



**Environmental
Law Institute's
Food Waste Initiative**

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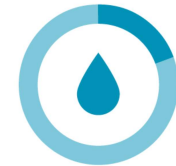
Food Waste 101 (Pt. 1)

- Up to 38% of the food supply goes uneaten in the United States, and most of it is wasted.
- When food is wasted, all of the resources used to grow, harvest, transport, store, and prepare it are wasted as well.
- The economic value of wasted food is estimated to be \$428B per year.
- At the same time, 1 in 8 people in America are food insecure.

Annually, uneaten food alone accounts for:



6.1%
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)

Source: ReFED/2022 Data (Published 11/23)

Food Waste 101 (Pt. 2)

- Over 87% of uneaten food ends up in landfills or incinerators.
- Food waste alone accounts for almost a quarter of the municipal waste stream.
- In landfills, food waste decays and contributes significant methane emissions.



Food Waste 101 (Pt. 3)

- Reducing food waste can lead to significant **environmental**, **economic**, and **social** benefits.
- EPA has created a **Wasted Food Scale**, which orders food waste reduction actions by their environmental impacts.
- Preventing food waste is most preferred while landfilling, incinerating, and sending food down the drain are least preferred and should be avoided.



The Environmental Law Institute (ELI)

ELI's mission is to foster innovative, just, and practical law and policy solutions to enable leaders across borders and sectors to make **environmental**, **economic**, and **social** progress.

ELI's Work Spans a Range of Topics:



Climate & Energy



Environmental Health



Freshwater & Oceans



Land & Biodiversity



Environmental Governance

ELI's Role Takes Many Forms:



Developing Law and Policy



Educating Professionals and the Public



Providing Objective Data and Analysis



Convening Diverse Groups to Solve Problems

ELI's Food Waste Initiative

- **What ELI does:** conduct research and work with stakeholders to prevent food waste, increase surplus food donation, and recycle food scraps.
- A key component of ELI's work is **building the capacity** of **cities** to address **food waste**.
- **ELI** served as Project Director for **NRDC's** pilot project (2015) and now is Senior Advisor (with **NRDC**) to **Urban Green Lab's Nashville Food Waste Initiative**.



URBAN GREEN LAB™

Key Components of ELI's Nashville-based Food Waste Reduction Work

- Convenings
- Policy Analysis and Recommendations
- Research
- Public Education Events
- Podcasts & Blogs



Convenings

Stakeholder Discussions on Range of Food Waste Topics

Participation on Mayoral Sustainability-focused Committees

Presentations at Numerous Events and Conferences

Public Education Events

James Beard Waste Not Cooking Competition and Waste-Not Demonstration Events

Mayor's Food Saver Challenge Launch and Re-Launch Events

Food Waste-related Film Showings at Adventure Science Center and Green Door Gourmet

Policy Analysis & Research

Comments on Climate Adaptation and Resilience Plan and Climate Mitigation Action Plan

Model Ordinances, Policies, and Executive Orders on food waste (with NRDC)

Landscape Analyses/Recommendations (e.g., Community Composting, Food Rescue, Food Scrap Recycling Infrastructure)

Food Waste Prevention Resource Guide Series for Urban Green Lab

Podcast & Blogs

Sharing Our Research and Work in Nashville through ELL's Vibrant Environment Blog and People Places Planet podcast



Examples of ELL's Nashville Food Waste Projects

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1. ReFED, [Food Waste: The Problem](#)
2. NRDC, [Wasted Report](#) (2017)
3. ELI, [A Toolkit for Incorporating Food Waste in Municipal Climate Action Plans](#) (2021)
4. NRDC, [Food Waste Reduction Tools for Cities](#)
5. C40 KnowledgeHub, [How Cities Can Reduce Municipal Food Waste](#) (2023)
6. EPA Reports on Food Waste Impacts: [From Farm to Kitchen](#) (2021), [From Field to Bin](#) (2023), [Quantifying Methane Emissions](#) (2023)
7. NFWI, [Nashville Food Rescue Landscape Analysis](#) (2017)
8. Metro Nashville Government, [Davidson County Long-Term Zero Waste Master Plan](#)
9. NRDC & ELI, [Model Executive Order on Municipal Leadership on Food Waste Reduction](#) (2023)

FOR MORE INFORMATION + HELPFUL RESOURCES