



## Sustainable Food Management

- **Food waste costs you money**
- **Food waste creates greenhouse gases**

### Minimizing Food Waste Results in a Triple Win:

**Good for your bottom line:** Individuals, families and businesses devote a large portion of their budgets to purchasing food, either for consumption or resale. In the U.S., food waste is the largest component of municipal solid waste, and that's a lot of money spent on unnecessary purchasing and disposal costs. Simple changes in food management practices result in significant reductions in food waste generation, which make food dollars go further.

**Good for the Environment:** Food disposed in a landfill decomposes and becomes a significant source of methane, a greenhouse gas 21 times more potent than carbon dioxide. Landfills and the food waste in them account for more than 20 percent of all methane emissions in the U.S. Therefore, diversion of food waste from landfills reduces greenhouse gas emissions. Further, using composted residual food improves soil health and structure, increases drought resistance, and minimizes the need for supplemental water, fertilizers, and pesticides.

**Good for Communities:** Food donation is a simple practice, with little or no program start-up cost, that provides needed food to hungry people. The federal "Bill Emerson Good Samaritan Food Donation Act" protects businesses, organizations, and individuals that donate food in good faith from legal liability. All 50 states have "Good Samaritan" laws that provide extra protection to donors. To handle unavoidable surplus consumable food, placement in a leak-proof, durable container, with frequent pickups for donation or composting, will reduce or eliminate odors and pests.

#### Food Waste Facts

- The U.S. creates over 34 million tons of food waste each year.
- Food waste is more than 14% of the total municipal solid waste stream.
- Nearly 98% of food waste generated goes to the landfill.

Turn excess food into a resource.

Interested? Turn over to learn how to participate.

# Join EPA's Food Recovery Challenge

Save money and reduce your environmental footprint by joining EPA's **Food Recovery Challenge (FRC)** through the **WasteWise** program. It takes just 4 easy steps:

## 1. Assess it! Conduct a Baseline Food Waste Assessment

Where do I start? Am I buying too much food? What am I throwing away? Conducting a Baseline Food Waste Assessment will answer these questions definitively, and clearly show you the way to reach your goals. The assessment should be conducted within 60 days of joining the FRC and should contain a good representative sample of food waste tracking data depending upon your business or activities (e.g. 1 week for a grocery store/campus). EPA's WasteWise program tools can provide assistance.

## 2. Plan it! Create a Food Waste Reduction Plan

Set yearly food waste diversion goals for a three year period, using the data obtained in Step 1, Baseline Food Waste Assessment, as a guide.

## 3. Track it! Report Progress Annually Using ReTRAC

ReTRAC is a web-based data management and reporting system that will track your organization's waste generation and reduction activities, including changes in purchasing, food donation, and composting. *Use of ReTRAC is free for WasteWise and FRC partners.*

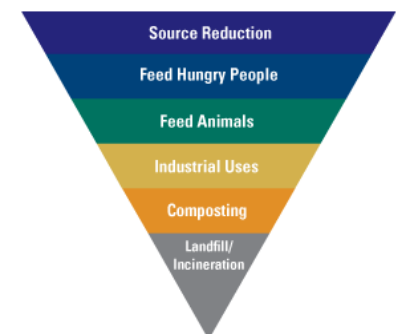
## 5. Do it! Undertake a Food Waste Reduction and Recovery Activity

Commit to undertaking at least three activities to reduce your food waste. Examples are modifying food purchasing, changing food production and handling practices, reducing excessive portion size, donations to the needy and composting/digestion.

### More reasons to join WasteWise and FRC:

- Free technical assistance via the WasteWise Hotline;
- Free access to the web-based data management tracking tool ReTRAC;
- Opportunities to receive WasteWise Awards that recognize outstanding achievements;
- Public recognition in WasteWise publications;
- Case studies, meetings, outreach and educational materials;
- Personalized and frameable annual Climate Profile describing greenhouse gas reductions;
- Reduced purchasing and waste disposal costs.

EPA recommends the following "food recovery hierarchy" as the preferred options to make the most of excess food.



[www.epa.gov/foodrecoverychallenge](http://www.epa.gov/foodrecoverychallenge)