

New Hampshire Wasted Food Reduction: From State Policy to Business Practice



In order to align with state and federal sustainability goals, and to address existing waste management challenges or laws, an increasing number of states are enacting food waste bans to limit the quantity of wasted food sent for disposal in landfills. Food waste bans, or similar regulatory tools, encourage the prevention of wasted food, the donation of surplus edible food, and the recycling of food scraps through animal feed, composting or anaerobic digestion (AD).

Wasted Food in New Hampshire

The New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services (NHDES) estimates that, in 2020 alone, approximately 165,000 tons of wasted food were disposed of by the state's residents, businesses, and institutions. This wasted food stream makes up 24% of the state's total solid waste stream (Sources: [BioCycle](#), [NHDES](#)]

Instead of ending up in landfills, where it contributes to greenhouse gas emissions, this food has the potential to be utilized for a variety of higher purposes:



Surplus, leftover foods	Food scraps that are inedible for humans (but are edible for animals)	Inedible food scraps
Providing nourishment for people AND/OR Upcycling into new food products for people or animals	Providing nourishment for animals	Composting to create a natural soil amendment AND/OR Transforming in an anaerobic digester into sources of renewable energy and a natural soil amendment

New Hampshire Food Waste Ban

Effective Date: February 1, 2025

Applicability: The ban applies to entities (businesses, institutions, schools, etc.) that produce one ton of food waste per week or more and are located within 20 miles of a facility with the capacity and authorization to manage wasted food. The Northeast Resource Recovery Association maintains a [list of facilities, such as compost sites that manage wasted food](#).

Requirements: Affected entities must divert their wasted food from disposal, following these priority strategies:

1. Human consumption: Donate food to [food relief organizations](#), such as food banks and food redistribution organizations.
2. Animal consumption: If human consumption is not viable, prioritize redirecting food to [feed animals](#) at livestock farms or other establishments that have animals.
3. Composting, digestion, or land application: Send food waste to [composting](#) or [anaerobic digestion](#) operations.
4. Energy recovery: As a last resort, consider options for energy recovery from food waste. This does not include combustion methods.

[\[Click here to read New Hampshire's legal language: see section five, parts a and b\]](#)

Guidance on Reducing, Recovering, & Separating Wasted Food

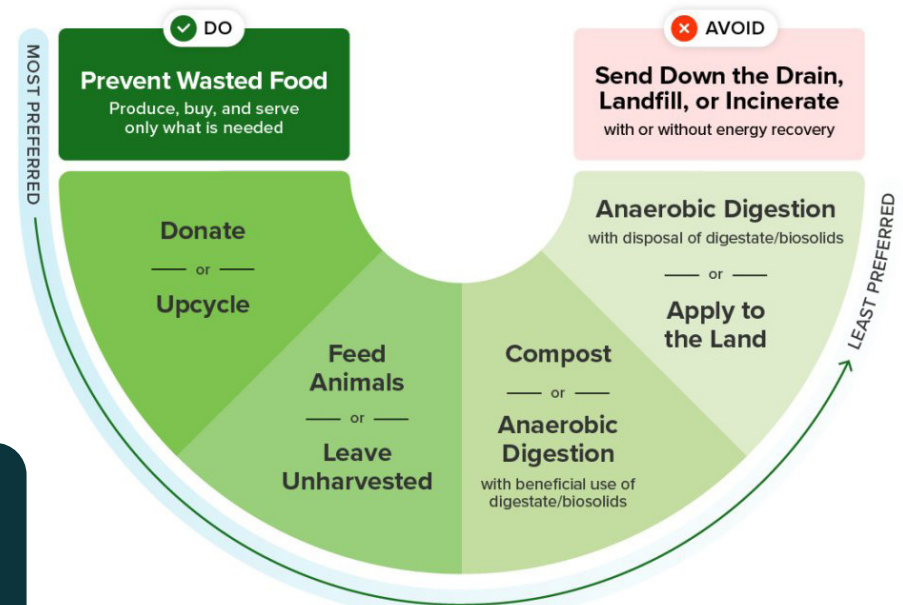
- [Food Waste Estimator](#): This food waste estimation guide was created for the [RecyclingWorks in Massachusetts](#) program but can be used by businesses, institutions, and schools in any state to estimate how much wasted food they generate.
- [Source Reduction Guidance](#): Details a variety of strategies for reducing wasted food at the source, including meal planning, food purchasing and procurement, and food storage/inventory.
- [Food Donation Guidance](#): Provides guidance on setting up a food donation program with a food rescue partner and selecting foods to donate.
- [Food Waste Separation Guidance](#): Overviews how food scraps can be separated and stored to align with animal feed, composting, or anaerobic digestion outlets.

If you are a business or institution interested in hearing more about starting a wasted food reduction program, CET offers free technical support. Contact us at (888) 813-8552 or wastedfood@cetonline.org.



Wasted Food Scale

How to reduce the environmental impacts of wasted food



Businesses can optimize their wasted food management by practicing strategies across the US EPA's [Wasted Food Scale](#).