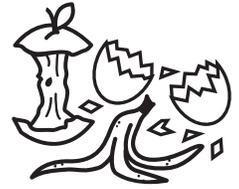


FOOD WASTE



The City of Buffalo is collaborating with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to promote food waste reduction and its associated environmental impact. Building on the familiar concept of “Reduce, Reuse, Recycle,” this approach changes how we think about environmental protection and recognizes the impacts of the food we waste.

WHY IS THE REDUCTION OF FOOD WASTE IMPORTANT?

Wasted food is a growing problem in our modern society. The amount of food Americans throw away each year is staggering—in 2013 alone, more than 37 million tons of food waste was generated, with only five percent diverted from landfills and incinerators for composting. The EPA estimates that more food reaches landfills and incinerators than any other single material in our everyday trash, constituting 21 percent of discarded municipal solid waste. Additionally, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) reports that Americans wasted over one-third of the vegetables and fruit bought in 2010. Reducing wasted food is a triple win; it’s good for the environment, for communities, and for the economy.

SAVING THE PLANET

REDUCING WASTED FOOD DOES GREAT THINGS FOR THE ENVIRONMENT:

- Save resources—Wasted food wastes the water, gasoline, energy, labor, pesticides, land, and fertilizers used to make the food. When we throw food in the trash, we’re throwing away much more than food.
- Reduce methane from landfills—When food goes to the landfill, it’s similar to tying food in a plastic bag. The nutrients in the food never return to the soil. The wasted food rots and produces methane gas. Methane is a strong greenhouse gas with more than 21 times the global warming potential compared to carbon dioxide.
- Return nutrients to the soil—If you can’t prevent, reduce or donate wasted food, you can compost. By sending food scraps to a composting facility instead of to a landfill or composting at home, you’re helping make healthy soils. Adding compost to gardens, highway construction sites, and poor soils makes great things happen. Properly composted organics (wasted food and yard waste) improve soil health and structure, improve water retention, support more native plants, and reduce the need for fertilizers and pesticides.

HELPING PEOPLE

PREVENTING WASTED FOOD AND RECOVERING SAFE, HEALTHY FOOD CAN HELP PEOPLE IN YOUR COMMUNITY:

- Feed the world—According to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, from 2012 to 2014 there were about 805 million hungry people on earth. They predict that by eliminating food loss and wasted food we would have enough food to feed all the chronically undernourished. They also expect that we wouldn’t have to increase food production or put additional pressure on our natural resources to do so.
- Feed people, not landfills—Instead of feeding landfills, we should be feeding people. You can donate different types of food to many different types of organizations. Contact Feeding America or your local food rescue organizations for information about locations and types of food donations.

SAVING MONEY

KEEPING FOOD OUT OF LANDFILLS CAN SAVE MONEY BY REDUCING DISPOSAL COSTS AND:

- Waste less and spend less—If you or your organization can find ways to prevent waste in the first place, you can spend less by buying only the food you will use. Preventing wasted food can also reduce energy and labor costs associated with throwing away good food.
- Receive tax benefits by donating—Your organization can claim tax benefits if you donate healthy, safe and edible food to hungry people. The Bill Emerson Good Samaritan Act (PDF) protects food donors from legal liability. (Source: USEPA)



CAN IT BE RECYCLED?

Call 311 or visit BuffaloRecycles.org to learn more.



FOOD WASTE



The City of Buffalo recently began a food waste collection program with Sue's Deli City Hall. Pre-consumer food waste is collected separately and composted or sent to a digester to create energy through our partnership with Natural Upcycling. Additionally, the city has been working with Beyond Green's sustainable food practices as they roll out programs at Nardin Academy and Westminster Community Charter School. Both locations are reducing food waste and composting food scraps! We also have a Food Too Good Too Waste Challenge going on with families at Westminster! Families are measuring their food waste and implementing strategies to reduce food waste. For more information, [click here](#).

Additionally, the city has been working with the Farmer Pirates as they expand their composting efforts to include commercial food waste composting. Farmer Pirates even have a pickup service for residential households.

TO LEARN MORE, PLEASE VISIT WEST COAST CLIMATE FORUM OR CONTACT SUSAN ATTRIDGE AT 716.851.5014 OR SATTRIDGE@CITY-BUFFALO.COM.



CAN IT BE RECYCLED?

Call 311 or visit BuffaloRecycles.org to learn more.

