



Food Recycling from Restaurants



It is estimated that restaurants throw away approximately 30% of their food worth over \$48 billion a year. A single restaurant can toss 50 tons of food and soiled paper annually. How can this loss become a gain for a restaurant and a community?

Reduce! First look at ways to decrease the volume of leftover food - portion sizes, outdates, rotate perishable stocks at delivery - first in - first out.

Reuse and Recycle! Redirect food to feed the hungry, create compost, and produce energy. Sending food to a compost facility helps create local jobs and the finished compost improves soil to complete the circle and grow healthy food. There is also the potential to decrease sewer treatment and electric costs, reduce disposal and hauling costs and enhance marketing by being a GREEN eatery.



Opportunities are growing in WI!

- **Local food bank, soup kitchens** can use excess edible food to help feed the community.

- **More Composters in Wisconsin** are accepting fruits, vegetables and paper soiled by food. There are a number of pilots in the state that are composting food beyond fruits and vegetables - both pre and post consumer. These pilots are likely to become more prevalent and more permanent because the **Wisconsin DNR is in the process of revising composting rules to make it easier to compost more than just fruits and vegetables.** More food will then be able to be diverted from landfills to composting.



- **Wisconsin has an increasing number of anaerobic digesters** that have the capacity to take food residuals and use them to generate electricity through methane production. These digesters are found on a number of large Wisconsin dairy farms. Going beyond the farm, the City of Madison is looking into building a digester to recycle food separate from a farm.



What can you recycle?

- ✓ Edible food
- ✓ Food Preparation residuals
- ✓ Plate Scrapings
- ✓ Coffee Grounds & Tea Bags
- ✓ Outdated food
- ✓ Soiled (non recyclable) paper - pizza boxes, napkins, cups, etc.
- ✓ Bio-compostable service ware (ASTM-6400 certified)



How to get started? Contact:

- Local food banks and soup kitchens
- Your hauler – ask about a food residual recycling program
- Local large scale composters
- Local UW Extension Agriculture Agents or large scale dairy farms
- Local government Solid Waste/Recycling Programs
- UW Extension Solid and Hazard Waste Education Center
(Joe Van Rossum, 608-262-0936, vanrossum@epd.engr.wisc.edu)
- WI DNR – regional SW specialist <http://dnr.wi.gov/org/caer/cs/ServiceCenter/ssbyregion.html>

