

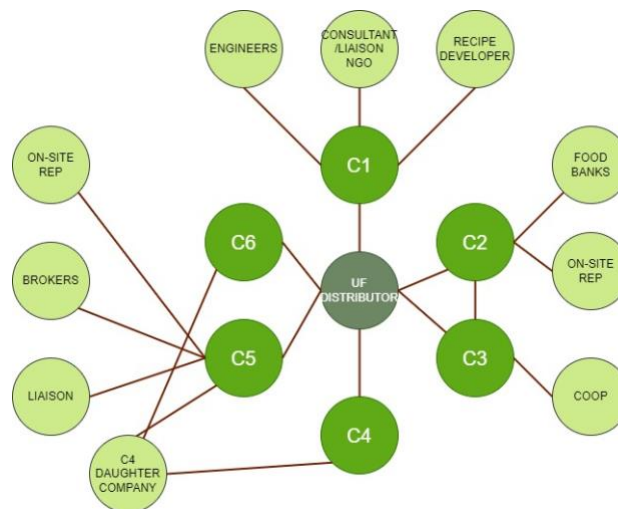
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2024

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Food waste represents an increasing environmental and public health issue. In the province of Québec, private actors are finding innovative ways to reintroduce this externality into the market in the form of upcycled foods. While upcycled foods are gaining popularity alongside interest in sustainable diets, this sector of the province's economy has yet to garner much scholarly attention. In this thesis, I investigated the opportunities and challenges facing entrepreneurs in this sector. To do so, I conducted semi-structured interviews with representatives from six upcycled food companies in the province to ask about their commodity chains and relationships with different actors. My findings show that the most common challenges were those related to social acceptability at initial stages of conception, supply consistency, and production volume. The greatest potential for growth appeared to be through partnerships and collaboration with other private and non-profit actors. Most importantly, the biggest influence of interviewed companies on environmental sustainability rested in their ability to redefine waste as a profitable locus for agri-food innovation. This established profitability, in turn, fosters waste consciousness of industry stakeholders, leading to greater engagement and transparency in waste production and mitigation.



Social Network Graph of Interviewed Companies' Relationships (Source: Author)