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Subject: Daily Table and Somerville Food

The [Daily Table](#) model of affordable food in Dorchester has spawned a bill in the Cambridge City Council. Daily Table is a nonprofit market started by the former CEO of Trader Joe's that sells aging but still edible food very cheap to any consumer, preferably to low income and elderly. They get their stuff from grocers about to throw out old stuff, much of which has a much longer shelf life than the official limit. Cambridge, reflecting on this Daily Table scheme, would make it illegal for grocers to throw out aging food, and thereby encourage them to discount it or give it away. Last week, at the Trader Joe's on the Charles River, my tenant and I got four pounds of cherries for free, for example.

Reflecting on a project I'm developing with the Council on Aging, CAAS, the schools, SCATV and Tufts nutrition, it occurred to me that it might be more useful to charge a "disposal fee" and use that income to supplement SNAP benefits through the Farmers Markets. The Board of Aldermen could raise consciousness about wasted food, save money for the poor, and re-inforce good nutrition through the Farmers Markets with a relatively simple bill with lots of good will, low cost to anybody, and - perhaps most important - capture the visibility of two new national documentaries coming out on Market Basket....

Just a word to the wise. Wouldn't have to be fast, but it would be very, very cool by the Fall when those movies begin to come out.

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