# Morris County's Food Rescue Assessment

Alessia Eramo

MCMUA Recycling Education & Training Administrator



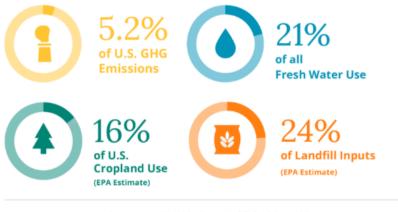
### Motivation for Food Waste Efforts

Food waste is national problem.



Up to 40% of food produced in the US goes uneaten

#### **Uneaten Food Consumes:**



Source: ReFED/2023 Data (Published Nov 2024)

# Statewide Food Waste Reduction Goals

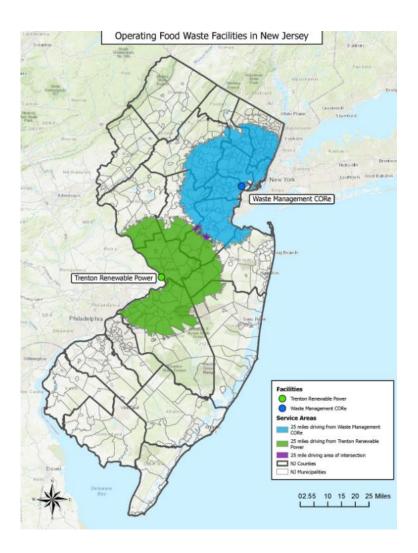
- New Jersey solid waste goals guide the priorities of the MCMUA
- Mandated MSW recycling goal for the County is 50%, adopted into District Solid Waste Management Plan
- Big push in NJ to address food waste, estimated to be 22% of MSW
- The 2017 Food Waste Reduction Act (N.J.S.A. 13:1E-226 et seq.) established goal to reduce the amount of food waste generated annually by 50% by 2030.

New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection

### Food Waste Reduction Plan

OCTOBER 2023

### New Jersey Food Waste Legislation



Food Waste Recycling and Food Waste-to-Energy Production Law (P.L. 2020 c.24)

- Large food waste generators with an average projected volume of 52 tons of food waste or more per year are required to source separate and recycle food waste if they are located within 25 road miles of an authorized food waste recycling facility.
- Applies to commercial food wholesaler, distributor, industrial food processor, supermarket, resort, conference center, banquet hall, restaurant, educational or religious institution, military installation, prison, hospital, medical facility, or casino

## Pending New Jersey Food Waste Legislation

#### A2090/S2426

- Requires each solid waste management district to develop strategy to reduce food waste (50% by 2030); requires DEP to adopt certain rules and regulations regarding composting facilities.
- Current version was referred to Committees in Senate and Assembly in 2024
- First introduced in 2022, MCMUA began looking at how it would accomplish this target
- With limited opportunities for food waste recycling, NJ has primarily focused on education and resources on backyard composting.

#### A2102/ S1040

- Exempts community gardens operating on-site composting systems from certain DEP permits under certain conditions.
- NJDEP considering rules to allow for tiered permitting for food waste composting sites of different scales.



### Morris County Disposal & Recycling Projections

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			MORRI	IS COUNTY TOTA	<b>NLS</b>				
Calendar Year	Population	Population Increase	Individual Generator Waste Totals Per Day		MSW Disposal	Disposal Decrease	MSW Recycling/Diversion	Recycling/Diversion Decrease	MSW Recycling Rate
2000	470,212				297,368		247,148		45.4%***
2010	492,623	21,297 (4.4% Increase)	3.29 pounds disposed 2.73 pounds of recycling 6.02 total pounds of waste		295,927.16	1,440.84	245,453.55	1,694.45	45.3%
2020	509,285	17,009 (3.4% Increase)	3.11 pounds disposed 2.32 pounds of recycling 5.43 total pounds of waste	0.18-pound decrease in disposal 0.41-pound decrease in recycling, 0.59 pound total decrease in waste per person over the last decade.	288,888.76	7,038.40 (2.4% Increase)	215,688.68	29,764.87 (12.1% Increase)	43%
2030*	526,601	17,316 (3.4% Increase)	3.03 pounds disposed 2.00 pounds recycled 5.03 total pounds of waste	SAA	281,850.36	7,038.40 (2.4% Increase)	185,923.81	29,764.87 (13.8% Increase)	50% (Expected)
*2030 Results Assume Status Quo Projection Based on applicable increases.									

<sup>\*\*</sup>All numbers weights are in tons units of measure.

<sup>\*\*\*</sup> in 2007 MSW Recycling was 36%

		2021 GE		L AND RECYCLING RATES IN	NEW JERSEY (Tons)				
COUNTY	POPULATION G	GENERATION	DISPOSAL			RECYCLING			
							MSW	Total	Total %
		Disposal and					%	Recycled	Recycled
	2021 Estimate	Recycling	MSW	Non-MSW	TOTAL	MSW		w/Add-ons	
Atlantic	274,534	755,609	213,670.05	122,792.62	336,462.67	117,321.55	35%	419,146.08	55%
Bergen	955,732	2,221,921	695,689.61	390,840.75	1,086,530.36	408,123.59	37%	1,135,390.59	51%
Burlington	461,860	1,012,395	341,002.37	161,472.08	502,474.45	208,182.79	38%	509,920.46	50%
Camden	523,485	955,393	364,788.05	194,064.43	558,852.48	160,343.73	31%	396,540.07	42%
Cape May	95,263	434,005	103,946.31	107,850.04	211,796.35	79,125.87	43%	222,208.96	51%
Cumberland	154,152	441,522	97,952.41	110,215.35	208,167.76	171,581.28	64%	233,354.47	53%
Essex	863,728	1,602,628	467,686.65	251,987.91	719,674.56	175,351.91	27%	882,953.49	55%
Gloucester	302,294	1,137,130	198,881.03	106,750.55	305,631.58	323,481.66	62%	831,498.37	73%
Hudson	724,854	1,041,616	421,350.86	157,190.51	578,541.37	155,658.20	27%	463,074.97	44%
Hunterdon	128,947	206,861	57,341.09	54,171.59	111,512.68	35,516.95	38%	95,348.10	46%
Mercer	387,340	923,884	273,054.93	89,386.24	362,441.17	153,736.13	36%	561,442.94	61%
Middlesex	863,162	2,811,284	566,072.33	324,269.96	890,342.29	412,819.25	42%	1,920,941.63	68%
Monmouth	643,615	2,074,285	508,282.07	350,816.78	859,098.85	363,938.15	12%	1,215,186.00	59%
Morris	509,285	1,163,741	308,292.23	170,497.63	478,789.86	228,706.74	43%	684,951.12	59%
Ocean	637,229	1,162,546	430,700.80	263,525.39	694,226.19	193,578.05	51/0	468,319.85	40%
Passaic	524,118	1,262,944	495,475.12	290,222.37	785,697.49	168,612.43	25%	477,246.69	38%
Salem	64,837	136,567	39,605.85	44,033.50	83,639.35	18,998.37	32%	52,928.06	39%
Somerset	345,361	852,165	257,520.58	191,307.66	448,828.24	153,538.21	37%	403,336.48	47%
Sussex	144,221	262,597	75,472.57	33,952.52	109,425.09	60,751.90	45%	153,172.13	58%
Union	575,345	1,500,288	357,798.47	362,355.62	720,154.09	158,251.33	31%	780,134.11	52%
Warren	109,632	157,181	14,581.52	35,326.55	49,908.07	22,513.64	61%	107,272.53	68%
TOTAL	9,288,994	22,116,562	6,289,165	3,813,030	10,102,195	3,770,132	37%	12,014,367	54%

2021 County Rate Table

MSW recycled includes all paper and beverage containers, anti-freeze, motor oil, brush, grass, leaves, consumer electronics, food waste, dry cell batteries, other glass, other plastic and textiles when they are generated by a non-industrial generator. 10% of total metal has been included as non-industrial.

Street sweepings are no longer counted as a recyclable due to their management as a BUD. (NJAC 7:26A-1.3)

NOTES: Totals subject to rounding. Last Updated on 01/04/24

# How does food waste fit into Morris County's disposal & recycling rates?

#### Reaching 50% recycling goal

- An estimated 22% of Morris County's MSW is food waste.
- This is equivalent to 67,824 tons per year.
- Removing (through source reduction) 22% from disposed MSW would achieve a 49% recycling rate. Recycling any portion of the 22% would make this recycling rate even higher.
- Targeting food waste is one of many approaches the MCMUA is using to achieve the 50% recycling goal.

#### Reaching 50% food waste reduction (Food Waste Reduction Act)

Reduce 33,912 tons of food waste per year in Morris County

### Preparing to Tackle Food Waste

- Goals
  - Better understand wasted food landscape in Morris County
  - Focus MCMUA initiatives on the best ways to reduce amount of food sent to landfills
  - Understand gaps for recycling and waste reduction
- Preliminary Research and Efforts
  - Residential Food Scrap Pickup
  - Commercial Food Scrap Pickup
  - USDA Grant Application Composting and Food Waste Reduction Grant Program
  - NRDC Grant Application Food Matters Regional Initiative
- 2022 REA annual grant application
  - Proposed Food Waste Phase I

### Food Waste Phases of Work

- Phase I: SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) Analysis
  - Provides justification for Morris County's approach to food waste
- Phase II: Morris County Food Rescue Assessment
- Phase III: Food Waste Business Challenge





### Phase II: Food Rescue Assessment

- Evaluate opportunities for food rescue and address gaps and limitations
- Focus efforts on redistributing excess food to address food insecurity

### Why donation?

- 1 in 7 Americans is food insecure
- Food grown for human consumption is most valuable when it can be used to provide human sustenance.
- Source reduction, donation, and upcycling minimize the need for waste management.
- While 40% of produced food is surplus, only 2% is donated (ReFed)
- Donation has a lower energy, water, and land-use demand, and has lower ecological and environmental impacts than other surplus food pathways.



### Phase II: Food Rescue Assessment



#### Objective

Reduce the amount of waste headed to landfills from Morris County by facilitating the recovery and redistribution of edible excess food.



#### Methodology

Engage stakeholders in the food distribution sector to better understand existing practices, needs, and challenges in Morris County

Identify opportunities and tools for recovering excess food.



#### **Deliverables**

Food Rescue Solutions Report for Morris County



### Other Anticipated Outcomes

Facilitate connections between various stakeholders

Establish relationships between the MCMUA and the Morris County food distribution sector to continue to assist in food recovery and waste reduction.

Leverage lessons learned to target specific improvements for food recovery and donation.

# Preparing to engage stakeholders and identify opportunities

Background: research, review rescue assessments from other communities, establish preliminary contacts, reach out for information



3.26.2019

**Food Rescue Solutions for Jersey City** 

Stakeholder Engagement Findings and Recommendations

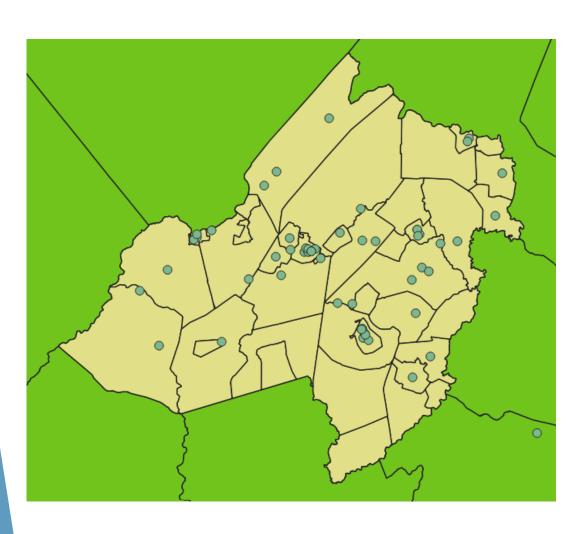


Morris County Rescued Food Pathways and Stakeholders/ **FARMERS** WHOLESALERS **USDA EXCESS FOOD CFBNJ GENERATORS** Mount Olive **FOOD RESCUE FOOD ASSISTANCE ORGANIZATIONS ORGANIZATIONS** Mendham ssex County **FOOD RESCUE PEOPLE APPS** Chathan LANDFILL Flashfood **ORGANICS** RECYCLING

Government (and others)

### Pantries and Soup Kitchens in Morris County

Kitchens





# Conversations with Morris County Food Assistance Organizations

- Developed questionnaire as basis for discussions
- Calls/Virtual Meetings/Site Visits
- Types of Questions Asked
  - Services Provided
  - Donations
  - Food Storage and Disposal
  - Future Planning



#### Services

- What type of services do you provide?
   How often and/or where?
- Do you have more than one location or provide food delivery services?
- How many meals/people do you serve?
- 4. Who prepares the food?
- Do you have enough volunteers? How do you connect with them?
- 6. How do people typically find out about your servi-



### Food Assistance Questionnaire

#### Donations (Food and Other)

- 7. What types of donations do you collect? Who can donate?
- 8. When are you open? What are donation hours? Where are donations dropped off?
- 9. Where do most of your food donations come from? Any large-scale donors?
- 10. Do you purchase any food? Where does your financial support come from?
- 11. Are there specific items you want/need?
- 12. Do you communicate with donors what food you need? If so, how?
- 13. What types of food donations are typically underutilized? Is this communicated with donors and to what success?
- 14. What could be improved about the quality of quantity of donations you receive?
- 15. Do the cultural backgrounds of the people you serve influence the food you prepare or require?
- 16. If food boxes are provided, do clients know how to prepare all the types of food they are receiving?
- 17. Do you have any issues reaching food donors?
- 18. Are there any apps you use to communicate with donors?
- 19. Are you in communication with any other food pantries? Do you collaborate? Are there any organizations you partner with in various ways?
- 20. Do you get any produce from gleaners like the Foodshed Alliance?
- 21. Do you think there is a shortage of donors, food pantries, or soup kitchens in the area?
- 22. Do you collect reusable shopping bags?

#### Food Storage and Disposal

- 23. How much pantry, refrigeration, and freezer space do you have?
- 24. What types of food do you typically have in excess?
- 25. How do you dispose of food that does not get used?
- 26. Do you know approximately how much food waste is generated?
- 27. What do you think would be the most effective way to reduce the amount of food waste at food pantries?
- 28. If composting/food separation occurs, is a report given to the municipality reporting recycled food waste?







#### **Future Planning**

- 29. Is there any predictability to what food items will be required during specific period of the year or days of the week? E.g. donation days, seasonal preferences, holidays
- 30. Do you have room for growth? What additional resources would you need? Do you need additional food storage? Is it possible to expand in your space?
- 31. Have you received any grants/donations related to food storage? Have you applied for any?
- 32. Do you think you could be serving more people/do enough people in need know about your services?
- 33. Is there anything the MCMUA or others can do to promote or support your organization? What do you want donors to know about what is more useful to you?
- 34. Any wish list items that could make your job easier or more efficient?

### Some observations so far...

#### Different Food Service Models

- Pantries
- Soup kitchens
- Community Food Bank of NJ

All engaged in food rescue to some degree

#### Different Models and Resources Determine

- Specific needs
- Ability to rescue food or utilize rescued food

#### Specific Needs Could Include

- Fresh produce
- Specific produce 🍌 🦫
- Transportation
- Storage/cold storage 😭
- Labor to rescue and sort food •
- Financial support









#### Challenges

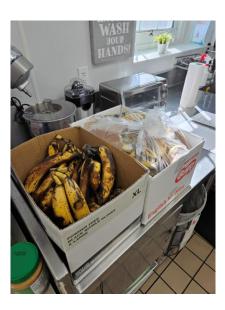
- Items needed on specific dates/times
- Food rescue opportunities don't suit the model of the recipient
- Donations not tailored to needs of recipients

#### No shortage of excess food

Current rescue framework is not optimized

- Rescued food isn't always rescued
- Organizations purchase food that could have been rescued
- Cost and other requirements of food composting and recycling are limiting factors for ultimately keeping food waste and scraps out of landfills







## **Engaging generators**



OHM#

# COUNTY OF MORRIS DEPARTMENT OF LAW & PUBLIC SAFETY DIVISION OF PUBLIC HEALTH

P.O. Box 900, Morristown, NJ 07963 P: (973) 631-5484 F: (973) 631-5490 Health Officer: Carlos Perez, Jr., Ph.D.

### FOOD WASTE RECYCLING SURVEY

EH-PMT-

s the Large Food Waste Generator located within 25 miles of a Class C Food Waste Recycling Facility?	YES	NO
f so, name and address of the Class C Food Waste Recycling Facility.		
Approximately how much food waste is generated per week?		
Vhere does Large Food Waste Generator dispose of food waste?		
s all food waste separated from other forms of solid waste?		
low is food waste stored on the property? Describe.		
not taken to facility within 25 miles of Generator, how is food waste being handled on site? Describe.		

### Some observations so far...

- Supermarkets are already engaging in source separation of food waste, food donation, and other food waste diversion practices to some degree.
  - However, opportunities for improvement exist.
  - Maintaining efficiency and managing costs are other considerations for the business.











Supermarkets are partners in solid waste reduction, often recycling various materials in the back of house and on behalf of the consumer.



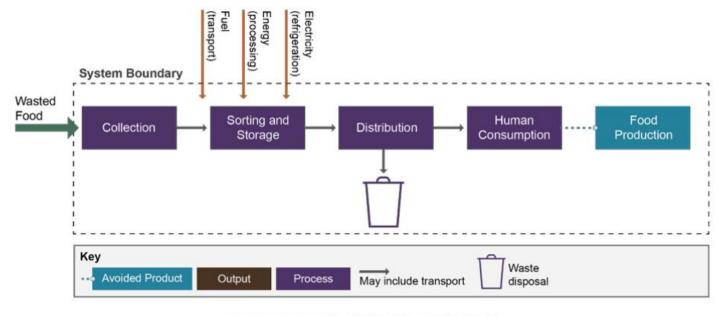






### Food donation considerations

- Food safety protocols must be maintained.
- Good Samaritan Law protects donors.
- Stakeholders must collaborate.
- Donation is not zero impact, not waste free
  - Estimates of secondary waste are 4-40%
- Donation cannot be relied on as sole solution/Source reduction still necessary
  - Not all wasted food is fit for donation
  - Amount of wasted food generated in the U.S. far outweighs the needs of foodinsecure Americans (U.S. EPA 2021c)



#### DIAGRAM OF DONATION

To mitigate environmental impacts on donation:

- Restrict collection and distribution to food that will be consumed
- Prioritize recovery of high environmental impact food
- Increase preservation capacity of collecting facilities (Field to Bin, USEPA, 2023)

### Possible Solutions

- Portal for donors and recipients to advertise and claim available food donations
- Create a network of pantries
- Maximize gleaning efforts from local farms
- Utilize ride share services for food transportation
- Satellite cold storage
- Utilize the Division of Public Health to provide education
- Compile education for businesses regarding food waste separation and outlets for excess food both edible and nonedible
- Provide rescued food options for external organizations at soup kitchens

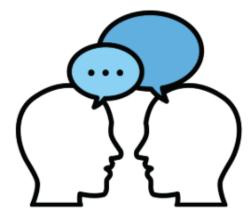
### Additional Observations

Lack of metrics in all areas of food waste

- How much food waste is generated?
- How much of that quantity is food scraps vs wasted food?
- How does that quantity break down between various sectors?

All stakeholders could benefit from a better understanding and education of all food waste diversion options.





County E-Newsletter

#### This Week in Morris County



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### Ongoing Outre

County E-Newsletter



#### Thanks for Recycling Right

Most containers and boxes generated during Thanksgiving are recyclable. Aluminum cans, glass bottles and jars, plastic bottles coded 1 and 2, steel/tin cans, corrugated cardboard, and other paper are all items that are mandated to be recycled in N.J. Check your local recycling program for other items that may be collected curbside such as aseptic cartons, aluminum trays, and #5 plastics.

- Items are recyclable only if they are empty, clean, and dry. Recyclable materials that don't come clean should be thrown in the
- Bottle caps are not recyclable because sorting equipment at the recycling facility does not capture them. Throw them in the

→ Forward

Fri 9/13/2024 5:05 PM

- Don't recycle disposable dishes, cups, and utensils or dirty napkins and paper towels. Single use, pre-packaged and disposable items are generally not recyclable. Avoid them to reduce waste.
- Drop off used cooking oil in Mt. Olive. Prevent food waste by cooking or ordering for the appropriate number of people and

get creative with leftovers.

- Savethefood.com and other online sites have tons of ideas for leftover food scraps.
- Many supermarkets offer free turkeys or ham over Thanksgiving. If you won't use them, consider donating them to a local food pantry.

Learn more about recycling in Morris

This Week in Morris County, Aug. 1, 2024



County of Morris <morrisnews@co.morris.nj.us> To Eramo, Alessia

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#### This Week in Morris County



County of Morris <morrisnews@co.morris.nj.us> To Eramo, Alessia

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#### **Drop Off Household Hazardous** Waste on Saturday

Saturday is Household Hazardous Waste Drop Off Day at the Morris County Public Safety Academy in Parsippany. Read the details on accepted and rejected materials Morris County residents only. Appointments at the Mount Olive facility are available. - Recycle: Fall clothing drive supports En

ployment Horizons, 9/23



#### Do Your Part: Don't Waste Food

More than 20 percent of solid waste in New Jersey consists of food, some of which was edible at the time of disposal. Food Waste Prevention Day is Sept. 19. Learn more

 Donate or find food at the Interfaith Food Pantry Network.



#### MCMUA: Make Compost

Use this recipe to make DIY compost. Composting at home diverts tons of waste from the waste stream, which saves your municipality on disposal costs, as well as space in landfills, and the environmental resources used for transport and disposal. Compost is great for gardens.

- MCMUA compost and mulch information
- MCMUA Vegetative Waste Recycling offers compost to residents and businesses.



Reply

#### Battery Disposal is Important! Learn **Guidelines on Trash and Recycling**

Improper battery disposal is hazardous! Do not throw batteries in the garbage or curbside recycling bins, which can cause fires in recycling enters, waste facilities and garbage trucks. Used batteries can and should be recycled ap-

- Battery and cellphone drop-off locations
- Avoid the Spark New Jersey | Call2Recycle | Battery Safety
- Morris County Battery Disposal Information



Home / Morris County MUA Offers Holiday Recycling Tips to Reduce Waste

### Morris County MUA Offers Holiday Recycling Tips to Reduce Waste

Published on December 18, 2024

Reduce, Reuse and Recycle This Holiday Season

The Morris County Municipal Utilities Authority (MUA) is encouraging residents to reduce, reuse, and recycle this holiday season to help minimize the amount of trash heading to landfills.

By making simple choices about recycling and waste reduction, residents can help the environment during one of the busiest times of the year. To learn what materials are accepted in your town's recycling program, **check your municipal website**, visit <u>MCMUA.com</u>, or download the Recycle Coach app.



#### Curbside Recycle Guidelines

Residents can recycle a variety of paper products and containers in their curbside bins if they are **empty**, **clean**, **and dry**:

- Holiday paper items: Plain wrapping paper (no foil or glitter), gift boxes, gift bags, cards, envelopes, tissue paper, catalogs, and corrugated cardboard boxes.
- Bottles and containers: Aluminum cans, glass bottles and jars, plastic containers coded 1 and 2, and steel/tin cans are all mandated to be recycled in Morris County.

Check your local program for additional recyclable items, such as aluminum trays, plastics coded 5, and aseptic cartons (e.g., eggnog or milk cartons). Plastic caps should be removed before recycling.

#### Items That Should NOT Be Recycled Curbside

Some holiday items cannot be recycled in your curbside bin:

- Gift wrap with foil or glitter, cellophane, bows, ribbons, and cards or envelopes with glitter or batteries.
- Most plastic packaging: Plastics numbered 3, 4, 6, or 7 and unmarked plastics are not recyclable.
- Disposable items: Plates, utensils, cups, napkins, straws, and paper towels belong in the trash.
- . Food containers: Only recyclable if they are completely clean of food residue.

#### Special Recycling Guidelines

Certain items require special disposal methods to avoid hazards:

- Batteries: Batteries, including small ones found in musical cards, can start fires when tossed in curbside bins. Follow proper disposal
  guidelines at mcmua.com/sw hhw faq batteries household.asp or search recycling sites like Call2Recycle.
- Plastic bags, film, and wraps: Drop these at designated bins near various supermarket entrances. While not recyclable, your local pantry or shelter may collect reusable shopping bags for reuse. Styrofoam: Limited recycling outlets are available; visit earth911.com to locate options.
- Holiday decorations and toys: <u>Scrap metal facilities</u> may accept string lights; call ahead. Otherwise, string lights belong in the trash. Most toys
  and hangers should go in the trash, although <u>large rigid plastic toys</u> may be accepted at municipal recycling depots.
- Electronics: They are required by law to be recycled. Electronics can be dropped off at the Household Hazardous Waste site in Mount Olive, municipal programs, or participating electronics stores. The NJDEP maintains a listing of electronic waste drop-off locations throughout the state
- . Cooking oil: You can drop off used oil at the Household Hazardous Waste site in Mount Olive or at select municipal recycling depots.

#### Tips to Reduce Holiday Waste

- DIY Gifts and Decorations: Upcycle materials to create unique gifts and decorations. Choose cards and wrapping paper made from recycled content and avoid glitter or foil.
- 2. Don't Bag Recyclables: Place items loose in your curbside bin.
- 3. Reduce Food Waste: Cook or order for the appropriate number of people and get creative with leftovers. Use online resources like Savethefood.com for recipes that minimize food waste.
- 4. Donate Surplus Food: Many supermarkets offer free turkeys or hams. If you don't need them, consider donating to a <u>local food pantny</u>. While every pantry has different donation needs, some of the <u>most requested items</u> at food banks are dairy products, fresh foods and vegetables, and lean proteins. However, it is always recommended that you check first to maximize contribution.

For more recycling guidelines and holiday tips, visit MCMUA.com or contact your local recycling coordinator.



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#### SANTA'S RECYCLING LIST

WEST TOWN

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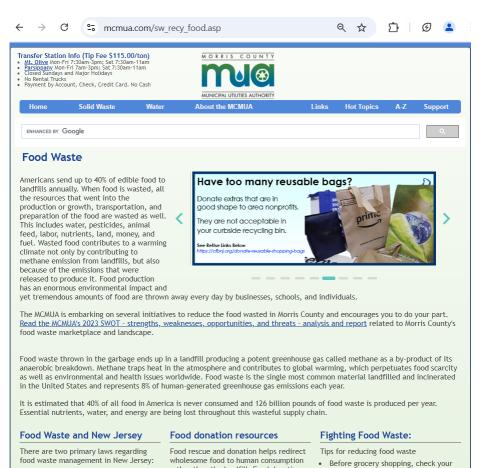
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- Batteries: Batteries, including small ones found in musical cards, can start fires when tossed in curbside bins. Follow proper disposal
  guidelines at mcmua.com/sw. hhw. faq. batteries. household.asp or search recycling sites like Call2Recycle.
- Plastic bags, film, and wraps: Drop these at designated bins near various supermarket entrances. While not recyclable, your local pantry or shelter may collect reusable shopping bags for reuse. Styrofoam: Limited recycling outlets are available; visit earth911.com to locate options.
- Holiday decorations and toys: Scrap metal facilities may accept string lights; call ahead. Otherwise, string lights belong in the trash. Most toys
  and hangers should go in the trash, although large rigid plastic toys may be accepted at municipal recycling depots.
- Electronics: They are required by law to be recycled. Electronics can be dropped off at the Household Hazardous Waste site in Mount Olive, municipal programs, or participating electronics stores. The NJDEP maintains a listing of electronic waste drop-off locations throughout the state.
- . Cooking oil: You can drop off used oil at the Household Hazardous Waste site in Mount Olive or at select municipal recycling depots.



- County E-Newsletter
- MCMUA website

The Food Waste Reduction Law (2017)



rather than the landfill. Food donations

pantry and make a shopping list

#### Food Waste and New Jersey

There are two primary laws regarding food waste management in New Jersey:

- The Food Waste Reduction Law (2017) which requires NJDEP to develop a plan to reduce food waste in New Jersey by 50 percent by 2030;
- The Large Generator Food Waste
   Recycling Law (2020), which requires
   certain large generators of food
   waste to separate and recycle it.

#### Benefits of reducing food waste

- Saves resources (food, water, energy, labor, money, etc.)
- Reduces greenhouse gas emissions
   Reduces methane from landfills
- Returns nutrients to soil
- Supports a circular economy
- Helps increase food access

#### Food donation resources

Food rescue and donation helps redirect wholesome food to human consumption rather than the landfill. Food donations are protected from liability by the Good Samaritan Law.

Food pantries

mcmua.com/sw\_recy\_food.asp

- <u>Community Food Bank of New</u> <u>Jersey</u>
- Interfaith Food Pantry Serving Morris County
- Resources for directing excess food to those who need it.
- More Meals Less Waste
- Share My Meals: Food recovery coalition operating in Morristown and other areas. It receives excess food from food establishments and donates it to families and community partners
- Resources for gardeners and farmers to donate excess crops
- https://ampleharvest.org/
- Local Share NJ

#### Fighting Food Waste:

Tips for reducing food waste

- Before grocery shopping, check your pantry and make a shopping list consisting only of items you need or will consume before they spoil.
- When grocery shopping, stick to the list.
- Prioritize using perishable food items first.
- Understand date labeling on food items. Most are quality or inventory indicators and not safety indicators.
- Store foods properly to extend their shelf life.
- · Freeze, can, or preserve excess food.
- Utilize scrap foods instead of throwing them away. Here are some recipe ideas:
- The Scraps Book: A Waste Less Cookbook
- Stop Food Waste Day Cookbook

External resources for food waste prevention

- <u>Savethefood.com</u>: Resource for meal prep (recipe & portion guides), innovative food use, and waste reduction ideas
- Food Loss Prevention Options from the FPA
- For Grade Schools
- For Manufacturers
- For Restaurants
- For Universities
- For Grocery Stores
- NJDEP Food Waste Toolkit
- <u>ReFED</u> is working across the food system to cut food loss and waste

- County E-Newsletter
- MCMUA website
- Social Media



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Food waste is a social issue as well as an environmental one. By donating

your excess food to local food banks and shelters, you can help feed the 1

in 10 people in New Jersey who are food insecure. @MCMUA

Morris County MUA @MCMUA · Feb 22, 2024

ow.ly/b0nX50QtEtx #DonateDontWaste.



Hey there Earthlings! @ @NJDEP has just launched an innovative Food Waste Toolkit! Let's champion sustainable living by reducing waste. Every bite counts! #ZeroWaste #Sustainability \* ow.ly/V8IM50QgoOc





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Food waste is not only a waste of money, but also a waste of resources. By reducing food waste, you can help conserve water, land, and energy that are used to produce food. You can also help reduce the need for landfill waste with @MCMUA. #FoodWasteFacts





#### Morris County MUA @MCMUA · Jan 25, 2024

Food waste is not only bad for the environment, but also for your wallet. By minimizing your food waste, you can save on groceries and not pay @MCMUA for landfilling. Checkout the new @NewJerseyDEP Food Waste Toolkit: ow.ly/nBzf50QtC3z #SaveMoneySaveFood



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#### Morris County MUA @MCMUA · Jan 18, 2024

It's cold outside, but don't let that stop you from composting your food scraps. Representation of the scraps of the your kitchen waste into nutrient-rich soil. ow.ly/uVOR50Qp1CS



- County E-Newsletter
- MCMUA website
- Social Media
- Informational Giveaways

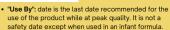
- County E-Newsletter
- MCMUA website
- Social Media
- Informational Giveaways











 "Packed On": This date indicates when the food was packed. Usually food is safe to eat past the packed on date.



Scan the QR Code for more information on preventing food waste.



- County E-Newsletter
- MCMUA website
- Social Media
- Informational Giveaways

### WASTE LESS, SAVE MONEY

#### Eliminate food waste with these simple steps:

- Stick to the list. Avoid overbuying by sticking to your list. Overbuying leads to wasted food and money.
- Be sure to double check your pantry before purchasing something you may already have.
- · Freeze or donate surplus food so it isn't wasted.
- Use groceries in the order they will expire.
- Avoid waste by storing food at their safe temperatures.
   Learn how by scanning the following QR code:





Understanding date labeling terms can lead to less food waste. Confusion surrounding the interpretation around date labels leads to the disposal of perfectly edible food.

#### Below are some common phrases found on food packaging:

- "Best if Used By": indicates when a product is of best flavor or quality. It is not a purchase or safety date.
- "Sell By": date tells the store how long to display the product for sale for their inventory management. It is not a safety date.
- "Use By": date is the last date recommended for the use of the product while at peak quality. It is not a safety date except when used in an infant formula.
- "Packed On": This date indicates when the food was packed. Usually food is safe to eat past the packed on date.



Scan the QR Code for more information on preventing food waste.

- County E-Newsletter
- MCMUA website
- Social Media
- Informational Giveaways
- Environmental Guide

Did you know that approximately 22% of solid waste in NJ consists of food waste?









About 12.5% of US households suffer from food insecurity.



Food waste in landfills produces the same CO2 emissions as 42 coal-fired power plants!

Reducing food waste saves resources, reduces greenhouse gas emissions, and reduces landfill methane. Donating excess food helps increase food access. Recycling food waste returns nutrients to soils and supports a circular economy.

#### **WASTE LESS, SAVE MONEY**

Eliminate food waste with these simple steps:

#### Shop smart

- . Stick to the list. Refrain from overbuying, which can lead to wasted food and money.
- · Double-check your pantry before purchasing something you may already have.

#### Food storage and use

- Store foods at their safe temperature.
- · Use groceries in the order they will expire.
- · Find recipes to use up scrap food.
- Freeze or donate surplus food.

#### Understand date labeling terms.

- . "Best if used by" is when a product has the best flavor or quality. It is not a purchase or safety date.
- . "Sell by" informs the store how long to display the product for sale for inventory management. It is not a safety date.
- . "Use by" is the last date recommended for product use at peak quality. It is not a safety date unless used on infant formula.
- · "Packed on" indicates when food was packed. Food is usually safe to eat past this date.



#### **FOOD DONATION**



Scan the QR code for a full listing of food pantries, soup kitchens, and emergency food services in Morris County:



#### **ELIMINATE WASTE, COMPOST AT HOME**

A large portion of garbage that goes to landfill is organic and yard waste, some of which can be composted instead! According to the Rutgers New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station, composting is a natural process where organic materials decompose and are recycled into a dark, crumbly, earthy-smelling soil amendment known as "compost."

#### CREATING COMPOST

#### Follow these basic steps to get started!

- 1. Find a container for your compost. Make it yourself or purchase specialty compost bins.
- 2. Make sure your container has a lid to avoid pests and smells.
- 3. Mix 1 part green materials and 3 parts brown materials.
- 4. If needed, chop up larger materials into smaller pieces about 2 inches or less in size.
- 5. Stir the mixture regularly to maintain oxygen levels for beneficial microbes and insects.
- 6. If the mixture is dry, add water from your garden hose. The compost mixture should be moist but not dripping wet. If you accidentally overwater, just add some dry brown materials.
- 7. If your mixture gets hot, this is a good sign! This means your decomposers are active.
- 8. Sift out finished compost and add this to your soil for a healthy garden or lawn.

#### 3 parts Browns:

#### Carbon-rich, dry materials

- · Dry leaves and pinecones
- . Shells of nuts & eggs
- · Woodchips and sawdust
- · Dry flowers, grass, & garden clippings
- Straw
- · Corn cobs

**Do Not Compost** 

Meat scraps

· Pet waste

Bones

Dairv

· Newspaper and shredded cardboard

· Fats/ oils or foods cooked in oils

compost well in your backyard bin.

· Diseased plant material

Packaging products

#### 1 part Greens:

#### Nitrogen-rich, moist materials

- · Fruit & vegetable scraps
- Peelings · Coffee & tea
- · Fresh grass & garden trimmings

# Horse manures

#### **BENEFITS OF COMPOST**

Amending your soil or lawn with finished compost has many benefits:



- · It helps soil retain water
- Promotes the development of healthy plant roots
- · Reduces the need for fertilizers and pesticides
- · Reduces erosion
- · Reduces greenhouse gas emissions by sequestering
- · Improves the physical, biological, and chemical properties of soil.



























- County E-Newsletter
- MCMUA website
- Social Media
- Informational Giveaways
- Environmental Guide
- Flyers and Information

#### **Composting Made Easy**



#### What To Compost

(2 parts) Browns: Carbon-rich, dry materials

- Dry leaves and pinecones
- . Shells of nuts & eggs
- · Woodchips and sawdust
- · Dry flowers, grass, & garden clippings
- Straw
- Corn cobs
- · Newspaper and shredded cardboard

(1 part) Greens: Nitrogen-rich, fresh and moist materials

- Fruit & vegetable scraps
- Peelings
- · Coffee & tea
- · Fresh grass & garden trimmings

#### What Not To Compost

- · Diseased, pesticide-treated, or pest-
- infected plants Poison ivv
- · Invasive weeds or weeds with seeds
- Large branches
- · Meat or fish scraps
- Dairy products
- · Fats, grease, or oil
- · Pet feces or kitty litter · Colored or glossy paper
- Sawdust made from pressure-treated
- plywood or lumber Coal or charcoal ashes
- · Non-compostable materials such as plastics, metal, glass, sand, or construction debris

To create compost, mix two parts of brown materials and one part of green materials from the above list. It is recommended to cut or break your materials into smaller pieces so they can break down quicker. Still, keeping some bulkler materials and size diversity is essential to maintain airflow through the pile. Compost bins can be bought or made at home using an aerated container (e.g., bin and lid with drilled holes). An ideal pile is about 3 feet wide by 3 feet high and is turned regularly. When your compost is ready to use, it will be brown and crumbly with an earthy aroma.

#### How To Use Compost



Compost can be used as an alternative to fertilizer or mulch in your lawn and garden to add nutrients and strengthen your plants. This not only puts your food waste to good use, but saves money on fertilizers and lawn treatments. This can be done by mixing compost with your soil, applying in a thick mulch-like layer or a thin layer over your lawn, or by creating a "compost tea" with compost and water to nourish your indoor or outdoor plants.

Morris County's Compost Facility offers up to 2 Cubic yards of compost free to Morris County residents picking up at the Parsippany or Mount Olive facilities. Larger quantities can also be ordered and delivered to residents.





#### **Compost Troubleshooting**

Symptom **Problem** Solution Check the bin has proper drainage Rotten-egg Odor Excess moisture, not enough air Add brown materials Turn pile more frequently and remove lid for added airflow Add brown materials Ammonia Odor Excess green materials & moisture Add water to improve moisture Turn or aerate the pile to improve Slow decomposition Lack of moisture, air, or nitrogen airflow Add more green materials to increase nitrogen and balance out excess browns Make sure food scraps are covered by Exposed food scraps, brown materials **Unwanted Pests** incorrect materials added Do not add meat, dairy, or fatty foods or overexposure Add a screen or cloth to reduce pests'

To order large quantities of recycled vegetative waste materials such as double-ground wood mulch, wood chips, and unscreened and screened compost, visit us at www.MCMUA.com or scan the

All MCMUA-produced compost materials adhere to NJDEP testing



access to your pile

Turn your pile more frequently to

increase its temperature and disturb

nesting pests



**DON'T WASTE FOOD** 



Shop smarter



About 12.5% of US households suffer from food insecurity



Reuse: Donate



Food waste in landfills produces the same CO2 emissions as 42 coal-fired power plants!



Recycle: Compost



DID YOU KNOW THAT IN THE UNITED STATES 15.8 MILLION PUMPKINS WILL GO TO WASTE AFTER THIS HALLOWEEN?

#### SCARE AWAY FOOD WASTE WITH THESE TIPS:

 DONATE PUMPKINS TO A LOCAL FARM: MANY FARMS WILL USE PUMPKINS TO FEED THEIR ANIMALS OR COMPOST THEM FOR THEIR CROPS, LOOK FOR A LOCAL FARM NEAR

#### HTTPS://PUMPKINSFORPIGS.ORG/#

. UTILIZE THE WHOLE PUMPKIN: PUMPKIN SEEDS CAN BE A DELICIOUS SNACK OR EVEN PLANTED AGAIN FOR NEW PUMPKINS NEXT YEAR, THERE ARE MANY TASTY FALL RECIPES WITH PUMPKIN AS THE STAR OF THE DISH.

HTTPS://WWW.FOODNETWORK.COM/FN-DISH/RECIPES/2015/10/THE-5-BEST-RECIPES-FOR-COOKING-WITH-FRESH-PUMPKIN

- COMPOST OR BURY YOUR PUMPKIN: PUMPKINS CONTAIN MANY NUTRIENTS AND WATER AND MAKE GREAT COMPOST, \*NOTE\* PAINTED PUMPKINS ARE NOT SUITABLE FOR COMPOSTING. WASH OFF THE PAINT BEFORE COMPOSTING.
- UPCYCLE: IS YOUR PUMPKIN STILL IN GOOD CONDITION? UPCYCLE YOUR PUMPKIN INTO A BIRD FEEDER OR PLANTER. USE YOUR IMAGINATION AND CREATE NEW WAYS TO USE YOUR PUMPKIN!

\*PLEASE COMPLY WITH LOCAL ORDINANCES REGARDING FEEDING WILDLIFE.\*





- County E-Newsletter
- MCMUA website
- Social Media
- Informational Giveaways
- Environmental Guide
- Flyers and Information
- June MRC Meeting Focus



# Continued of Public Heal



#### DONATING FOOD? KEEP FOOD SAFETY IN MIND



Food donations are a vital resource for many individuals and families in need. However, ensuring the safety of donated food is critical to prevent foodborne illnesses. Here are some essential tips for proper food safety when donating food:

#### 1. Understand Donation Guidelines

Many food banks and pantries have specific requirements for the types of food they accept. Check with the organization to confirm their needs and restrictions. Typically, they prefer:

- Non-perishable items such as canned goods, dry pasta, and rice.
- Unopened, undamaged packaging with clear expiration dates.

#### 2. Check Expiration Dates

Expired food can pose a health risk. Ensure all donated items are within their "best by" or "use by" dates.

#### 3. Inspect Packaging

Damaged or compromised packaging can lead to contamination. Avoid donating items with:

- Broken seals.
- · Bulging or dented cans.
- · Torn or punctured bags.

#### 4. Avoid Home-Prepared Foods

While homemade meals and canned goods are prepared with good intentions, they are often not accepted due to safety concerns. Commercially prepared and packaged items are safer choices.

#### 5. Store and Transport Food Safely

If donating perishable items (when allowed):

- Use insulated coolers with ice packs to maintain proper temperatures.
- Keep refrigerated items below 40°F and frozen items at 0°F until delivery

#### 6. Label Clearly

Clearly label food items with contents and ingredients, especially if donating bulk items. This is vital for individuals with allergies or dietary restrictions.

#### 7. Practice Personal Hygiene

When handling food donations:

- · Wash your hands thoroughly.
- Avoid donating if you are sick or have open wounds.

#### 8. Know the Rules for Prepared Foods

If donating prepared foods from an event or commercial kitchen, ensure they meet your local health department standards. Food should:

- · Be prepared in a licensed facility.
- Be stored at proper temperatures during transport.

SCAN FOR MORE INFORMATION ON FOOD SAFETY TIPS WHEN DONATING FOOD



**FOOD PANTRY** 





SCAN THE QR CODE

BELOW TO FIND YOUR

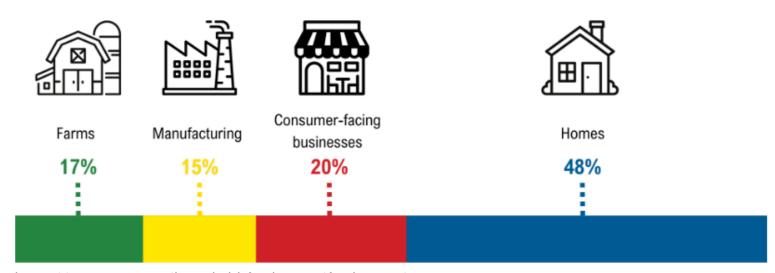
LOCAL MORRIS COUNTY





### Intro to Phase III: Motivation

- In 2023, the lost value of surplus food from food producers and businesses was \$108 billion (ReFed)
- Households are the greatest source of food waste in the US.



https://sites.mitre.org/household-food-waste/food-waste/

### Phase III: Food Waste Business Challenge



### **Objectives**

Build public food waste awareness

Engage restaurants and prepared food generators

Address questions and misconceptions business owners may have about food and donations. Educate them about ways to prevent food waste.



### Methodology

County-wide Restaurant Challenge

**Business Toolkit** 



#### **Deliverables**

Recipe Book with Business Spotlights Chopped Episode



# Additional Anticipated Outcomes

Increased community awareness

New business partners and food waste diversion opportunities

# Local initiatives can help MRCs fight food waste in their communities

#### Many online food waste resources

- Natural Resources Defense Council
  - Tackling Food Waste in Cities: A Policy and Program Toolkit
  - Estimating Quantities and Types of Food Waste at the City Level
  - Food Waste Restaurant Challenge
  - Engaging Health Departments: Overview Guide
- Social Media
  - EPA Preventing Wasted Food in Your Community: A Social Marketing Toolkit
  - Food Waste Prevention Week
- Refed.org





### Peer Networks

**USEPA** Too Good to Waste



#### NRDC Food Matters Network

#### **NRDC'S FOOD MATTERS INITIATIVE**



**Fund transformative food waste initiatives** to mobilize the development, adoption and implementation of food waste policy in cities

**Exert collective influence** using a member-driven approach to advocate policies at the local, state, and federal level

**Enable and foster** peer learning and engagement

**Cultivate leadership** so city leaders can excel in their roles as changemakers

**Support cities** to communicate more effectively to showcase and advance their food waste work

**Advance strategies**, methodologies, standards, and governance tools based on data and metrics for planning, implementing, and measuring food waste reduction programs and policies

### **Future**

- Complete Phases II and III
- Host stakeholder meeting with Share My Meals
- Evaluate implementation of identified food rescue solutions
- Quantify impact of proposed solutions in context of Morris County solid waste goals
- Continued education and outreach
- Compost Training Course

