

# Connecticut Wasted Food Reduction: From Policy to Practice



## Commercial Organic Waste Recycling Law

The State of Connecticut has a commercial [organic waste recycling law](#) that has been in effect since 2014, with [updates](#) coming in 2025. The law was created to support the local economy by encouraging the development of organic recycling infrastructure (creating jobs, needed soil amendments, and clean energy for Connecticut); and to further reduce the volume of waste being exported out state or to resource recovery plants that burn waste.

41% of Connecticut's 2.2 million tons of municipal solid waste is organic material. With limited disposal options, approximately 860,000 tons of this material is shipped out of state to landfills, further increasing disposal costs.

Much of this food could have instead been donated, helping the [1-in-8 Connecticut households](#) that have food insecurity. The remaining wasted food can be used to feed livestock, generate biogas fuel, and replenish valuable soil nutrients.

## Why should my business reduce wasted food?

There are many reasons to minimize wasted food:

- More efficient operations
- Lower overall food and waste management costs
- Improved cleanliness
- Improved employee and customer satisfaction

Creating less waste at the source—also known as wasted food prevention—is the most financially effective option and can significantly improve your bottom line by reducing costs at every step of your operations.



# Who does the organics recycling law affect?

The following entities must separate and divert wasted food from their trash disposal stream. Businesses and institutions can estimate the amount of food waste they produce using the [Connecticut Food Waste Estimation Guide](#).

**Businesses & Institutions** with more than 26 tons of food material per year, or 0.5 tons per week. For reference, 0.5 tons of food waste per week equals about four (4) 64-gallon carts.

**Annual Reporting Requirement:** Starting March 2025, businesses and institutions must also report on their annual food donation and recycling activity.

**Public and Non-Public Schools:** On and after July 1, 2026 – each K-12 public or nonpublic school building or educational institution located within 20 miles of an authorized composting facility.

Business sectors include food wholesalers and distributors, industrial food manufacturers and processors, supermarkets, resorts or conference centers, institutions providing hospitality, entertainment, rehabilitation, health care services, public or independent institutions of higher education buildings or facilities, and correctional facilities.

## How can I comply with the organics recycling law?

Businesses, institutions, and schools can optimize their wasted food management by practicing strategies across the US EPA's Wasted Food Scale.

CET offers customized no-cost assistance and has created detailed guidance documents on wasted food reduction, food donation, and food scrap diversion strategies:

- [Source Reduction Guidance in CT](#)
- [Connecticut Food Donation Guidance](#)
- [Food Waste Separation in CT Guidance](#)

**If you are a business/institution interested in starting a wasted food reduction program, contact CET at (888) 410-3827, [ReduceWasteCT@cetonline.org](mailto:ReduceWasteCT@cetonline.org), or via our [web form](#).**



### Wasted Food Scale

How to reduce the environmental impacts of wasted food

