

# Food Recovery Challenge

## Wasting food is hurting more than your bottom line! **Rethink!**

EPA is working with organizations including grocers, universities, stadiums, and other venues to rethink business as usual. Through the Food Recovery Challenge they are learning to purchase leaner and divert surplus food away from landfills to hunger-relief organizations and to composting. When excess food, leftover food, and food scraps are disposed of in a landfill, they decompose and produce methane - a greenhouse gas over 20 times more potent than carbon dioxide. Methane emissions have been linked to climate change and landfills contribute nearly one quarter of all methane emissions in the U.S.

## Benefits of Joining the Challenge

- **Improve** your bottom line through cost savings from reduced purchasing and waste disposal fees.
- **Support** your community by using surplus food to feed people, not landfills.
- **Reduce** the effects of climate change by shrinking your environmental footprint and lowering greenhouse gas emissions.
- **Take** advantage of EPA's technical assistance and resources.
- **Receive** recognition for your achievements.



## Why Rethink?

More than 36 million tons of food waste was generated in 2011, 96 percent of which was thrown away into landfills or incinerators.

In 2011, 14.9 percent of households in the United States did not have regular access to enough food for an active, healthy lifestyle (source: USDA). Much of the wasted food that is discarded in landfills is actually not waste, but safe, wholesome food that could be used to feed those in need. Food and food scraps that are not fit for consumption or donation can be used to feed the soil by composting food waste into a nutrient-rich soil amendment. Compost can reduce the amount of chemical fertilizer, pesticides and water needed in agriculture or landscaping.



CHANGING HOW WE THINK ABOUT OUR RESOURCES FOR A BETTER TOMORROW

# Join the Challenge

## Sign Up

Register as a participant at [www.epa.gov/smm](http://www.epa.gov/smm) under Food Recovery Challenge.

## Assess It

Conduct a comprehensive food waste assessment with tools on the Food Recovery Challenge website, and input your data within 90 days of joining the challenge.

## Commit to It

Set a three-year goal for reducing the amount of wasted food reaching landfills through food waste prevention, food donation, and/or composting. For specific requirements, please refer to the website.

## Do It

- Change food purchasing practices – both quantity and timing.
- Change food production and handling practices.
- If serving food, reduce excessive portion sizes through portion control, trayless dining practices, and modifying menus to eliminate uneaten sides.
- Feed people, not landfills by donating to those in need.
- Compost food waste or use anaerobic digestion.

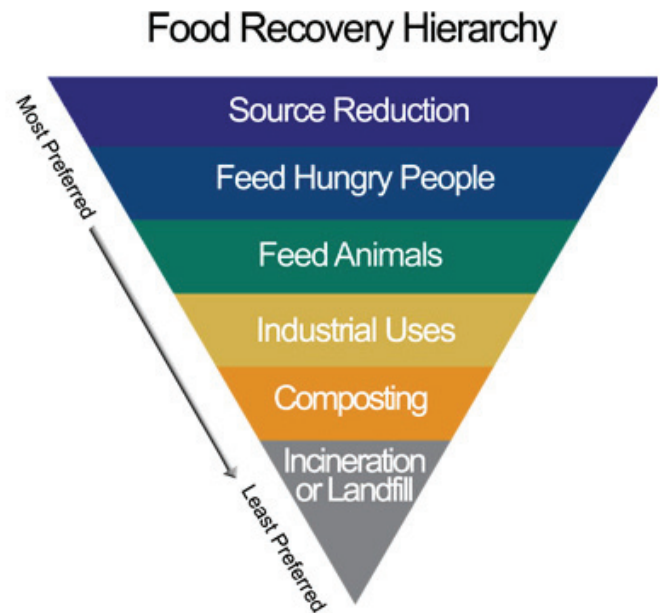
**For more information, please contact:**

## Track It

Measure and track your annual progress on EPA's website.

## Receive Recognition

Accomplish your committed goals and receive EPA recognition.



Use the Food Recovery Hierarchy to find a preferred option to make the most of excess food.

The Food Recovery Challenge is part of EPA's Sustainable Materials Management Program. The Program seeks to reduce the environmental impact of materials throughout their entire life cycle, including how they are extracted, manufactured, distributed, used, reused, recycled, and disposed.

