

FOOD WASTE...

The Harm it Does and How to Help



Food Pantry Donation

Astonishingly, most U.S. families end up tossing 25% of the food they purchase....that's the contents of one out of every four grocery bags!! That is very costly, adding up to about \$1,350 annually per family! More than 36 million tons of food waste was generated in just one year in 2012!

All sources of food waste make up about 40% of what is thrown out as trash all across the US. This is either dumped into landfills causing the release of large amounts of climate change greenhouse gases when the food is broken down OR burned in incinerators using lots of energy and producing lots of CO2 in the process.

In addition, there is the issue of the vast amounts of wasted resources required to produce and deliver that food (water, land, fertilizer, labor, refrigeration, transportation)!

What can you do?

- 1) BE AWARE OF THE ISSUE - that alone can help you reduce waste in your own home.
- 2) Plan menus, use lists and shop wisely.
- 3) Use all leftovers, store where you can see them!
- 4) Repurposing food scraps into jams and sauces
- 5) Freeze items you cannot use right away
- 6) Donate unneeded items to food pantries
- 7) Compost kitchen scraps in your backyard or kitchen composter or register with a local pick-up composting service.
- 8) Help your town organize a community-wide composting service. **SEE what the [Harwich Garden Club](#) is doing to further composting in their town!!**
- 9) Help organize in your area to have excess food donated by grocery stores and restaurants to food banks, pantries, etc. **SEE the [League of Women Voters Food Waste Tool Kit](#) LINK: <https://www.lwv.org/sites/default/files/2023-06/Food%20Waste%20Toolkit.pdf>**
- 10) Support local initiatives for community composting and legislation that advances composting in your state.

Waste not, want not? How Massachusetts became the only state to reduce food waste.
<https://www.csmonitor.com/Environment/2025/0323/food-waste-ban-massachusetts>