Why Divert Food Waste From Landfills?

Reducing the amount of food wasted has significant economic, social & environmental benefits:

Environmental Benefits

- **Reduce Methane From Landfills** - When food is disposed in a landfill it rots and becomes a significant source of methane - a potent greenhouse gas with 21 times the global warming potential of carbon dioxide. Landfills are a major source of human-related methane in the United States, accounting for more than 20 percent of all methane emissions.
- **Reduce Resource Use Associated with Food Production** - There are many resources needed to grow food, including water, fertilizers, pesticides, and energy. By wasting food, you are also wasting the resources that when into growing it. Additionally, 13 percent of greenhouse gases in the United States are associated with growing, manufacturing, transporting, and disposing of food. By reducing the amount of food wasted, we can reduce greenhouse gas emissions.
- **Create A Valuable Soil Amendment** - Recycling food waste and turning it into compost has many environmental benefits such as improving soil health and structure; increasing drought resistance; and reducing the need for supplemental water, fertilizers, and pesticides. Food waste can also be turned into renewable energy and a soil amendment through anaerobic digestion.
- **Improve Sanitation, Public Safety, and Health at Your Facility** - Food waste dumped in standard trash cans and dumpsters in the back alley of a home, store or restaurant can generate bad odors and attract rodents or insects. Placing food scraps in a closed, leak-proof, durable, and reusable container, and having it frequently emptied for donation or composting can significantly reduce, and even eliminate these problems.

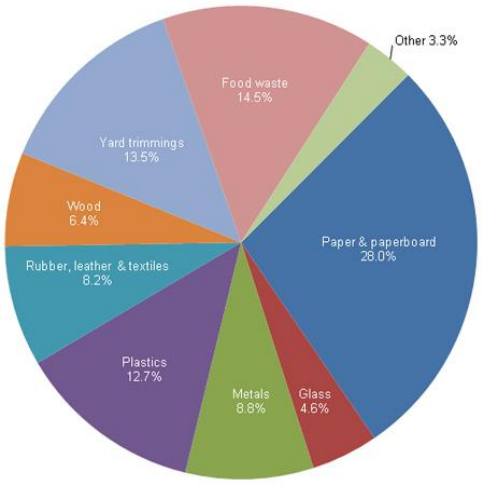
Economic Benefits

- **Lower Disposal Costs** - By decreasing the amount of food wasted, businesses pay less to dispose of their trash. Some haulers charge less if the food waste is separated from the trash and sent for composting rather than landfilling.
- **Reduce Over-Purchasing and Labor Costs** - By making strides to prevent food waste, businesses can reduce costs by purchasing only the food that will be used, or decreasing improperly prepared foods. Additionally, reducing food waste can increase staff efficiency and reduce energy and labor associated with disposing of food.
- **Receive Tax Benefits by Donating Food** - By donating wholesome and edible food to food banks or food rescue organizations, businesses can claim tax benefits as well as feed those in need.

Social Benefits

- **Feed People, Not Landfills** - An estimated 50 million Americans do not have access to enough food. Organizations can donate safe and healthy food to a food bank or food rescue organization and both reduce food sent to landfills and feed people in need.

Composting



Compost is organic material that can be used as a soil amendment or as a medium to grow plants. Mature compost is a stable material with a content called humus that is dark brown or black and has a soil-like, earthy smell. It is created by: combining organic wastes (e.g., yard trimmings, food wastes, manures) in proper ratios into piles, rows, or vessels; adding bulking agents (e.g., wood chips) as necessary to accelerate the breakdown of organic materials; and allowing the finished material to fully stabilize and mature through a curing process.

Natural composting, or biological decomposition, began with the first plants on earth and has been going on ever since. As vegetation falls to the ground, it slowly decays, providing minerals and nutrients needed for plants, animals, and microorganisms. Mature compost, however, includes the production of high temperatures to destroy pathogens and weed seeds that natural decomposition does not destroy.

Benefits of Composting

- Reduce or eliminate the need for chemical fertilizers.
- Promote higher yields of agricultural crops.
- Facilitate reforestation, wetlands restoration, and habitat revitalization efforts by amending contaminated, compacted, and marginal soils.
- Cost-effectively remediate soils contaminated by hazardous waste.
- Remove solids, oil, grease, and heavy metals from stormwater runoff.
- Avoids Methane and leachate formulation in landfills.
- Capture and destroy 99.6 percent of industrial volatile organic chemicals (VOCs) in contaminated air.
- Provide cost savings of at least 50 percent over conventional soil, water, and air pollution remediation technologies, where applicable.
- Reduces the need for water, fertilizers, and pesticides.
- Serves as a marketable commodity and is a low-cost alternative to standard landfill cover and artificial soil amendments.
- Extends municipal landfill life by diverting organic materials from landfills.

Types of Composting

- Backyard or Onsite Composting

Backyard or onsite composting can be conducted by residents on their own property. By composting these materials onsite, homeowners and small businesses can significantly reduce the amount of waste that needs to be disposed of and thereby also save money.

- Vermicomposting
- Aerated (Turned) Windrow Composting
- Aerated Static Pile Composting
- In-Vessel Composting