



Illinois Food Waste Action Plan

developed by the
Wasted Food Action Alliance
prevent | rescue | recycle



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WASTED FOOD ACTION ALLIANCE

WE ARE a diverse set of organizations, institutions and businesses helping build a unified approach towards reducing wasted food and leveraging it to benefit our region. We collaborate to combat wasted food and create solutions for the benefit of food systems and those who rely on them.

Whether stopping waste from occurring in the first place (**PREVENT**/reduce), making sure food is redistributed to feed people (**RESCUE**/donate), or repurposing waste as energy, agricultural, and other products (**RECYCLE**/compost), there are opportunities to strengthen and improve our food system through collaboration, innovation, policy change and education.



Collaboration

to connect and promote existing services and programs

Innovation

to identify and address gaps in infrastructure and services

Policy

to support policy change on the state and local level

Education

to launch education campaigns promoting food waste reduction as a climate solution

To achieve an ambitious food waste reduction target, we need long-term planning and equally ambitious policy efforts. The goal of the Wasted Food Action Alliance is to engage others in implementing the solutions outlined in this Action Plan. With decision makers at the state and local levels prioritizing environmental work, an Illinois Food Waste Action Plan offers solutions that can be incorporated into state and local plans for waste reduction, local food, and more.

ILLINOIS FOOD WASTE ACTION PLAN

Now is the time to join forces and support an **Illinois Food Waste Action Plan**. This plan will reduce wasted food in Illinois through prevention, rescue and recycling.

Together we will...

- **Promote and connect** wasted food prevention, rescue and recycling services and programs.
- **Support schools and institutions** to reduce wasted food and expand food waste reduction education and activities.
- **Develop and support policy** addressing wasted food prevention, rescue, and recycling.



2019 - Governor Pritzker signed an executive order joining Illinois into the U.S. Climate Alliance.

Illinois (as bound by the United States Nationally Determined Contribution to the Paris Agreement) will need to accomplish a 26-28% reduction in net greenhouse gas emissions by 2025 from 2005 levels.¹

↓
27%

Methane from food in landfills accounts for 8% of annual greenhouse gas emissions.²

If Illinois reduces food going to landfills by 50%, GHG emissions will be reduced ??? (0.54 MTCO2E/Short Ton)³

US 2030 Food Loss and Waste Reduction Goal (US EPA, USDA) aims to

1. reduce food waste going to landfills and combustion with energy recovery by **50 percent** to 109.4 pounds per person
2. cut food loss at the retail and consumer level **in half**, by approximately 66 billion pounds⁴

↓
50%

Illinois landfills receive 2.8 million tons of wasted food each year!⁵

A 50% reduction means we need to **PREVENT, RESCUE, RECYCLE 1.4 million tons annually** by 2030.

TAKE ACTION

“The United States has an extraordinary food waste problem: up to 40 percent of all food in the country is not eaten. At the same time, 41 million Americans face food insecurity. Tackling food waste by reducing food waste, rescuing surplus food, and recycling food scraps would reduce greenhouse gas emissions and put food on the tables of Americans across the country—and cities are uniquely positioned to help solve this problem.”

- [Natural Resource Defense Council \(NRDC\)](#)⁶

We all need to...

ASSESS

- Current **wasted food** landscape - how much food is being wasted, rescued and recycled?
- **Infrastructure** for food rescue and food scrap recycling to determine capacity available locally (including rescue, collection and processing infrastructure).
- Current **policy** or ordinance that either supports or restricts reducing wasted food.
- Key **stakeholders** to provide feedback on the needs, opportunities, and barriers related to reducing wasted food.

SET GOALS & MEASURE PROGRESS

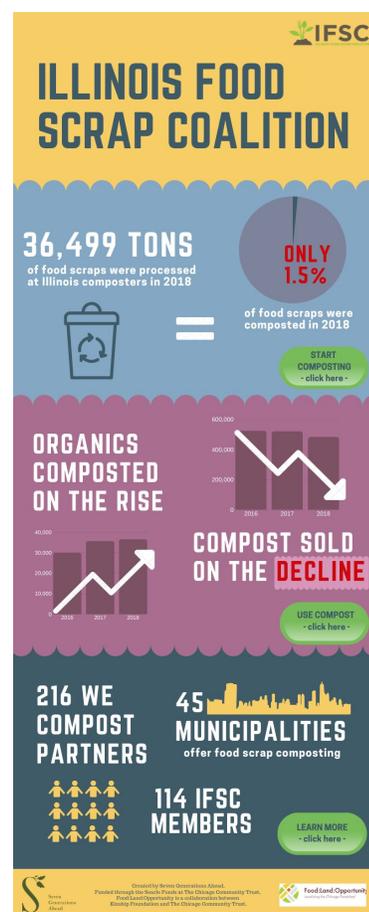
- Set wasted food diversion **goals** and **metrics**.
- Connect reducing wasted food to climate change goals.

TAKE ACTION

- Enact policies and ordinances to support food rescue and recycling/composting.
- Develop or connect to programs and education materials to share with key stakeholder groups.

RECOGNIZE & SUPPORT SUCCESS

- Recognize and celebrate communities, institutions and businesses working to reduce wasted food.
- Incentivize reducing wasted food - tax incentives/credits



OPPORTUNITIES FOR CHICAGO

- [IEC](#) 2019 Environmental Mayor Report - Recommendations for the Next Chicago Mayor
- Support the use of end-use compost for landscape activities at all City properties.
 - Expand CPS Commercial Composting Pilot Program.⁷

RESOURCES

There are many tools to support household, institution, and municipal food waste reduction. Here are a few:

INFRASTRUCTURE AND POLICY

[Illinois Food Scrap Coalition](#)
[ReFed: Rethink Food Waste](#)

MUNICIPAL

[Natural Resources Defense Council \(NRDC\)](#) - Tackling Food Waste in Cities: A Policy and Program Toolkit

[Chicago Food Policy Action Council](#)

[Residential Food Scrap Composting: A Guide for Illinois Municipalities](#) a project of the Illinois Food Scrap Coalition, developed by Seven Generations Ahead in collaboration with partners from the Wasted Food Action Alliance.

Advocates for Urban Agriculture [City of Chicago Compost Ordinance Overview and FAQs](#)

HOUSEHOLD

US EPA [Food: Too Good to Waste](#)

NRDC [Save the Food](#)

INSTITUTIONS AND BUSINESSES

US EPA Sustainable Management of Food [tools and resources](#)

[USDA Food Loss and Waste](#)

[Food Waste Reduction Toolkit for Illinois Schools](#) a project of the Wasted Food Action Alliance, developed by Seven Generations Ahead in collaboration with partners from the Wasted Food Action Alliance.

LEARNING FROM OTHER CITIES AND COUNTIES

Check out successful plans and programs from across the US for ideas that work to reduce wasted food.

- [Alameda County, CA](#)
- [Denver](#)
- [Minneapolis](#)
- [Nashville](#)
- [Santa Barbara](#)



PRIORITY SOLUTIONS

GOAL: Reduce wasted food in Illinois through prevention, rescue and recycling.



Promote and connect wasted food prevention, rescue and recycling services and programs.



Actively support food system stakeholders to reduce wasted food with targeted food waste reduction education and activities.



Develop and support policy addressing wasted food prevention, rescue, and recycling.

The priority solutions outlined in this plan have been selected by the Wasted Food Action Alliance as initial priorities for reducing wasted food and keeping wasted food out of our landfills. There are other sectors and solutions not detailed, but an important part of the solution.

This plan is dynamic and we welcome suggestions as we work together to reduce wasted food in Illinois.

GOAL

Reduce wasted food in Illinois through prevention, rescue and recycling.

PRIORITY SOLUTIONS



1. **Promote and connect** wasted food prevention, rescue and recycling services and programs.
 - a. Identify existing services and programs for food waste prevention, rescue, and recycling in Illinois and nationally. Share information and best practices, encourage collaboration and raise awareness.
 - b. Promote resources via a centralized hub to assist consumers, businesses, and institutions with implementing wasted food reduction efforts.



2. Actively **support food system stakeholders** to reduce wasted food with targeted food waste reduction education and activities.
 - a. New information will be added as it is developed relating to the stakeholder groups including: Producers/Growers, Distributors, Retailers, Food service, **Institutions** and businesses, **Schools**, Rescue organizations, Consumers, Recyclers/Composters



3. Develop and support **policy** addressing wasted food prevention, rescue, and recycling.
 - a. Work with Illinois Environmental Council and other partners to ensure policy agenda is created for local and state policy to reduce wasted food in Illinois.
 - b. Become the go-to group for information about and support for local and state policy to reduce wasted food in Illinois.



Recommended Solution 1

PROMOTE & CONNECT

Promote and connect wasted food prevention, rescue and recycling services and programs.



PROMOTE & CONNECT

Identify and promote assets (people, infrastructure and technology) in Illinois.

OBJECTIVE A

Identify existing services and programs for food waste prevention, rescue, and recycling in Illinois and nationally. Share information and best practices, encourage collaboration and raise awareness.

OBJECTIVE B

Promote resources via a centralized hub to assist consumers, businesses, and institutions with implementing wasted food reduction efforts.



WASTED FOOD ACTION ALLIANCE WILL...

- I. Identify and map regional assets to encourage collaboration across silos.
 - A. PREVENT - Identify opportunities to connect-the-dots to improve cold-chain management.
 - B. RESCUE - Identify technology solutions to connect food donors to transportation to food bank/pantry to donor agencies. Pilot Project: Feeding America technology to support food bank infrastructure.
 - C. RECYCLE - Collaborate with the Illinois Food Scrap Coalition to support food scrap recycling for residents and institutions/commercial businesses. Explore opportunities for business incentives and resources related to food waste reduction and recycling.

- II. Reach out to and engage a diverse group of stakeholders in collaborating to reduce wasted food.
 - A. Explore public awareness campaigns, promote existing work, and identify how members can collaborate to leverage expertise and resources.
 - B. Develop a communication strategy to support food waste reduction.

- III. Develop a diverse and sustainable funding portfolio to support the Wasted Food Action Alliance.



PROMOTE & CONNECT

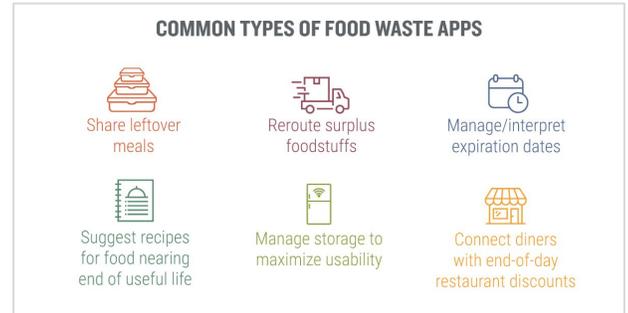
Identify and promote assets (people, infrastructure and technology) in Illinois.

OBJECTIVE A:

HOW WILL *YOU* IDENTIFY & SHARE ASSETS?

TAKE ACTION

- ❑ Start or support a program to reduce wasted food, rescue and donate, or recycle/compost food scraps.
- ❑ Develop/implement a technology solution to track and reduce wasted food, improve food donation systems or measure the impact of recycling food scraps.
- ❑ Identify and support opportunities for business incentives for reducing wasted food.



ensia.com/features/smartphone-apps-food-waste/

ENGAGE OTHERS

- ❑ Share your commitment to reduce wasted food through your organization/company advertising, website, social media or newsletter.

MAKE MONEY MATTER

- ❑ Host a networking fundraising event to connect and raise money for work to reduce wasted food.
- ❑ Sponsor or write a project that supports reducing wasted food in grant applications.

OBJECTIVE B:

HOW WILL *YOU* EXPAND & STRENGTHEN *YOUR* NETWORK?

TAKE ACTION

- ❑ [Join](#) the Wasted Food Action Alliance
- ❑ Invite a local or regional partner to join the Wasted Food Action Alliance.
- ❑ Join an organization or network that reduces wasted food.

ENGAGE OTHERS

- ❑ Share information about the **Illinois Food Waste Action Plan** through your organization/company advertising, website, social media or newsletter.

MAKE MONEY MATTER

- ❑ Sponsor or write a project of the Wasted Food Action Alliance into a grant application to fund collaborative work.





Recommended Solution 2

FOOD SYSTEM STAKEHOLDERS

Actively support food system stakeholders to reduce wasted food with targeted food waste reduction education and activities.

This Action Plan is a living document and new information will be added as it is developed relating to different stakeholder groups

- Producers/growers
- Distributors
- Retailers
- Food service
 - Schools
 - Institutions (hospitals, jails, higher education, museums, etc)
- Food rescue organizations
- Consumers
- Food scrap recyclers/composters



SCHOOLS

Develop and disseminate *Food Waste Reduction Toolkit for Illinois Schools*.
Support the recovery and redistribution of food in K-12 schools.

OBJECTIVE A

Provide detailed guidance for K-12 schools to reduce food waste, raise awareness and increase knowledge of the impacts of wasted food.

OBJECTIVE B

Engage members of the next generation, educators and the general public (parents, staff, administration, etc.) in order to change how schools handle wasted food.

OBJECTIVE C

Support the recovery and redistribution of food in K-12 schools - share tables, redistribution of good food within schools, donation to outside organizations.

WASTED FOOD ACTION ALLIANCE WILL...

- I. Promote the adoption and use of the [Food Waste Reduction Toolkit for Illinois Schools](#).



- II. Collaborate with statewide partners for the development of state-level guidance and best practices for the recovery and redistribution of edible food for K-12 schools.





SCHOOLS

Develop and disseminate *Food Waste Reduction Toolkit for Illinois Schools*. Support the recovery and redistribution of food in K-12 schools.

HOW WILL YOU SUPPORT SCHOOLS?

TAKE ACTION

- ❑ Share a link to the *Food Waste Reduction Toolkit for Illinois Schools* on website, social media, newsletter, etc.
- ❑ Develop a program to rescue food from schools to support a local food pantry.

ENGAGE OTHERS

- ❑ Send a link to the *Food Waste Reduction Toolkit for Illinois Schools* to a school/district.
- ❑ Find out if any schools in your community have programs to reduce wasted food, rescue or recycle. Promote those efforts through social media.

MAKE MONEY MATTER

- ❑ Provide funding to a school/district for the materials needed to sort lunchroom food for rescue or composting.
- ❑ Sponsor a zero waste presentation or event for students.

Food Waste Reduction Toolkit for Illinois Schools

Share tables and the redistribution of food
 A share table is a place where students may return whole and/or unopened food or beverage items from school meals that they did not eat. These items can be made available to other students to consume during or after the meal service or be donated to an outside organization.

Share tables can be used in the following ways:

- Food or beverage items left on the share table can be made available at no cost to other students who may want additional servings.
- Items left on the share table may be served and claimed for reimbursement during another meal service.
- Items left on the share table may be donated to a local food pantry, business entity, or other non-profit charitable organization.
- Share tables may be used in the National School Lunch Program, the School Breakfast Program, the Child and Adult Care Food Program, and the Summer Food Service Program.

Share tables are to be used only for food and beverage items and are a part of a school meal. No food items should be placed on a share table. Instead, encourage students with home-packed lunches to take home unopened food. Students eating school meals should not intentionally choose extra food just to place it on the share table.

FOOD RECOVERY & REDISTRIBUTION 18



Mindful Waste lunchroom sorting station



New Trier Environmental Club teamed up with Solid Waste Agency of Northern Cook County (SWANCC), NTHS administration and Go Green volunteers to conduct a cafeteria waste audit at the Freshman Campus.



INSTITUTIONS

Support institutions/businesses managing wasted food by connecting them to local resources and supporting the sharing of best practices.

OBJECTIVE A

Identify Illinois institutions/businesses taking action to manage wasted food in their operations and raise awareness in their communities.

WASTED FOOD ACTION ALLIANCE WILL...

- I. Connect to organizations and networks of institutions to share the Illinois Food Waste Action Plan and solicit spotlights of institution successes in Illinois.
- II. Develop a list of Illinois institutions willing to share best management practices for reducing wasted food, rescuing food and recycling food scraps with industry peers.
- III. Identify business incentives and resources for food scrap diversion from landfill.





INSTITUTIONS

Support institutions reducing wasted food by connecting them to local resources and supporting the sharing of best practices.

HOW WILL *YOU* SUPPORT INSTITUTIONS?

TAKE ACTION

- ❑ Launch a food waste reduction program at your institution (prevent, rescue, recycle).
- ❑ Highlight food waste reduction as a priority in your business plan, website, newsletters.
- ❑ Find out where your institution donates food and encourage employees to support that organization as well.
- ❑ If your institution is doing food scrap composting, be recognized through the We Compost recognition program of the Illinois Food Scrap Coalition.

ENGAGE OTHERS

- ❑ Share your success story about reducing wasted food with the Wasted Food Action Alliance to provide best practices for other institutions.
- ❑ Participate in a webinar about institution food waste reduction.
- ❑ Provide tours of your food waste reduction operations to teach others.

MAKE MONEY MATTER

- ❑ Track and report food donated to ensure your institution receives appropriate tax credit for the donation.
- ❑ Adopt a school and cover the cost to set up a food waste reduction program.

OBJECTIVE A

Identify Illinois institutions/businesses successfully working to reduce food waste, raise awareness and increase knowledge of the impact of wasted food.



The U.S. Food Loss and Waste 2030 Champions

The USDA and US EPA recognize private sector corporations such as General Mills, Sodexo, Unilever and Wal-Mart, which have made sizable commitments to reducing food loss and waste within their operations.



Priority Solution 3

POLICY PRIORITIES

Develop and support policy addressing wasted food prevention, rescue, and recycling.



POLICY PRIORITIES

Create annual policy agenda to reduce wasted food.

OBJECTIVE A

Work with civic and advocacy groups to ensure policy agenda is created for local and state policy to reduce wasted food in Illinois.

OBJECTIVE B

Become the go-to group for information about and support for local and state policy to reduce wasted food in Illinois.

WASTED FOOD ACTION ALLIANCE WILL...

Support local and state policy agenda

- I. Meet with stakeholders to discuss policy priorities and develop a short and long term policy agenda.
- II. Examine convergence points around the Harvest to Home bill.
- III. Collaborate with policymakers and stakeholders to contribute to and support a Good Food Policy.

Become the go-to group for food waste policy information

- I. Present Illinois Food Waste Action Plan to Governor Pritzker's appointed Statewide Materials Management Task Force.
- II. Map out policy relationships and opportunities to educate decision makers about the action plan and other policies, both local, state and federal (like the Good Samaritan Act).
- III. Develop a plan for grassroots outreach and partnership in support of state bills that have been introduced.
- IV. Collaborate with Illinois Department of Public Health to assist with outreach/education for local health inspectors, especially re: Good Samaritan act.
- V. Explore integrating food waste prevention/reduction info into food handler training & food protection manager certification overseen by Illinois Department of Public Health.

2020

HB 4704 Right to garden
(Harper/Bennett)

HR 683 / SR 992 Farming as a public
service (West/Bennett)

HB4715 / SB3087 Incidental compost
sales (Frese/Tracy)

SB3462 Nutrient Loss Reduction
Strategy fund (Villivalam)



A growing number of states and localities are enacting organic waste bans or waste recycling laws to restrict the amount of food waste an entity can send to the landfill. This helps to push businesses and consumers to reduce food waste.

Illinois does not currently have any food waste bans or food waste recycling laws.



POLICY PRIORITIES

Create annual policy agenda to reduce wasted food.

OBJECTIVE A

HOW WILL *YOU* SUPPORT A STATE POLICY AGENDA?

TAKE ACTION

- ❑ Join the work of an Illinois organization addressing food policy and ensure wasted food in part of that platform (see some examples below).
- ❑ Contact legislators about the Wasted Food Action Alliance and ask them to support reducing wasted food in Illinois.
- ❑ Host a policy open house at aldermanic, city, and county wide levels.
- ❑ Connect the impact of reducing waste to climate change goals for your community/place of business, etc.

ENGAGE OTHERS

- ❑ Share information on food waste reduction policy through your newsletter/website/social media

MAKE MONEY MATTER

- ❑ Join the Illinois Environmental Council to support food waste reduction policies.



OBJECTIVE B

HOW WILL *YOU* EDUCATE POLICY MAKERS?

TAKE ACTION

- ❑ Participate in a webinar to address state and local policies that support food waste reduction.
- ❑ Invite key decision makers to discussions about food waste reduction policy and impact.
- ❑ Share events and resources with the WFAA to be included on the website or in future meetings and presentations.
- ❑ Post the Illinois Food Waste Action Plan on your website and link to WFAA.

ENGAGE OTHERS

- ❑ Share the WFAA website and events with others.
- ❑ Encourage other groups to support the Illinois Food Waste Action Plan.

MAKE MONEY MATTER

- ❑ Identify policymakers who support food waste reduction and support their campaign.

LEARNING FROM OTHER CITIES AND REGIONS

Check out successful plans and programs from across the US for ideas that work.

- [Central Ohio Food Waste Initiative](#)
- [Vermont Universal Recycling Law](#)
- [Pacific Coast Collaborative](#)
- UK Love Food Hate Waste = 21% reduction in 5 years
- National Resource Defense Council Food Matters



ILLINOIS POLICY

PREVENT

2019 The Solid Waste Planning and Recycling Public Act [101-0074](#)

2019 Bulk Containers Public Act [101-0510](#)

RESCUE

2016 bill HB5530 was passed to allow food donations from schools and other government operated facilities to prevent it from ending up in the landfill.

2019 IL [HB3496](#) -- Amends the Good Samaritan Food Donor Act

RECYCLE

[1990](#) Landscape waste was banned from landfills in Illinois. There are many landscape waste composting facilities and jobs in Illinois as a result of this effort.

2009 Permit requirements for Commercial Food Scrap Composting were lowered, making this type of business more feasible for Illinois.

2013 Permit requirements were removed for urban farms and compost piles under 25 cubic yards.

2015 HB437 was passed to allow for temporary and permanent sites to collect organics for composting.

2019 Supporting Nutrient Loss Reduction Goals [SR0052](#)

2019 Promoting Soil Health Public Act [101-0484](#)
<https://ilenviro.org/2019-iec-legislative-report/>

LOCAL ORDINANCE/PLAN

[GREENEST REGIONS COMPACT](#) - Municipalities adopt the GRC by formal resolution and agree to work to achieve GRC goals in their community and in collaboration with other municipalities across the region. To date, 131 communities of all sizes and strengths have adopted the GRC to improve quality of life for more than 6 million residents making it the largest regional sustainability collaborative for municipalities in the country.

MWRD Resource Recovery Ordinance [change](#) - Area breweries will have the opportunity to tip or deliver their organic waste locally at a more affordable cost at the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago's (MWRD's) Calumet Water Reclamation Plant (WRP).

CHICAGO 2015 [Amendment of Municipal Code](#) Titles 7, 11 and 17 by modifying regulations for recycling facilities and urban farm accessory composting operations



RECOMMENDATIONS

PREVENT

Date Labeling - Under current federal law, date labels are almost entirely unregulated, except for use on infant formula. States have a variety of inconsistent date labeling regulations that often fail to reflect the distinction between food safety and food quality.

CURRENT: Illinois does not have date labeling regulations except for Admin. Code tit. 8, § 65.30 (2013) which pertains to eggs

- “It shall be allowable to include expiration dates in the labeling of consumer-size containers at retail.”
- “Eggs with an expiration date marked on the container shall not be offered for sale or sold to a consumer after the date marked on the container.”

Bring-Your-Own Container HB5534 (Cassidy) — Expands the ability of consumers to bring their own containers into retail establishments.

RESCUE

Liability Protection - Many potential food donors, including grocers and retailers, cite fear of liability as a primary deterrent to donating food. However, the federal Bill Emerson Good Samaritan Food Donation Act provides a national baseline of civil and criminal liability protection for food donors and recipient nonprofit organizations that receive and distribute food to needy individuals. States cannot make laws that remove or reduce the protection created under the Act, but they are free to enact laws that are the same or even stronger.

CURRENT: 2016 bill HB5530 was passed to allow food donations from schools and other government operated facilities to prevent it from ending up in the landfill. 2019 IL [HB3496](#) -- Amends the Good Samaritan Food Donor Act

Tax Incentives for Donation -

CURRENT: Illinois does not offer additional tax incentives beyond federal incentives.

Donation from Schools - HB5203 Share tables (Edly-Allen) — Requires that Illinois State Board of Education provide standard operating procedures for share tables.

RECOMMENDATION

- Mandate that the Department of Health not require date labels on food products that do not pose an increased safety risk.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Expand liability protections for food donations to cover food donors that donate food directly to individuals;
- Expand liability protections to cover charitable or non-profit organizations that charge a fee for distributed food to cover the cost of handling;

RECOMMENDATION

- Create a tax credit for individuals and businesses that donate food to non-profit organizations;

RECOMMENDATION

- Require Department of Health to develop a food donation recommendations and train health inspectors on the information in the guide.



RECOMMENDATIONS cont.

RECYCLE

Organic Waste Bans & Waste Recycling Laws

In order to push businesses and consumers to reduce food waste, a growing number of states and localities are enacting organic waste bans or waste recycling laws to restrict the amount of food waste an entity can send to the landfill. Five states and several localities have passed either waste bans or waste recycling laws for food waste.

CURRENT: Illinois does not currently have policy that addresses food waste.

Animal Feed

Using food scraps as animal feed in a safe, resource-efficient way can be environmentally friendly and energy-efficient, providing multiple benefits for both farmers and food waste generators, such as retailers, restaurants, and institutional cafeterias.

Under federal law, food scraps can generally be fed to animals, so long as food scraps with animal derived by-products are heat-treated by a licensed facility before being fed to swine; and food scraps containing animal-derived by-products are not fed to ruminants. The federal regulations function as a floor, and most state regulations go beyond them.

CURRENT: Illinois restricts this. 2014 § 5/48-7 No feeding garbage to animals. Exception for individuals feeding household garbage to swine.

[Incidental Compost Sales HB4715/SB3087](#) (Frese/Tracy) — Allows for the sale of compost generated at incidental levels without the need for a special permit from the IEPA.
2020

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Conduct a statewide waste characterization study to determine the weight, type and generator sector of food scraps being disposed of in Illinois.
- Prioritize food scrap recycling in the state's Solid Waste Management Plan and Climate Action Plan.

RECOMMENDATION

- Update regulations to allow food scraps to be fed to animals safely.

Minnesota: "An individual or facility may feed byproducts of canned or frozen foods to livestock or poultry provided that the individual or facility has obtained an "exempt materials" permit. §§ 35.73, 35.751 (2015)."

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Require the use of compost on state, county or municipal projects.
- Create a set of standards to guide food scrap compost education and training to provide consistency and quality.

Cook County Policy Roadmap 2019

Objective 3A - Improve access to healthy and affordable food options to reduce hunger and enable healthy living, especially within marginalized communities.

Objective 2.3 - Support transportation and land use policy that prioritizes efficient use of land and the connectivity between jobs, transportation and land use.

Objective 4.3 - Develop equitable, healthy and sustainable local food systems to improve resident health and create economic opportunity.



WHY & HOW

**Prevent
Rescue
Recycle**

The Wasted Food Action Alliance seeks to apply the ReFED Roadmap in Illinois through collaboration to bring organizations and businesses together to create greater collective impact.



From the farm to our refrigerators, food is wasted throughout the supply chain.

- Illinois has more than 74,000 farms covering some 27 million acres, or about 75% of the state’s total land area.
- In Illinois, food insecurity is a problem that makes it troubling that so much good edible food is being thrown into the landfill, rather than to people’s plates.
- Wasted food also degrades the environment and wastes resources such as fresh water and soil nutrients.

PREVENT

Illinois landfills receive 14 million tons of waste annually.

Nearly **20% of that is food scraps.** That’s 2.8 million tons of food scraps each year!

RESCUE/DONATE

40% of all food in the US gets wasted, while 1 out of 7 Americans are food insecure.

In Illinois, more than one million people struggle with hunger and food insecurity.

RECYCLE/COMPOST

Decomposing food in landfills releases methane, a greenhouse gas 84x more powerful than carbon dioxide.

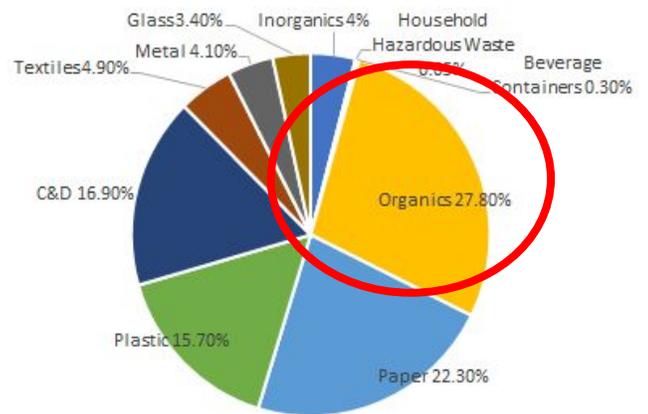
Compost is vital to developing healthier soil for Illinois farmers.

Illinois

2015 Illinois Commodity/ Waste Generation and Characterization Study Update

Table 2-3. Top Ten Individual Material Categories in Landfilled Residential MSW

Category	Waste Composition %	Cum. %
Food Scraps	20.2%	20.2%
Yard Waste - Compostable		
Uncoated OCC/Kraft		
Compostable Paper		
Mixed Paper - Recyclable		
Recyclable Glass Bottles & J.		
Other Organic		
Diapers	3.2%	91.4%
Other Film	3.0%	50.4%
Painted Wood	3.0%	53.3%
Total	53.3%	



We need your input to help guide collaborative ACTION and POLICY through:

- Governor Pritzker’s appointed Statewide Materials Management Task Force
- Illinois EPA development of an Illinois Organics Management Plan
- Collaboration to develop an Illinois Good Food Policy
- Illinois Environmental Council’s work on local and state policy and ordinance

MORE THAN JUST FOOD

THE U.S. WASTES TONS OF RESOURCES WHEN WE WASTE FOOD

2.6% OF ALL U.S. GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS ANUALLY



37 MILLION PASSENGER VEHICLES' WORTH

21% OF THE U.S. AGRICULTURAL WATER USAGE



MORE THAN: TEXAS + CALIFORNIA + OHIO

1,250 CALORIES PER PERSON PER DAY
THAT IS HALF OF THE RECOMMENDED DAILY INTAKE FOR ADULTS

19% OF ALL U.S. CROPLANDS
THAT IS MORE LAND THAN ALL OF NEW MEXICO

21% OF U.S. LANDFILL CONTENT



THE NO. 1 CONTRIBUTOR BY WEIGHT

18% OF ALL FARMING FERTILIZER
WHICH CONTAINS 3.9 BILLION POUNDS OF NUTRIENTS

\$218,000,000,000

WHICH IS EQUAL TO 1.3% OF THE U.S. GROSS DOMESTIC PRODUCT (GDP)



Food waste is the single largest material sent to landfills.



Photo credit: SCARCE

A ROADMAP TO REDUCE U.S. FOOD WASTE BY 20 PERCENT

According to the [2016 ReFED A Roadmap to Reduce U.S. Food Waste by 20 Percent](#),

“Climate change and resource utilization are closely linked, and food is one of the most important resources in that equation. This puts food waste squarely at the center of many global challenges. Reducing food waste would have a game-changing impact on natural resources depletion and degradation, food insecurity, national security, and climate change. As one of the largest economies and agricultural producers in the world, we believe the United States has a major role to play in setting an example and contributing to significant food waste reduction.”

ReFED: “[Rethinking Food Waste through Economics and Data: A Roadmap to Reduce Food Waste](#)” maps a path for action and solutions. This roadmap identified three key areas in which to focus efforts:

Policy – Commonsense policy adjustments are needed to scale federal food donation tax incentives, standardize safe handling regulations, and boost recycling infrastructure by expanding state and local incentives and reducing permitting barriers. The biggest lever to accelerate change is comprehensive federal legislation.

Innovation – Key technology and business-model innovations are needed around packaging and labeling, IT-enabled transportation and storage, logistics software, value-added compost products, and distributed recycling. These could be accelerated through a national network of food waste innovation incubators.

Education – Launching a widespread training effort to change the behavior of food business employees is critical. In addition, campaigns to raise food waste awareness among consumers need to attract additional funding and support to expand to the scale of anti littering and anti-smoking efforts.

2016

AMERICANS THROW AWAY
AN ESTIMATED 25% OF THE
FOOD THEY BRING HOME

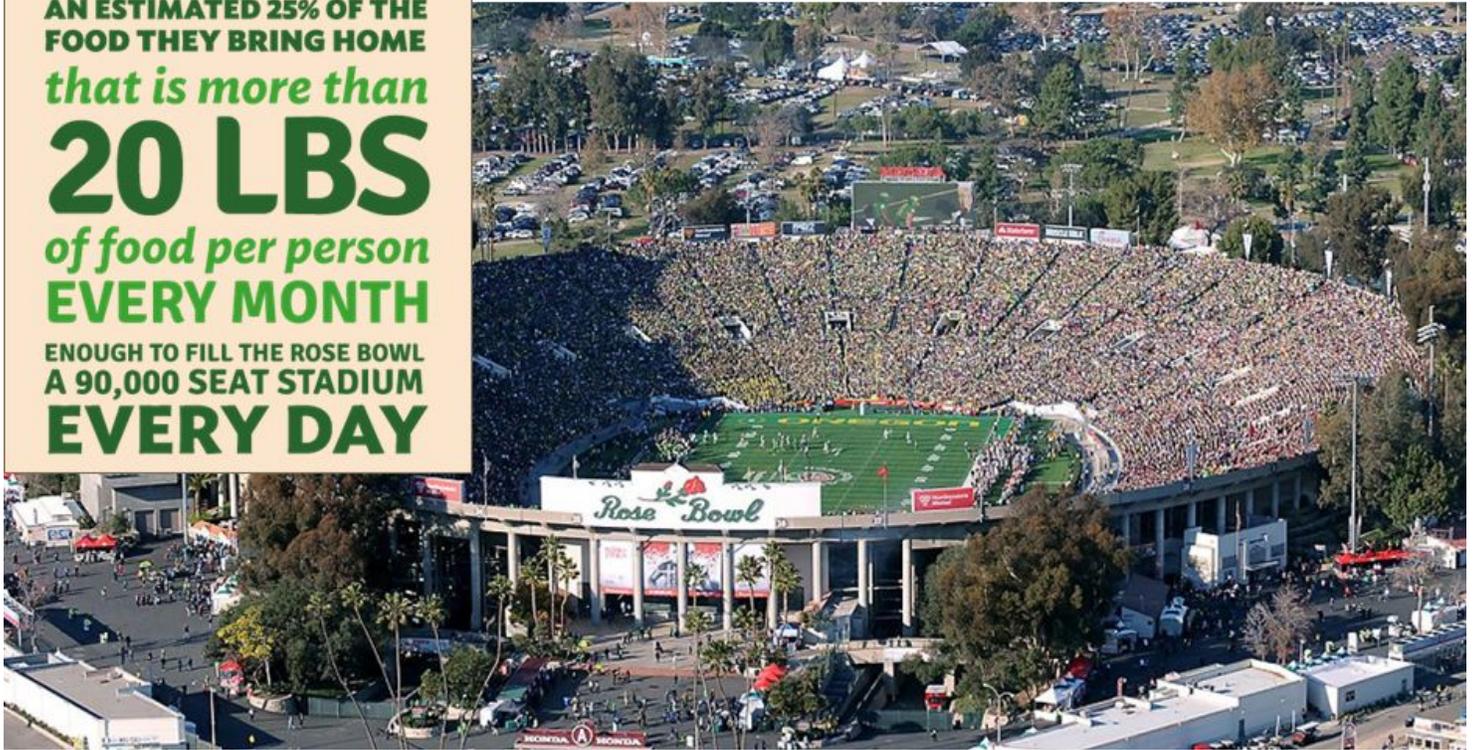
that is more than

20 LBS

of food per person
EVERY MONTH

ENOUGH TO FILL THE ROSE BOWL
A 90,000 SEAT STADIUM

EVERY DAY



In his book “American Wasteland,” activist and author Jonathan Bloom estimated that the United States could fill a college stadium with the amount of food it wastes ... in a day.

Wasted Food vs. Food Scraps - a Food Justice Perspective

- **WASTED FOOD** refers to perfectly edible food that can be recovered for food banks and shelters.
- **FOOD SCRAPS** are the inedible scraps that are destined for other uses, like animal feed or composting.

Changing language helps change mindsets. People are less likely to throw away wasted food if they understand its value to feed others or return nutrients to the soil. Also, food rescue is an issue of respect, equity, and problem solving. No one wants to be given something called “waste” to eat for their next meal.



Impacts of COVID-19 on Food Waste



Our food system is impacted at all levels by the global coronavirus pandemic that required rapid food supply chain adaptation.

- More food has been going to waste throughout the system.
- Food insecurity has dramatically risen.



In a University of Illinois report, *Food Waste and Covid-19: Impacts along the Supply Chain*, it was reported: “The Covid-19 pandemic has created massive disruptions in the food system, from farm to fork. In some cases, we have observed and experienced severe food shortages. In others, food cannot reach end consumers and is ultimately wasted.”⁸

Producers largely dependent on the foodservice sector saw increases in food waste due to Covid-19 (milk⁹, chicken¹⁰ and onions¹¹ are examples). This food was not easily able to be repurposed due to limited processing capacity and cold storage.

Processors - Covid-19 impacted food processing facilities, including meat processors¹² and produce packing plants¹³. Processors did not see significant increases in food waste. Rather the producers did, when they could not get the product off the farm and to a processing facility.

Food Service - unexpected closures of businesses and institutions led to significant food loss. In some cases those food service businesses closed completely. In others there was a shift to supporting food rescue systems to feed people at home.

Retail - Many stores have been consistently overwhelmed with consumer purchases, especially in the early months of the pandemic when stock-up shopping resulted in many stores running out of product. Though panic buying has the potential to lead to wasted food when consumers' increased spending leads to surplus, the consensus is that food waste from grocery purchasing behaviors was not significantly impacted by COVID-19¹⁴.

Households - COVID-19 has led to a rise in unemployment and reduction in income for many households. Reduced income will often lead to less waste, as food waste is positively related to income. Further, rising food prices during the pandemic are also likely to reduce waste for households at all income levels¹⁵. The net effect on household food waste is unclear.

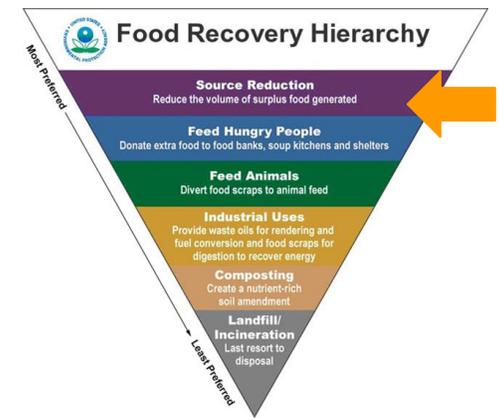
More than ever, there is a need to convene and build a collaborative local and regional response to support a sustainable and equitable food system. While emergency actions are imperative, longer term policy and system changes are needed to build a more resilient, fair, and equitable food system – a circular food system that reduces the amount of wasted food and ensures food scraps are processed and return nutrients to our soil.

WHY PREVENT

Source reduction, the prevention of wasted food, occupies the first spot on the EPA's Food Recovery Hierarchy. Food waste prevention results in greater environmental, social, and economic benefits than any other solution on the hierarchy. Prevention is also the most cost effective and least resource intensive strategy to reduce wasted food. Stopping food waste from occurring in the first place:

- **Lowers the amount of greenhouse gases emitted** and lowers the carbon footprint of the manufacturing, transportation and decomposition of food materials.
- **Saves money** through buying less food, decreasing synthetic and chemical fertilizers and reducing landfill hauling costs. (less food waste=less in the landfill).
- **Conserves energy** and resources in the growing, manufacturing, transporting, and selling food (not to mention hauling the food waste and then landfilling it).
- **Teaches people** to respect the value of their food.

According to ReFED, "Prevention, which avoids unnecessary fertilizer and fuel use on farms, has twice the lifecycle greenhouse gas benefit per ton compared to food recycling...Solutions that prevent waste in businesses and homes have the greatest Economic Value per ton and net environmental benefit, diverting 2.6 million tons of annual waste."



HOW TO PREVENT

Food wasted at the consumer level means food that was intended for people to eat but was thrown away by consumers. Throwing away food is a behavior that is a consequence of individual and interpersonal factors as well as food system policies, food marketing, and the media.¹⁶ The ReFED Roadmap presented three solutions with the greatest economic value per ton. All three address prevention:

- Standardized Date Labeling
- Consumer Education Campaigns
- Packaging Adjustments

Date labeling and packaging adjustments need to be addressed on a national level AND supported locally. And consumer education should be approached consistently and from multiple sources. See the next page for more details.





ReFED found that standardizing date labels nationally was the most cost-effective solution to this country’s food waste problem. The fairly simple solution has the potential to divert 398,000 tons of food waste per year and provide \$1.8 billion in annual economic value¹⁷.



Date Labeling

Other than infant formula, the federal government does not regulate food date labels. According to ReFed, “currently, 41 states and the District of Columbia require at least some foods to have date labels. These state date label regulations vary widely...This patchwork state regulatory system, as well as the wide array of date labels that appear on products, contributes to confusion among consumers and regulators and ultimately results in the significant waste of safe, wholesome food.”¹⁸

ILLINOIS POLICY (2020)

- Date label required - none (optional for eggs)
- Sale after date restricted for - eggs
- Donation after date restricted - none

Understanding date labels will help consumers avoid wasting safe, usable food based on those labels alone. And consistent labeling will require work on the national and state level.

Packaging

Packaging serves an important role in physically protecting food from damage and spoilage. Packaging technologies delay food spoilage, giving consumers a wider window of time to use them. Rethink Food Waste through Economics and Data (ReFED) estimates that greater adoption of food packaging technologies to prolong the shelf life of fruits and meats have the annual potential to divert 72,000 tons of food waste from landfills in the U.S. alone, which is equivalent to reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 329,000 tons per year.¹⁹

Consumer Education

Educating producers, distributors, retailers and consumers about preventing wasted food is a critical step in achieving food waste reduction goals. Learn more at www.wastedfoodaction.org and www.illinoiscomposts.org.

WHY RESCUE

Food recovery rescues edible food that has been produced for consumption, but never served or sold, and gives it to those in need. Rescue efforts help to address and reduce widespread food insecurity. The ReFED Report estimates within the next decade, “Food recovery can increase by 1.8 billion meals annually, nearly doubling the amount of meals rescued today and diverting 1.1 million tons of waste.”²⁰

HOW TO RESCUE

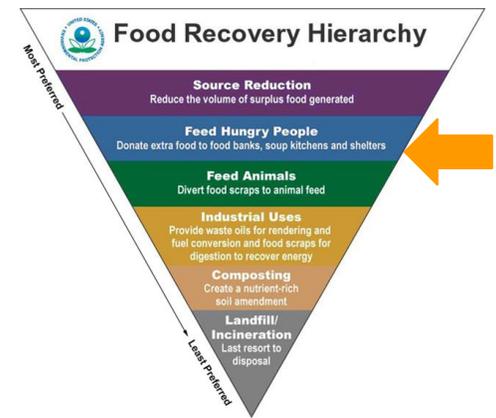
For food rescue programs to expand, three key elements must be taken into account:

- Business Education - produce surpluses on farms and at packinghouses accounts for almost half of new rescue opportunities - these sectors have lower levels of donations today than food retailers.
- Policy - including the maintenance and expansion of tax incentives for business donations and the standardization of food handling safety regulations.
- Infrastructure - available and efficient transportation and cold storage.

Liability Protection - The federal bill Emerson Good Samaritan Act shields donors and recovery organizations from criminal and civil liability arising from the age, packaging or condition of donated food. All 50 states have passed their own liability laws, many of which include greater protections.

Tax Incentives - Small farmers and businesses bear a significant expense to harvest, prepare and store food for donation that would otherwise be discarded. While federal tax incentives exist, they can be difficult to claim. State tax incentives can help offset costs for donors of all sizes.

State Funding - States can also fund food banks directly.



HOW TO RECYCLE / COMPOST



COMPOSTING

Composting can occur in urban, suburban and rural communities. There are a number of models and businesses that exist to support composting, from haulers to processors to sales of finished compost. This list is not all inclusive, nor does WFAA promote any of these businesses above others. For a complete list and additional resources, go to learn more at [Illinois Food Scrap Coalition](#).

Backyard

Community Garden

Commercial Composting

Ride-Along with Yard Waste
3rd Bin Year Round

- [Block Bins](#) (neighborhood-level option)
- [Collective Resource Compost Neighbor Totes](#)

Drop Off

- [Better Earth Logistics](#) drop-off kiosks in Peoria
- [Green City Market](#) in Chicago
- [Prairieland Disposal](#) in McHenry County, Lake County, northern Kane County, northwestern Cook County

Container Swap

- [Collective Resource Compost](#)
- [Healthy Soil Compost LLC](#)
- [The Urban Canopy](#)
- [WasteNot Compost](#)

Anaerobic Digestion

URBAN COMPOSTING

[Green City Market](#) in Chicago partners with Healthy Soil Compost to process the local, organic waste produced at the market back into nutrient-rich energy for increasing soil health and community urban farming.

“By composting and recycling, we reduced our waste at markets from about thirty garbage bins per day to just six! Shoppers can use their own container or bag of organic waste (up to 5 gallons) and drop it off for a small fee at select sites.”²¹

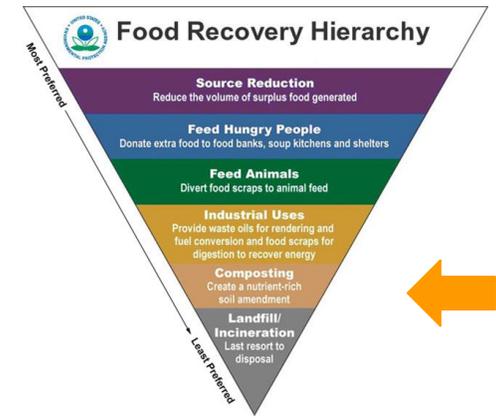
Options for residential composting:

				
Seasonal Residential Ride-Along With Yard Waste	Residential Year Round Compost (3rd Bin)	Bucket Exchange (Supplement to Seasonal Ride-Along)	Drop Off Events	Municipal Drop Off

WHY RECYCLE

Recycling food scraps reduces landfill methane emissions, while also offering the opportunity to return nutrients to degraded soils. Composting is nature’s way of recycling. It is the process that converts organic material, including food scraps and yard waste, into nutrient-rich soil amendment that can be used to grow more food and plants. By composting our wasted food, we transform these scraps from waste into a vital resource.

Composting is vital to implement because it provides many benefits to people, the environment and the economy. Across the nation, composting is developing as a viable, locally-based industry that achieves multiple objectives related to economic development, job creation, cost savings, and environmental sustainability.





WASTED FOOD ACTION ALLIANCE

MISSION to develop a working strategy and action platform that makes Illinois a leader in reducing wasted food by connecting and building on current wasted food initiatives, education, and policy in unified ways that holistically promote source reduction; food recovery for hunger relief and other uses; and recovery of food scraps for composting and creating healthy soil.

The Wasted Food Action Alliance was formed in response to the 2016 ReFED Report addressing national concern for the amount of food wasted in the United States. Initially called the Wasted Food Solutions Task Force, the group focused on finding intersections between food recovery and food scrap composting. A multistakeholder approach was needed and included leading food businesses, solid waste agencies, environmental and hunger organizations, policymakers, and innovators. The group has grown both in number of members and focus, with each member contributing unique perspectives and expertise on the challenges and opportunities for waste reduction across the food supply chain.

The Wasted Food Action Alliance was renamed in 2019 and includes a Coordinating Team and the full Alliance playing critical roles in driving the overall strategic direction of the Alliance and development of this **Illinois Wasted Food Action Plan**, ensuring it accurately represents the food waste landscape, analyzes relevant and practical solutions, and results in actionable insights for all stakeholders.

In 2020, the wastedfoodaction.org website was launched in order to share resources and provide support to the local emergency food system response to the coronavirus pandemic and the resulting food system disruption.



Wasted Food Action Alliance VALUES

Collaboration – We build strong connections and engagement among rural and urban stakeholders in the Illinois food system, including support for the Illinois agriculture community.

Education – We strive to develop replicable and scalable models that educate statewide stakeholders on best practices for reducing food waste.

Good Stewardship and Sustainability – We value the links between reducing food waste and increasing healthy agricultural practices that are good for the soil, farmers, and food.

Equity – We value a community that is not only inclusive and respectful, but also strives to create economic opportunities and serve the needs of disadvantaged or underprivileged populations and communities.



WASTED FOOD ACTION ALLIANCE

COORDINATING TEAM (2020)

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Susan Casey, Seven Generations Ahead
Amy DeLorenzo, University of Illinois Extension
Stephanie Katsaros, Bright Beat
Jennifer Nelson, Seven Generations Ahead
Vanessa Reese, Fresh Taste
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TECHNOLOGY AND ASSET MAPPING

Co-Chairs: Brendan Kitt,
Chad Steward and Stephanie Katsaros

FUNDRAISING

Chair: Gary Cuneen

METRICS

Chair: Jen Nelson

POLICY

Chair: Jen Walling

SCHOOL TOOLKIT

Chair: Susan Casey

COLLABORATORS (Oct 2020)

The following organizations participated in WFAA meetings contributing to the development of this Action Plan. This list does not indicate an official endorsement by the organization or entity. See the website for more info.

Advocates for Urban Agriculture
Aramark
Beyond Hunger
Big Green Chicago
Bright Beat
Chartwells
Chicago Bridge Project
Chicago Food Policy Action Council
Chicago Public Schools
City of Chicago Dept. of Public Health
City of Chicago Office of the Mayor
City of Chicago Street and Sanitation
City of Chicago, Dept. of Planning and Development
City of Evanston
City of Highland Park
Compass - Northwestern University
Composting Partners
Consortium to Lower Obesity in Chicago Children (CLOCC)
Cook County Department of Environmental Control
Cook County Department of Public Health
DuPage County
Environmental Law & Policy Center
Faith in Place
Feeding Illinois
Food Recovery Network
Fresh Taste
Gourmet Gorilla
Greater Chicago Food Depository
Greenest Region Corps
Healthy Schools Campaign
Illinois Agri-Food Alliance

Illinois Environmental Council
Illinois EPA
Illinois Food Scrap Coalition
Illinois Public Health Association
Illinois Stewardship Alliance
Illinois Sustainable Technology Center
Kane County
La Casa Norte
Lake County
Lakeshore Recycling Systems
Liberty Prairie Foundation
Mindful Waste
Northern Illinois Food Bank
Peoria County, Sustainability and Resource Conservation
SCARCE
Seven Generations Ahead
SLoFIG
Solid Waste Agency of Lake County (SWALCO)
Solid Waste Agency of Northern Cook County (SWANCC)
University of Illinois, Chicago
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
Urban Canopy
US EPA Region 5
US Foods
USDA Food and Nutrition Service, Midwest Region
Village of Oak Park
West Cook County Solid Waste Agency
Will County
YWCA Metropolitan Chicago
Zero Waste Chicago

ILLINOIS FOOD WASTE ACTION PLAN

July 2019

Discuss need for Illinois Food Waste Action Plan

- Build collective knowledge
- Gather feedback on potential solutions

September 2019

Refine action plan goal and priority solutions

- Feedback on goal and priority solutions
 - **Prevent** input from food service providers, institutions, etc.
 - **Rescue** input from Feeding Illinois, food banks and food pantries
 - **Recycle** input from Illinois Food Scrap Coalition
- Draft actionable steps for priority solutions
- Identify key partners for each solution
- Consensus on goal and priority solutions

November 2019

Consensus on target actionable steps

- Breakout groups to develop work plans and goals for targeted actionable steps
- Review expected measurable outcomes

2020

Engage others in Action Plan priority solutions

- Graphic design/professional layout of action plan
- Present plan to outside stakeholders

August 2019

Align current WFAA work with national plans

- Determine where to align goals with ReFED, USEPA, etc
- Feedback on goal and priority solutions
- Participant in local convenings on policy issues, work and strategies regarding local food and sustainable agriculture in Illinois

October 2019

Seek feedback on action steps from stakeholders

- Feedback on targeted actionable steps
 - Recycle input from ILCSWMA
- Refine targeted actionable steps

December 2019

Final feedback on Action Plan

- Present refined work plans
- Consensus on entire action plan
- Identify outside stakeholders to engage

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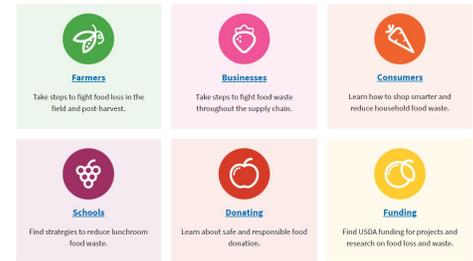
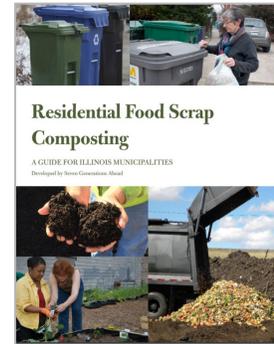


IMAGE CREDITS

Front cover, left, EsfilPla (Shutterstock); **Front cover**, center, Greater Chicago Food Depository; **Front cover**, right, Seven Generations Ahead; **Contents**, Sense & Sustainability; **Wasted Food Action Alliance - An Introduction**, top, Food Production-Illinois, Illinois Environmental Council; **Wasted Food Action Alliance - An Introduction**, center, Rush Surplus Project; **Wasted Food Action Alliance - An Introduction**, bottom, Weera Prongsiri (123RF); **Illinois Food Waste Action Plan - Overview**, Agriculture at Illinois State, agriculture.illinoisstate.edu; **Solution 1 - Take Action**, US Food Supply Chain Map, University of Illinois; **Schools - Take Action**, bottom right, Go Green Illinois, Zero Waste Schools, Seven Generations Ahead; **Institutions - WFAA**, Lake County Adult Corrections, Seven Generations Ahead; **Institutions - Take Action**; left, Illinois Food Scrap Coalition, right, Seven Generations Ahead; **Continued Recommendations**, top, Wasted Food Infographic, National Resource Defense Council; **Food Waste - An Illinois Problem**, top; **Food Waste - An Illinois Problem**, bottom; **ReFED**, ReFED; **Food Waste in the US** top, Pool/Getty Images, bottom images Seven Generations Ahead; **Impact of Coronavirus Pandemic on Food Waste**, left, Inside Waste, right, Patch; **Prevent - Why & How**, top, Northern Illinois Food Bank; **Prevent - Why & How**, bottom; **Prevent - Labeling, Packaging, & Education**, US Environmental Protection Agency; **Rescue**, top, US Environmental Protection Agency, center, right; **Recycle**, left, Shrewsbury, MA, center right, Collective Resource, right, SCARCE, **Why Recycle**, top, US Environmental Protection Agency; **Background & Vision**, left, EsfilPla (Shutterstock), center, MeaningfullMeals

Slide 1, left, EsfilPla (Shutterstock), center, Greater Chicago Food Depository, right, Seven Generations Ahead; **Slide 2**, Sense & Sustainability; **Slide 4**; **Slide 5**; **Slide 11**; **Slide 12**; **Slide 14**; **Slide 15**, left, SWANCC, **top**, **bottom**; **Slide 16**, **left**, **center**, **right**; **Slide 17**, **left**, right, Seven Generations Ahead; **Slide 20**; **Slide 27**, ReFED; **Slide 28**, top, Traveling Aggies Fan Travel, left, Regeneration International, right, IFSC; **Slide 29**, left, Tebelyoum, right, CNBC; **Slide 30**, top, Food Engineering Mag, **bottom**; **Slide 31**, Food Engineering Mag; **Slide 32**, top, Food Engineering Mag, **center**, **bottom**; **Slide 33**; **Slide 34**, **right center**, **right second from bottom**, **right bottom**, **left**, top, Food Engineering Mag; **Slide 36**, left, Aevus Biotechnology, center, Meaningfull Meals, **right**,

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Food:Land:Opportunity
Localizing the Chicago Foodshed

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