



**Policy that Produces  
Progress:  
Model Ordinances and  
Other Governance Tools  
to Reduce Food Waste**

Darby Hoover, NRDC

[www.nrdc.org/food-waste-reduction](http://www.nrdc.org/food-waste-reduction)

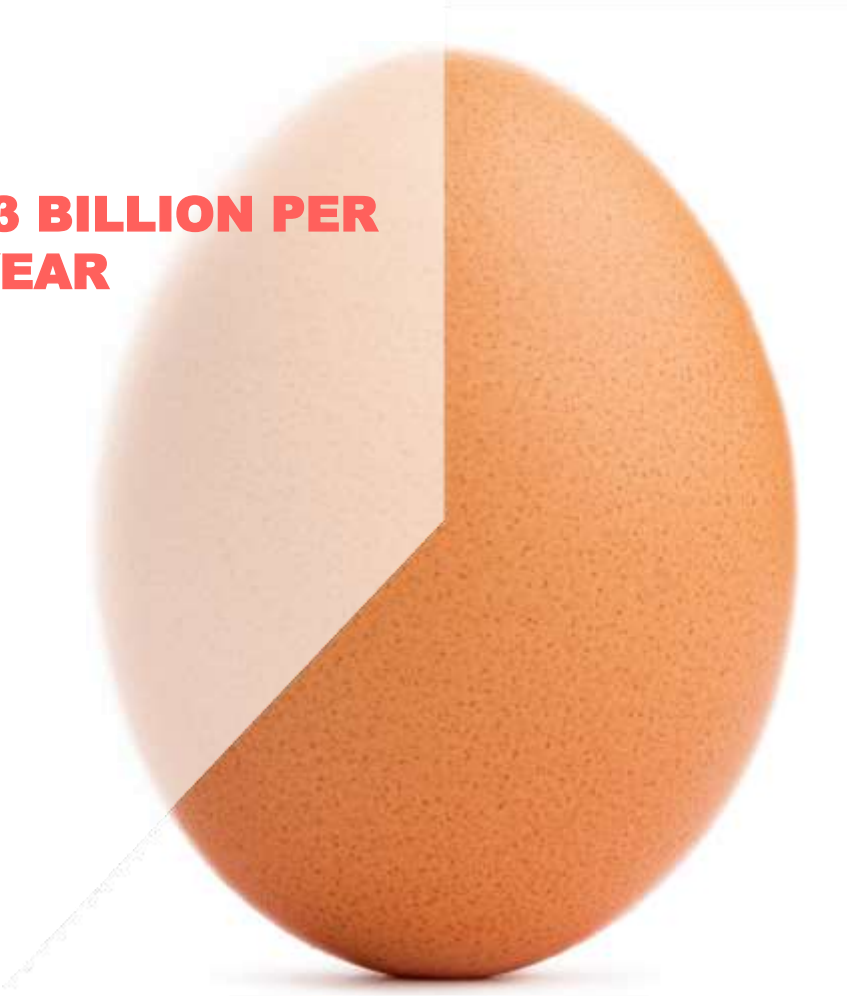


Food Waste Prevention Week

April 4, 2024

# UP TO 40% OF ALL FOOD GOES UNEATEN

**WORTH \$473 BILLION PER YEAR**



**MEANWHILE, OVER 1 IN 10 AMERICANS ARE FOOD-INSECURE**

Source: NRDC, Wasted: How America Is Losing up to 40 Percent of its Food from Farm to Fork to Landfill, 2017; ReFED, 2023; Photo: Dimitris Stephanides/iStock



**6%**  
of U.S. GHG  
Emissions



**22%**  
of all  
Fresh Water Use



**16%**  
of U.S.  
Cropland Use  
(EPA Estimate)



**24%**  
of Landfill Inputs  
(EPA Estimate)

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Source: ReFED April/May 2023

# FOOD WASTE REDUCTION

## NRDC PRIORITIES

### CLIMATE

- **8%** of global GHG emissions
- Climate pollution from **every stage of food production and distribution**; food rotting in landfills releases methane
- Potential to **avoid 100 gigatons** of CO<sub>2</sub>e by 2050

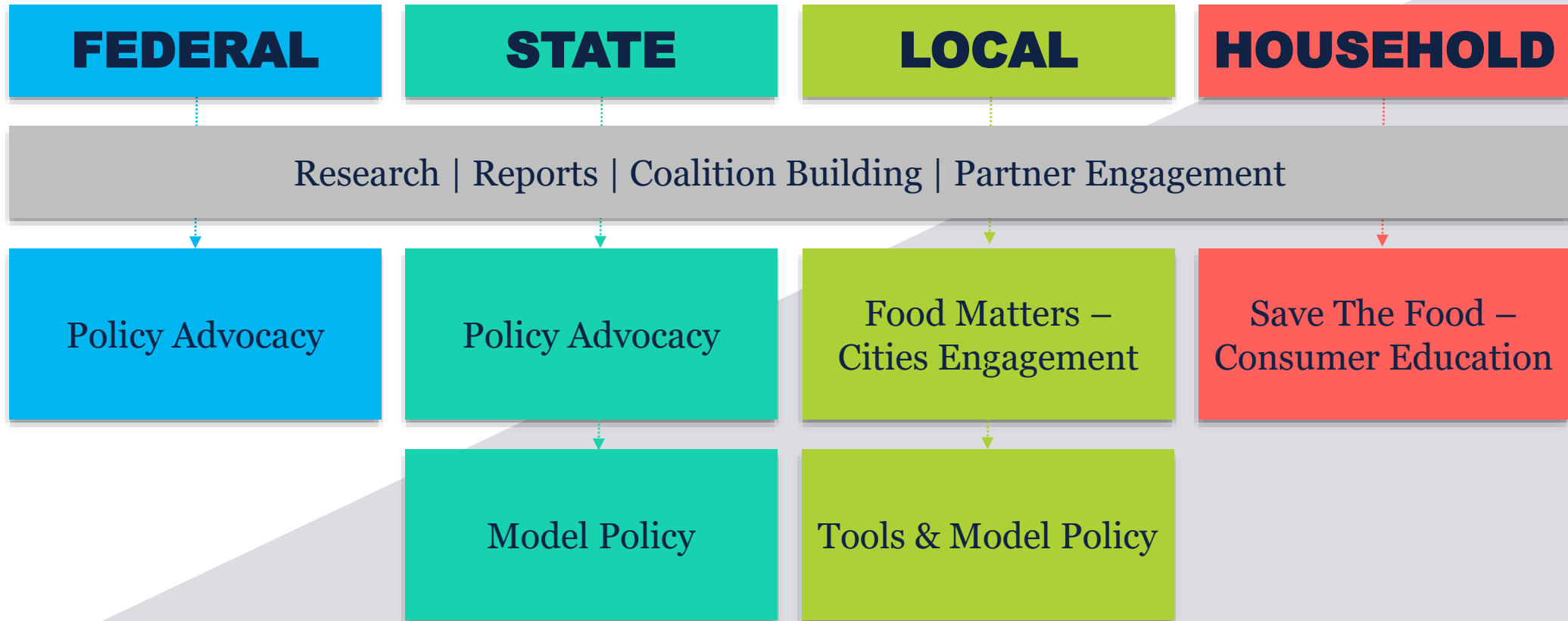
### HEALTH & EQUITY

- **13%** U.S. food insecurity; detrimental to physical, mental health
- **80%** of landfills and incinerators are in BIPOC communities
- Wholesome food can be **rescued and redistributed**

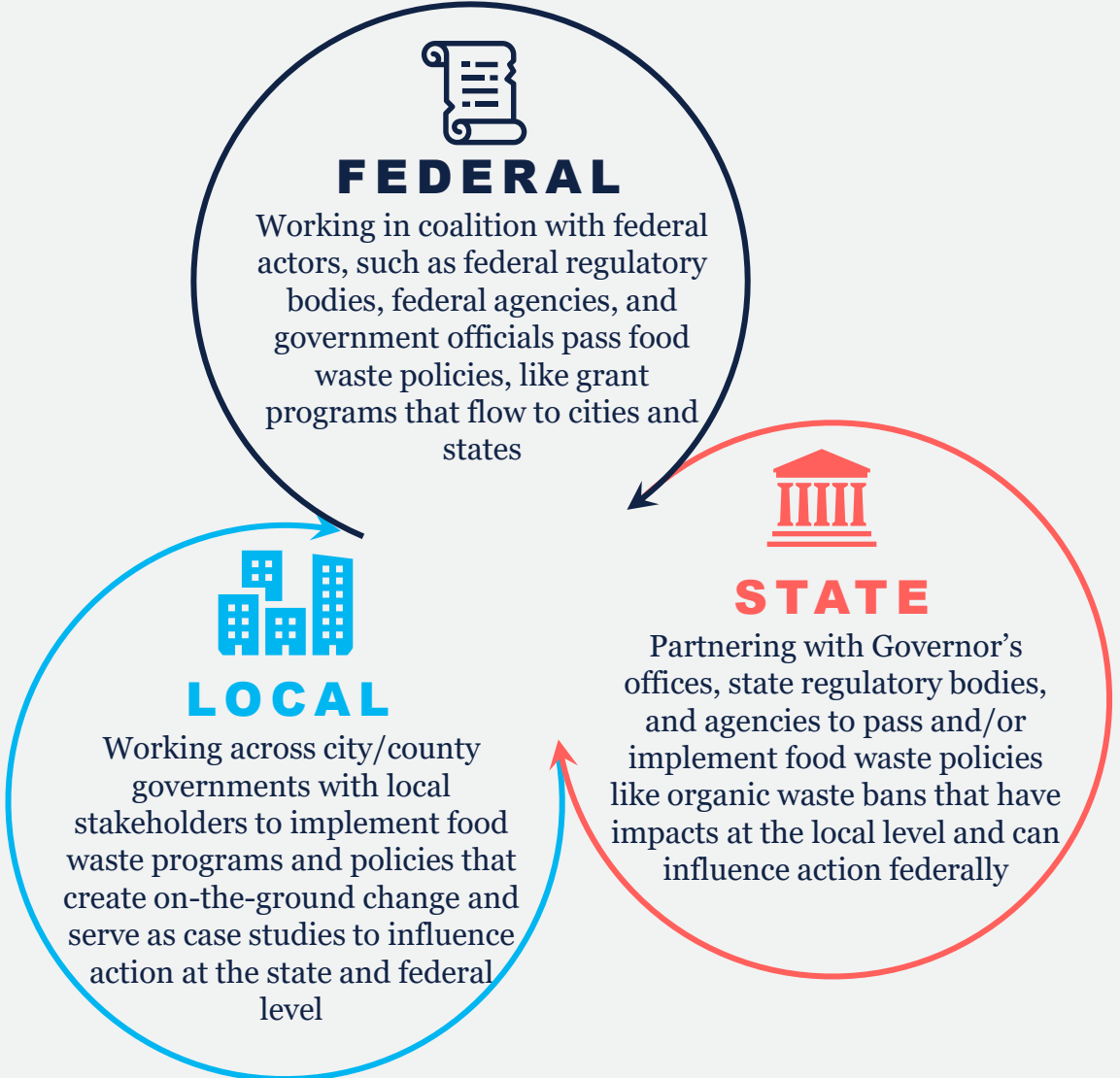
### BIODIVERSITY

- Growing wasted food requires **80 million acres of cropland**, consumes the same amount of water as **CA and ID**
- Limit **deforestation and cropland expansion**; most cropland used for animal feed production
- We have more than **enough food** to feed the entire population

# NRDC'S FOOD WASTE WORK



# THEORY OF CHANGE





**UNITED STATES 2030 FOOD LOSS AND WASTE  
REDUCTION GOAL**



In 2015, the USDA and EPA committed to

**50% reduction in food loss and waste by 2030**

*in alignment with UN Sustainable Development Goal Target 12.3*

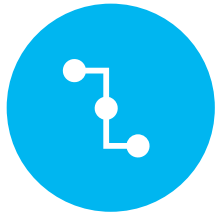
# WHY CITIES?



High rates of food insecurity



Waste management is a large municipal expense



Influence entire supply chain (companies to consumers)



Climate and other sustainability goals



Advocates for policy change at state and federal level





# NRDC FOOD MATTERS INITIATIVE



*Plus Baltimore and Philadelphia*

**The NRDC Food Matters Knowledge Sharing Network** is for cities and counties involved in food waste reduction at the municipal level. The network provides ongoing opportunities for jurisdictions and their partners including:

- ❑ **Periodic webinars** and/or **networking calls** on topics of interest with expert speakers
- ❑ **Connecting with other cities** (through learning cohorts, virtual and/or in-person convenings, peer review of plans/strategies, etc.)
- ❑ **Connecting with other national or international networks** and events (e.g. study tours, Milan Urban Food Policy Pact)
- ❑ **Newsletter** and other communications of interest (e.g. funding or policy sign-on opportunities) from NRDC

**You're  
invited!**

NRDC Food Matters  
**KNOWLEDGE  
SHARING  
NETWORK**

To learn more, email us at [foodmatters@nrdc.org](mailto:foodmatters@nrdc.org) or  
scan the QR code





**Food Rescue Landscape Assessment Guide**



**Food Scrap Recycling Landscape Assessment Guide**



**Food Waste Restaurant Challenge Guide**



**Food Donations from Farms Guide**

# FOOD MATTERS TOOLS



**Increasing Public Awareness About Food Waste Prevention Guide**



**Assessing Progress on Food Waste Interventions at the City Level**



**Food Waste Generation and Food Rescue Potential Baseline Calculator Guide**



**Food Waste Strategic Communications and Partnership Guide**

# MUNICIPAL MODEL POLICIES

The Environmental Law Institute and NRDC developed model policies to provide municipalities with tools like model policy language address food waste. The models are based on **extensive research** and **best practices**, and are **adaptable tools** that can be tailored to needs of individual municipalities



## Pay as you throw

- Decrease landfilling and incineration of MSW
- Establish residential MSW management pricing scheme that promotes transparency, efficiency, and fairness by charging households according to amount of trash they generate



## Mandatory reporting for large generators

- Provide data on food waste generation
- Increase awareness of how much food is being wasted
- Lead to reductions in disposal of food waste through implementing targeted food waste reduction strategies



## Model compost procurement policy

- Require the purchase of compost to increase demand, infrastructure, and business potential
- Soil health benefits



## Municipal leadership on food waste reduction

- Helps government entities lead by example by reducing amount of food waste from municipal operations
- Highlights importance of reducing food waste to businesses, residents and community