

Eco Heroes: Daisy Tam, Founder of Breadline And Hong Kong Foodworks

[Christian Gollayan](#)



Daisy Tam (Photo: Nic and Bex Gaunt for Hong Kong Tatler)

Daisy Tam has developed a crowd-sourcing app called [Breadline](#) to fight the alarming level of food waste in Hong Kong. It connects bakeries with volunteers wanting to pick up leftover loaves to deliver to charities.

Her awareness of the food waste issue dates back to 2004, when as a PhD student at Goldsmiths College in London, she had a part-time job selling apples at Borough Market. There she discovered a community of farmers and bakers who exchanged leftover produce, which inspired her dissertation and a passion for urban food security.

“Traders don’t want to waste food,” says Daisy. “So they created their

own food-recycling system and I was fascinated by that on a city scale."

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That experience sits in stark contrast to what she saw in her native Hong Kong when she returned in 2011; she was shocked by the city's lack of concern about food waste. Daisy found that supermarkets opted to throw away recently expired goods rather than donate them.

And as an assistant professor at Hong Kong Baptist University, she learned that the city only produces three per cent of the food it consumes. So in the event of a natural disaster or trade war, food insecurity would gravely affect all of Hong Kong's inhabitants.

Daisy Tam speaks about food waste in Hong Kong at TedX Wanchai (Video: Courtesy of TedX Wanchai)

Daisy won a Fulbright scholarship in 2018 to build her Breadline app. While still in beta, Breadline has already connected 80 volunteers with 300 bakeries and facilitates the donation of more than 1,000 loaves of [bread](#) each week. She expects the platform will be available to the public by the end of the year.

As well as developing her app, Daisy educates the public on food waste through speeches, workshops and her website, [Hong Kong Foodworks](#). While there's still plenty of work to do, she's heartened to see an increase in awareness about the city's fractured food system over the past eight years.

"We've always associated hunger with developing countries," Daisy says. "Now we're talking about food security in very rich cosmopolitan cities."

For more information, visit [hkfoodworks.com](#)

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