

# Food Waste Reduction

## Master Planning Summary Fact Sheet

S A I N T P A U L – R A M S E Y C O U N T Y P U B L I C H E A L T H

### Facts

- 40% of food in the United States goes to waste (Natural Resources Defense Council).
- Food waste is the most prevalent material in both residential and commercial waste at 20% and 22.4% respectively (Ramsey/Washington Recycling & Energy Board, 2014).
- Organic material (e.g., food and non-recyclable paper) comprises 40% of Minnesotan's waste (Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, 2013).
- Decomposing food in landfills releases methane, a major greenhouse gas.
- Hunger is an issue for many Americans.
  - In Ramsey County, the food insecurity rate is 13.5%.
  - Food insecurity: "limited or uncertain availability of nutritionally adequate and safe foods" (USDA).

### Food is wasted at every step from farm to table.

This includes steps, such as:

- Farming
- Processing
- Transportation
- Retail handling
- Inadequate storage and planning by consumers
- Uneaten and thrown away food at home and restaurants.

### What is being done to reduce food waste?

#### National Goal

The USDA and EPA have established the Food Loss Waste Reduction Goal to cut food loss and waste by 50%.

- **2010 baseline** = 218.9 pounds of food waste per person per year.
- **2030 goal** = 109.4 pounds of food waste per person per year.

#### National Legislation

Two pieces of legislation to address food waste have been introduced.

- The **Food Recovery Act** takes comprehensive steps to reduce food waste at farms, stores, institutions and homes (H.R.4184).
- The **Food Date Labeling Act** aims to make food date labels more consistent and less confusing (H.R.5298 and S.2947).

# Facts on Food Waste

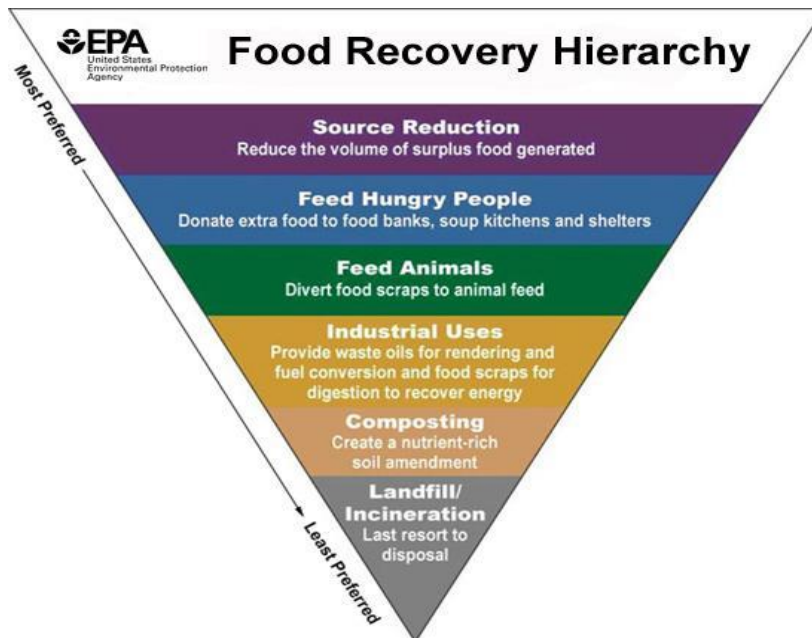
## What is happening in Ramsey County?

The county supports food to people, food to livestock, organics recycling and consumer education by:

- Contracting with Second Harvest Heartland to collect produce, dairy, deli, meat, bakery and grocery items, which prevents food waste.
  - The food is distributed to food shelves, soup kitchens and shelters.
  - These efforts fed over 532,000 people in 2016.
- Partnering with public schools to implement the Food-to-Hogs program.
  - Students separate their food waste, which is later fed to pigs.
  - 30,000 tons of food waste is feed to pigs annually.
- Providing funding to businesses to start and expand organic waste recycling programs via the Recycling & Energy Board's BizRecycling program.
  - 117 businesses in Ramsey County were awarded grants in 2016.
- Supporting 7 organic waste collection sites.
  - 551,990 pounds of organics was collected at the 7 sites in 2016.
  - Up to six new satellite sites may be opening in 2017.
- Participating in the National Ad Council's Save the Food campaign.
  - Ads will be placed on billboards and in local newspapers.
  - Information will be distributed in 2000 organics kits handed out at yard waste sites.

## The Food Recovery Hierarchy

The Food Recovery Hierarchy shows strategies from the most preferred to the least preferred methods for dealing with food waste.



Get involved:

- [SaveTheFood.com](http://SaveTheFood.com)
- [RamseyRecycles.com/masterplan](http://RamseyRecycles.com/masterplan)
- Share your ideas on Facebook at Ramsey County Minnesota, #rc rethinkstrash