40% of all food produced in the U.S. gets wasted

Totaling more than 130 billion pounds each year

That's 20 lbs. of food per person per month

Which has an economic impact of over $1500 per year for a family of four or $1.6 billion per year nation- wide.

*Sourced from U.S.D.A. & U.S.E.P.A.

Questions? Contact:

Angelina Peone

Recycling & Composting Educator

Cornell Cooperative Extension, Schenectady County

107 Nott Terrace Schaeffer Heights

Suite 301 Schenectady NY

AP2267@cornell.edu

518-372-1622 ext. 264

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Schenectady County Recycles is a collaborative partnership between Schenectady County and Cornell Cooperative Extension of Schenectady County. This media is funded by Schenectady County with the support of grants through the NYS Environmental Protection Fund and the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation.

Cornell Cooperative Extension puts knowledge to work in pursuit of economic vitality, ecological sustainability, and social well-being. CCE provides equal program and employment opportunities. Please contact the CCE-SC office if you have any special needs.

REDUCING FOOD WASTE

Facts & Tips for Families

Schenectady County Recycles!

Food waste accounts for 15% of all municipal solid waste in America, and food waste is the largest component of material buried at landfills. Food and other compostable organics create methane in landfills, a greenhouse gas more potent than carbon dioxide. Reducing wasted food not only prevents environmental pollution, but donating food also benefits families in need.
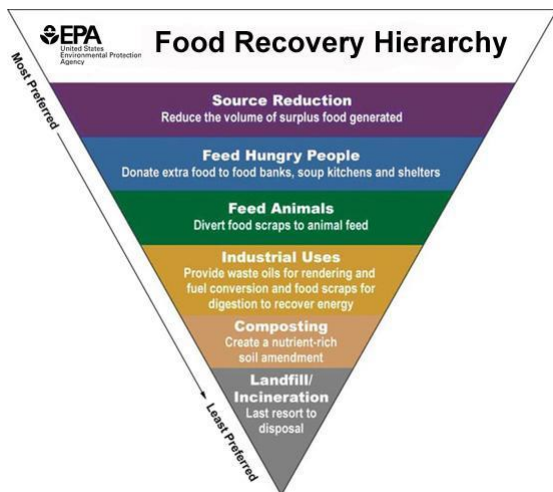
Like recycling, food follows the hierarchy of preferred management: firstly to reduce excess food, then to reuse or "rescue" food that can still be eaten, and lastly to recycle food through composting.

Food Waste Reduction Tips

- Make a shopping list before going to the grocery store. Meal planning is a great way to reduce food waste!

- Take an inventory of food in the kitchen and plan at least one meal per week based on what needs to be eaten or used up first.

- Always store the most perishable food items in the front shelves of the refrigerator, so they don't get forgotten and go to waste.

- When putting away groceries, rotate older products to the front of shelves and store the newest products in the back of the cupboard.

- Self-serving during meal time is an effective way to reduce food waste by controlling meal portions.

- Eating fruits and vegetables that are in-season lowers your environmental impact and ensures your food is as fresh as can be!

- Choose fresh foods that have a long "shelf-life" for kitchen storage: apples, squash, potatoes, onions, carrots, etc. They will not go to waste as quickly as other more perishable food items.

- Purchase grains, cereals, nuts, and other snacks in bulk at the grocery store. Buy as much as you'll need to reduce waste and excess packaging.

- Learn how to correctly interpret food labels for recommended "best if used by" and "sell by" dates.

- Purchase the "ugly" produce! Break the stigma and help farmers sell their less attractive (but still high-quality) fruits and veggies.

- Compost food scraps made while preparing meals. Home composting is easy and it's the best way to recycle food scraps.

- Support your community by donating unwanted food items. Find a food bank near you by visiting regionalfoodbank.net

Want to learn more about food scrap collection programs, backyard composting, or workshops about composting? Contact the CCE,SC Recycling Educator.