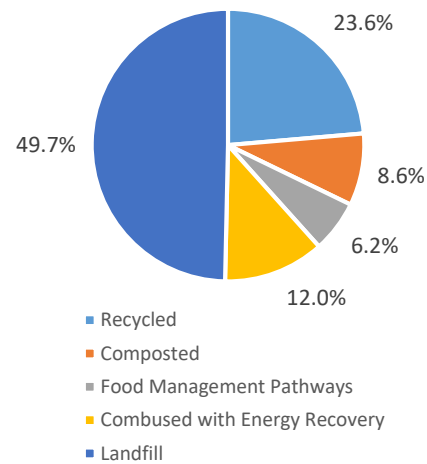


## Why is Sustainable Management of Food so Important?

Food waste is a growing problem in landfills today. According to a 2020 report on Advancing Sustainable Materials Management, the 2018 fact sheet report identified that the United States generated 292 million tons of food waste went that to municipal solid waste facilities:

- 69 million tons were recycled (23.6%)
- 25 million tons were composted (8.5%)
- 18 million tons were processed through other food management pathways (6.1%)
- 34 million tons were combusted with energy recovery (11.8%)
- **146 million tons went to the landfill (50.0%)**



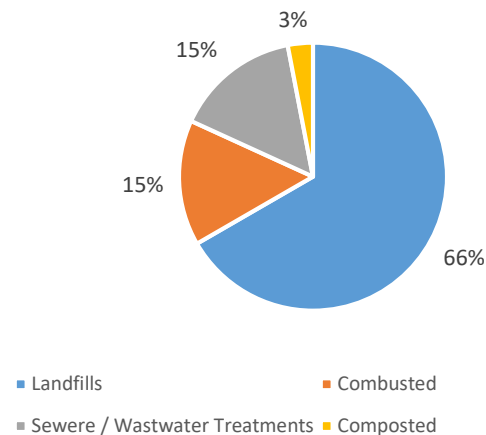
Source: [https://www.epa.gov/sites/default/files/2021-01/documents/2018\\_ff\\_fact\\_sheet\\_dec\\_2020\\_fnl\\_508.pdf](https://www.epa.gov/sites/default/files/2021-01/documents/2018_ff_fact_sheet_dec_2020_fnl_508.pdf)

## What is Food Waste?

According to the Environmental Protection Agency, EPA, food waste is defined as food that is produced for human consumption but not ultimately consumed by humans. It states that over one-third of the food produced in the United States is never eaten, rather wasted. When food is wasted it ends up in our landfills, **one of the largest components of material buried**. According to a 2018 Wasted Food Report by the EPA in November 2022:

- 25 million tons of wasted food is estimated to be generated by single family and multi-family dwellings
  - 66% of wasted food was put into landfills
  - 15% of wasted food was sent to sewer/wastewater treatments
  - ONLY 3% was composted

### Single Family and Multi-Family Dwellings



Source: [https://www.epa.gov/sites/default/files/2020-11/documents/2018\\_wasted\\_food\\_report.pdf](https://www.epa.gov/sites/default/files/2020-11/documents/2018_wasted_food_report.pdf)

Food waste is not only wasteful in produce it also is a waste of everything that goes into producing it. From the water, land, fertilizer, fuel, and energy used to grow and transport the goods also goes to waste. In the United States, food waste is estimated at between 30-40 percent of the food supply.

This estimate, based on studies from the USDA's Economic Research Service, 31 percent food loss at the retail and consumer levels corresponded to approximately 133 billion pounds and \$161 billion worth of food in 2010.

Source: <https://www.epa.gov/sustainable-management-food/sustainable-management-food-basics>

## Food Scraps Recycling

Food scraps are readily biodegradable and contain organic matter and nutrients, which make them a valuable resource rather than a waste product. Separate food scraps from other solid waste items and properly store them in a **compost bucket**. Recycling these materials through composting creates useful products that benefit our soils.

## What is Compost?

Compost is an organic matter resource that has the unique ability to improve the chemical, physical, and biological characteristics of soils. The many benefits of composting include the addition of nutrients to soil, saves money on waste disposal costs, helps reduce environmental pollution, reduces methane emissions generated in landfills by food waste, and eliminates the need to use chemical fertilizers.

## What to Compost?

- Fruits and peels
- Vegetables
- Meats
- Fish
- Dairy
- Shells
- Bones
- Bread and Grains
- Eggshells
- Coffee grounds and filters
- Tea bags
- Nut shells

NO: metal, glass, plastic, packing tap, chemicals, Styrofoam peanuts, diapers, rubber bands, shredded newspaper, cardboard, paper,

## How to Use Compost

- For garden, vegetable, and flower beds
- To plant trees and shrubs
- In potting mixes

As part of the **Help Greene Grow Green**, program Greene County Solid Waste Management is providing **FREE composting bags** for households to use at home to store all their food waste. Don't have a bucket to help transport your food waste? Purchase a composting bucket at the Catskill Transfer Station. Use the bucket to store your household food waste, and when the bucket is full, use the bags to bring your food waste back to the Catskill Transfer Station. Once the compost is available, feel free to bring a bucket from home and get some for your own personal use! See How to Use Compost for more details!

### Tips to Reduce Food Waste... "Reduce, Reuse, Recycle"

#### Reduce

Read labels of best by / use by / sell by dates when grocery shopping

Use up perishable foods that need to be eaten as soon as possible.

Learn how to properly store foods so they don't spoil (visit: [www.savethefood.com](http://www.savethefood.com))

Eat leftovers!

#### Reuse

Donate excess food to local food banks

Find creative ways to reuse food scraps with new recipes (soups, sauces, casseroles, etc.)

#### Recycle

Compost any food scraps that cannot be reduced or reused in other ways

## Help Greene Grow Green!



### Become our Partner in Composting!

Greene County Solid Waste Management is investing in Sustainable Management of Food. This is a systematic approach seeking to reduce food waste and the impact it has on our environment. This is a FREE program to eliminate non-wasteful food products from our landfill.



Greene County Solid Waste Management  
183 Rt. 385, Catskill