

Food Waste

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US Food Waste Statistics

- One-third of all food produced in the US is never eaten
- Most common material found in the landfill and incinerated
- US wastes more food than any other country
 - Estimated 219 lbs of food waste per person/year
- Before pandemic 35 million people faced food insecurity
 - The number is expected to rise to as much as 50 million in 2022

US EPA. (2021). From farm to kitchen: the environmental impacts of US food waste. [From Farm to Kitchen: The Environmental Impacts of U.S. Food Waste | US EPA](https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2021-05/Farm-to-Kitchen-The-Environmental-Impacts-of-U.S.-Food-Waste.pdf)
RTS. (n.d) Food waste in America in 2022. [Food Waste in America in 2022: Statistics & Facts | RTS](https://www.rts.org/food-waste-in-america-in-2022-statistics-facts/)



Where Does Most of Our Food Waste Come From?

- Spoilage/expiration
- Overabundance
 - I.e. production > consumption
- Recalls/improper storage/equipment malfunction
- Scraps of our plates

Where our waste comes from:

**43%**

homes

**40%**restaurants, grocery
stores, food service
companies**16%**

farms

**2%**

manufacturers

Economic Impacts

- Americans waste more than \$218 billion each year on food
- Higher waste management costs
 - Landfill maintenance
 - Transportation costs
 - Operation costs at treatment plants
- Less landfill space
 - More area for businesses and communities

Environmental Impacts

- Food waste in landfills= large amounts of methane
 - Powerful greenhouse gas that contributes to global warming/climate change
- Agriculture uses 70% of water used throughout world
 - Food waste= great waste of freshwater/groundwater sources
- Land/Oil usage wasted
 - Millions of gallons of oil are used to make food that is wasted
 - One-third of world's total ag land is used to grow food that is wasted

Other Environmental Impacts

Environmental Impacts of U.S. Food Waste: EPA

What resources go into a year of food loss and waste in the U.S.?

*excluding impacts of waste management, such as landfill methane emissions



Greenhouse gas emissions of more than 42 coal-fired power plants



Enough water and energy to supply more than 50 million homes



The **amount of fertilizer** used in the U.S. to grow all plant-based foods for U.S. human consumption



An **area of agricultural land** equal to California and New York

Learn more: www.epa.gov/land-research/farm-kitchen-environmental-impacts-us-food-waste

Social Impacts in Iowa

- 297,800 people face hunger
- 1 in 8 children are food insecure
 - Imagine what the one-third of food the US produces that isn't eaten could do for these people?
- Impacts of food insecurity
 - Performance lacks (school, work, etc.)
 - More likely to suffer from diabetes or high blood pressure
 - Growth, developmental, and behavioral issues in children

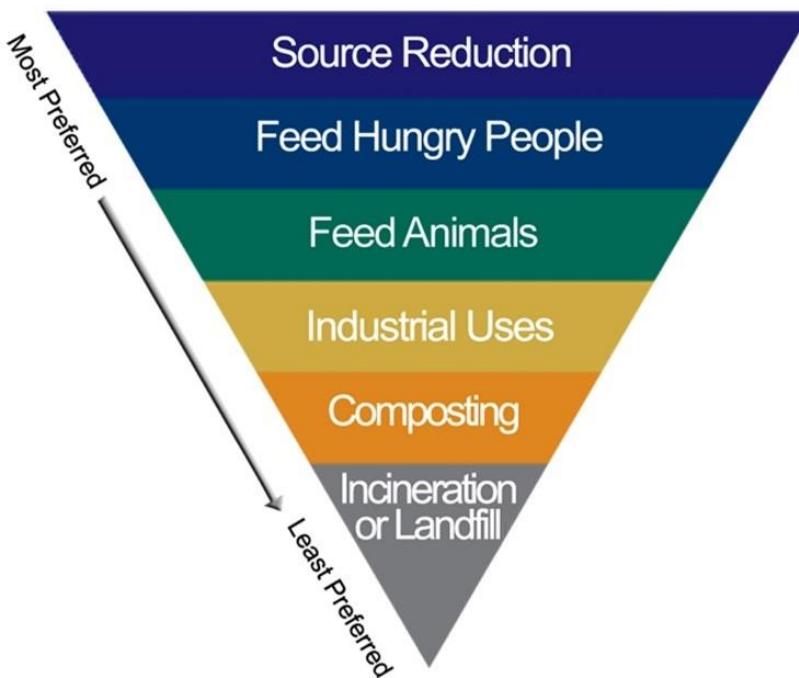
Feeding America. (2022). What hunger looks like in Iowa. [Iowa | Feeding America](#)

Food Bank of Iowa. (2019). About food insecurity. [About Food Insecurity | Food Bank of Iowa](#)
foodbankiowa.org

Reducing Food Waste

- Decreases food insecurity
- Fosters productivity and economic efficiency
- Promotes resource and energy conservation
- Addresses global warming and climate change

Food Recovery Hierarchy



How Can We Reduce Waste?



Iowa Waste
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Where Do We Go From Here?

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