

 **NRDC METRICS FOR ASSESSING CITY-LEVEL FOOD WASTE PROGRESS** (Note: first capture baseline, then measure change over time)

PREVENTION OF WASTED FOOD	PROGRESS METRIC	WHAT TO MEASURE AND/OR WHERE TO FIND DATA	EQUITY SUB-METRIC EXAMPLES*	NOTES
	Number of schools/businesses engaged in prevention measures	Surveys, participants in city-based food waste challenges, data from other organizations	Types/demographics of organizations targeted for outreach	
	Percentage/amount of food waste reduced at participating schools/businesses	Surveys, participants in city-based food waste challenges, data from other organizations	Types/demographics of participating organizations	
	Number (percentage) of businesses that have set specific food loss and/or waste reduction targets	E.g., green business program	Types/demographics of participating organizations	
	Number (percentage) of businesses that have started measuring their food loss and/or waste	E.g., green business program	Types/demographics of participating organizations	
	Number of individuals engaged in or receiving food waste outreach (social media or other estimate of traditional engagement)	Views of web pages, social media impressions, number of mailings, billboard views, etc.	Viewer analytics	
	Number of prevention education materials distributed (e.g., postcards, Save the Food advertising placements)	Number of each type of material distributed	Demographics of recipients	https://savethefood.com/
	Estimated number of views of public-facing prevention materials (Save the Food billboards, websites, social media, grocery carts, etc.)		Viewer analytics	
	Average miles driven and number of trucks with Save the Food wraps on them		Neighborhoods visited	NRDC does not encourage excess driving, but this information could be helpful in measuring number of Save the Food ad views.
	Residential survey responses about attitudes and behaviors regarding food waste. Suggested categories include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Change in respondent perception of amount of food waste generated by them • Change in respondent perception of food waste behaviors they engage in • Change in respondent recognition of food waste reduction program/brand • Reduction in the percentage of people rating themselves as not good at buying the amount of food they are likely to use (e.g., reduction in responses that are a 6 or lower on a 10-point scale) • Reduction in the percentage of people who respond "Disagree" or "Strongly disagree" to the statements "Food waste is an important national issue" and "Everyone, including me, has a responsibility to minimize the food they throw away" • Reduction in the percentage of people who respond "Disagree" or "Strongly disagree" to the statement "I know how to reduce the amount of food that I waste" • Increase in the percentage of people who cite Save the Food or other food waste campaign as their source of food waste information (and/or who are aware of STF) 	Before/after surveys (percentage change)	Demographics of survey recipients and respondents	
Changes in consumer consumption/purchasing behaviors	Surveys and/or observation; potentially various data sets	Demographics of targeted/observed consumers		
Resources allocated to technical assistance/materials for food businesses and institutions to conduct food waste audits and/or monitor their food waste on an ongoing basis	Dollars and/or city staff hours	Types/demographics of organizations targeted for outreach		
Amount of grant funds available for local businesses and institutions to implement prevention efforts and/or develop entrepreneurial business models to make commercial use of food scraps	Dollars	Proportion of different types/demographics of organizations targeted for outreach		

*Additional equity metrics to consider: <https://www.canr.msu.edu/foodsystems/uploads/files/measuring-racial-equity-in-the-food-system.pdf>

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RESCUE OF SURPLUS FOOD	PROGRESS METRIC	WHAT TO MEASURE AND/OR WHERE TO FIND DATA	EQUITY SUB-METRIC EXAMPLES*	NOTES
	Food insecurity rate and/or percentage of meal gap that is being filled by food donations	Percentage and/or weight change (of pounds donated by entities in a given location)	Proportions of different types/ demographics of sectors receiving food donations	Food insecurity rate is driven largely by broad economic conditions, not localized food donation, so metrics related to food insecurity should not be directly linked to changes to rescue efforts, although tracking these metrics may be useful in helping to prioritize areas for resource allocation.
	Number of individual recipients served by rescue organizations	Food rescue organizations	Demographics of individual/ neighborhood recipients	
	Total amount of food donated by entities located in the city (or community of interest)	Weight change and/or serving equivalent (per donor and/or total)	Amount of food donated to organizations by types/demographics of populations served/location	
	Amount of fresh produce, meat, dairy, deli, and culturally specific foods donated by entities located within the community and/or adoption/expansion of donation programs in these product categories	Weight change and/or percentage of total food donations	Amount of culturally specific food donations	
	Number of businesses and institutions regularly donating appropriate surplus food	Food rescue organizations	Types/demographics of organizations donating	
	Introduction/expansion of food donation apps, mobile pantries, distribution points located close to where recipients live/work/play, as well as food distribution mechanisms effectively serving disabled populations	Food rescue organizations	Location of resources by geography/ demographics	
	Number/capacity of refrigerated trucks and square footage of refrigerated/frozen/dry warehouse space	Food rescue organizations		
	Number of new donors and number of consistent donor organizations over time	Food rescue organizations		
	Number of paid staff employed by food rescuers and last-mile organizations (LMOs)	Food rescue organizations	Demographics of staff	
	Number of volunteers and volunteer hours per year at food rescuers and LMOs	Food rescue organizations	Demographics of volunteers	
	Amount of philanthropic donations directed to rescuers and LMOs	Dollar and/or percentage change	Proportion of different types of organizations receiving donations	
	Client satisfaction with food donation services	Surveys	Demographics of clients surveyed linked with satisfaction levels	
	Number of clients surveyed by food rescuers/LMOs and/or providing input to operation of the city's food rescue system	Food rescue organizations	Demographics of clients surveyed/ providing input	
Amount of food received by rescuers and LMOs that is discarded	Percentage and/or weight change	Amount of culturally specific food discards		
Amount of grant funds available for food rescue-related infrastructure, staffing, and communication functions	Dollars	Proportion of different types/ demographics of organizations receiving donations		

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	PROGRESS METRIC	WHAT TO MEASURE AND/OR WHERE TO FIND DATA	EQUITY SUB-METRIC EXAMPLES*	NOTES
RESCUE OF SURPLUS FOOD (cont.)	Number of health inspectors trained in food donation outreach	Number and/or percentage	Geographic reach/demographics of trained inspectors	
	Development of food donation guidance by city department of health	Qualitative	Number of materials available in different languages	
	Formal incorporation of food donation topics into department of health site visit protocols	Qualitative	Number of materials available in different languages	
	Number of city department of health food donation guides directly distributed or mailed to licensed food facilities	Number of guides distributed/mailed and/or number/percentage of facilities reached	Number of materials available in different languages	
	Number of site visits to city department of health website featuring food donation guidance		Viewer analytics	
	Number of environmental health policies changed that remove barriers to food donation			
	Amounts of food donated at licensed food facilities before and after outreach by health inspectors	Percentage and/or weight change		
	Amounts of food wasted at licensed food facilities before and after outreach by health inspectors	Percentage and/or weight change (e.g., in Denver, reduced number of check boxes marked for wasted foods in Disposal of Food box on PHI inspection form)		

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 **METRICS FOR ASSESSING CITY-LEVEL FOOD WASTE PROGRESS** (Note: first capture baseline, then measure change over time)

RECYCLING OF FOOD SCRAPS	PROGRESS METRIC	WHAT TO MEASURE AND/OR WHERE TO FIND DATA	EQUITY SUB-METRIC EXAMPLES*
	Tons of organic materials collected for recycling, with percentage or weight fraction of this as food scraps	City and/or private food scrap hauler data	
	Tons of organic materials processed for recycling, with percentage or weight fraction of this as food scraps	City and/or private food scrap processor data	
	Total potential tonnage capacity of processors (and amount of use of available capacity)	City and/or private food scrap processor data	
	Number of processors (and number of possible processors)	City and/or private food scrap processor data	Location of processing facilities (and potential location of new facilities)
	Number of haulers (public and private)	City and/or private food scrap hauler data	
	Number of city-level policies or programs related to home or commercial food scrap recycling	City data	
	Number of residential participants in municipal collection of food scraps (curbside and drop-off)	City food scrap hauler data	Geography and demographics of residential participants in food scrap collection
	Number of residences with access to municipal curbside collection of food scraps	City food scrap hauler data	Geography and demographics of residences with access to food scrap collection
	Number of residential participants in private, community, and/or nonprofit collection of food scraps (curbside and drop-off)	Private food scrap hauler data	Geography and demographics of residences with access to food scrap collection/drop-off
	Number of commercial participants in collection of food scraps (municipal and/or private)	City and/or private food scrap hauler data	Geography and demographics of businesses with access to food scrap collection
	Number of community compost sites available to public for food scrap drop-off	Number of sites and/or total capacity	Geography and demographics of neighborhoods with access to community composting
	Number of city programs aimed at increasing backyard composting (and number of bins distributed per year, number of residents trained, etc.)	City data	Geography and demographics of neighborhoods/individuals targeted for community composting outreach; language-appropriate outreach where applicable
	Number of city staff engaged in commercial and/or residential food scrap recycling outreach	City data	
	Number of organizations and nonprofits engaged in food scrap recycling education and engagement programs		
	Cost of organics recycling service (to user) by weight or other measure (commercial and residential)	City and/or private food scrap hauler data	
	Contamination rate of organics waste streams that include food scraps	City and/or private food scrap processor/hauler data	
	Amount of finished compost products purchased/available locally (including city and private purchases)	City and/or private food scrap processor data	
	Public cost of service per ton (tip fees) for both disposal (landfill, incinerator) and organics processing sites	City and/or private food scrap processor data	
	Number of agricultural operations with off-site food scrap drop-off		
Number of agricultural operations accepting food scraps for animal feed			
Amount of food scraps directed to animal feed	Weight		

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NRDC METRICS FOR ASSESSING CITY-LEVEL FOOD WASTE PROGRESS (Note: first capture baseline, then measure change over time)

RETHINKING FOOD WASTE OR OVERARCHING MEASURES	PROGRESS METRIC	WHAT TO MEASURE AND/OR WHERE TO FIND DATA	EQUITY SUB-METRIC EXAMPLES*	NOTES
	Change in amount of total waste generation (subcategories follow; see "Estimating Quantities and Types of Food Waste at the City Level" for details): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • by sector (e.g., residential versus ICI sectors such as restaurants/caterers, hospitality, grocers/markets, etc.) • types of food wasted (e.g., fruits/vegetables, prepared foods/leftovers, liquids) • where the food ends up (e.g., composting, landfill, donated) • what portion was potentially edible versus inedible (bones as inedible, for example) • what portion of surplus food potentially could have been rescued and donated (ICI sectors) 	Waste characterization studies (total tonnage to all destinations, tonnage per capita, and percentage change per capita, plus subcategories); repeat residential baseline assessment using NRDC baseline generation estimation templates. Hauler data for estimates of tonnages to different destinations (compost, landfill, etc.)		https://www.nrdc.org/resources/food-matters-what-we-waste-and-how-we-can-expand-amount-food-we-rescue
	Reduction in per capita tonnage of edible household food waste generated	Residential baseline generation estimation templates	Demographics of households assessed/contacted	
	Estimated amounts of CO2 emissions, water use, other resource use avoided from reducing amount of food going to waste	EPA Waste Reduction Model for some factors		https://www.epa.gov/warm
	Number of community events, roundtables, and stakeholder meetings related to food waste	E.g., sustainable neighborhood programs	Geography/demographics of event locations	
	Number of participants at community events, roundtables, and stakeholder meetings related to food waste		Demographics of event attendees	
	Number of stakeholders engaged through outreach		Demographics of stakeholders	
	Amount spent on public outreach campaigns related to food waste	Dollars	Geography/demographics of communities targeted for outreach	
	Number of media partners engaged in outreach/publicity related to food waste			
	Number of social media posts by public entities related to food waste		Cultural specificity/multilingual outreach	
	Number of printed materials distributed (e.g., residential outreach) related to food waste	Number printed and/or distributed		
	Number/percentage of initiatives related to food waste directly reaching or benefiting underserved and/or low-income neighborhoods		Geography/demographics of communities where initiatives are focused	
	Number of residences/neighborhoods participating in local sustainable neighborhood programs (with food waste component)	E.g., sustainable neighborhood programs	Geography/demographics of participating residences/ neighborhoods	
Number of food service businesses participating in local green business programs (with food waste component)	E.g., green business programs	Geography/demographics of participating businesses		
Number and/or proportion, by sector, of businesses engaging in city challenges to address food waste	City data	Geography/demographics of participating businesses		
Number of prevention, rescue, and recycling measures taken by businesses participating in city challenges	Survey of participating businesses	Types of measures taken by different types/demographics of businesses		

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RETHINKING FOOD WASTE OR OVERARCHING MEASURES (cont.)	PROGRESS METRIC	WHAT TO MEASURE AND/OR WHERE TO FIND DATA	EQUITY SUB-METRIC EXAMPLES*	NOTES
	Total amounts of preconsumer and postconsumer food waste discarded by businesses participating in city challenges (before and after challenge participation)	Survey of participating businesses; waste audits		
	Amounts of surplus food donated by businesses participating in city challenges (before and after challenge participation)	Weight and/or number of servings provided by rescue organization or business		
	Amounts of food scraps recycled by businesses participating in city challenges (before and after challenge participation)	Weight provided by hauler or business		
	Changes in costs to businesses linked to city challenge participation	Survey of participating businesses		
	Number of businesses continuing food waste reduction practices after city challenge participation	Periodic surveys of participating businesses	Geography/demographics of businesses continuing practices	
	Results of facility- or sector-based waste characterization studies conducted as part of city challenge	Quantitative and/or qualitative; note any changes	Geography/demographics of facility- or sector-based studies	
	Number of workshops on food waste conducted as part of city challenge	City data	Geography/demographics of businesses targeted for outreach	
	Number of hours of hands-on instruction/education conducted as part of city challenge	City data	Geography/demographics of businesses targeted for outreach	
	Budget and staff allocation at city level (for each food waste hierarchy strategy)	City agencies		
	Number of city-level goals related to food waste (including climate, sustainability, and solid waste goals)	City data		
	Number of city-level policies related to food waste	City data		
Amount of philanthropic donations for all forms of food waste innovation	Dollars	Proportion of different types/ demographics of organizations receiving donations		

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