

Boulder County
Business Guide to

Reducing Food Waste



Sustainability, Climate Action & Resilience

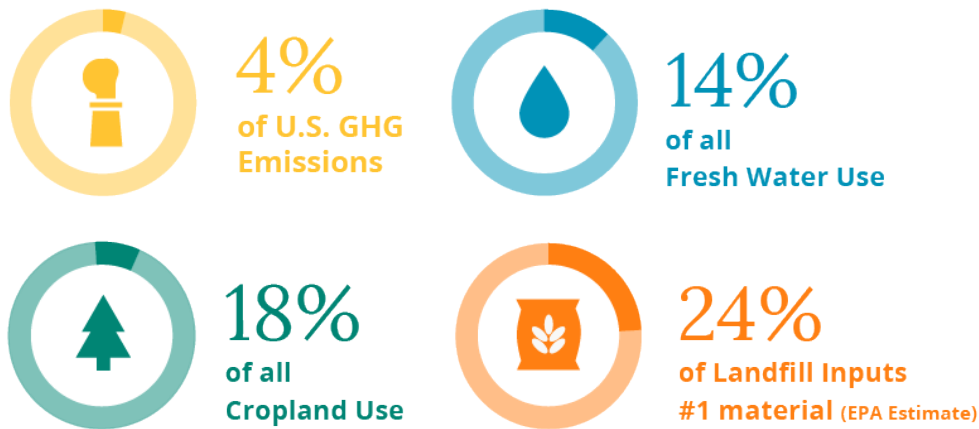


Why Food Waste Matters

In the United States, we waste a lot of food. In fact, we throw away 80-133 billion pounds of food annually — [this is the equivalent weight of 1,000 Empire State Buildings](#) and accounts for 30-40% of our nation's total food supply.

Not only is this a huge waste of money — approximately [\\$161 billion in lost value](#) — it's also a waste of resources. Food production requires land, water, pesticides, fertilizers, farmers' time, transportation, and more. When food is wasted, all of the resources that went into that food are wasted too.

Uneaten food consumes:



Food waste also contributes to climate change: roughly [8% of global greenhouse gas emissions](#) are associated with food waste. It is estimated that reducing U.S. food waste by 20% within the next decade [could prevent 18 million tons of greenhouse gas emissions](#) each year!

What role do businesses like yours have to play in reducing food waste?

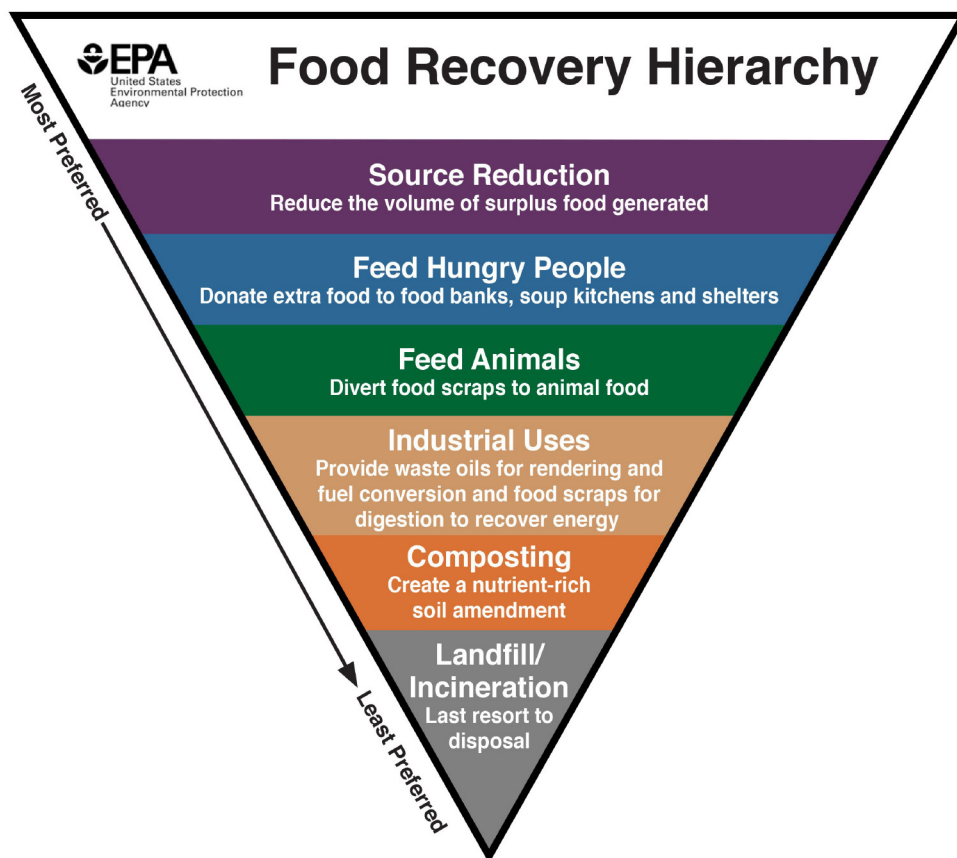
While 43% of food waste happens in households, 40% occurs in consumer-facing businesses like grocery stores, caterers, restaurants, and food service providers. Your business can make a direct impact in reducing food waste. You can save money too: [one study](#) found that a restaurant can save \$7 for every \$1 invested in food waste reduction.

37 MILLION AMERICANS STRUGGLE WITH HUNGER.

In Boulder County, almost [29,000 \(roughly 1 in 9\) people](#) are considered food insecure, which means they lack consistent access to healthy, affordable foods. By connecting with local non-profits, your business may be able to redirect excess food supplies or prepared foods to residents in need. Read on to find out how!

What can be done with Recovered Food?

Before sending food to the landfill, there are numerous ways it can be put to better use. In Boulder County, this means feeding people, animals, and the soil (via composting). You'll find information below on how you can take steps to reduce food waste at the source. We've also included a guide with resources to divert excess food and food scraps to local communities.





Source Reduction

Regardless of where your business is located in Boulder County, these are some ways for your team to reduce food waste:

- *Reduce portion sizes per meal.* A [recent study](#) indicated that just one typical meal served in a U.S. restaurant would supply 70-120% of the daily energy requirements for a sedentary woman!
- *Offer tiered portion sizes.* Perhaps you don't want to decrease all portion sizes but would prefer to let your customers decide if they want a small, medium, or large portion.
- *Consider hosting one "leftover" meal per day, weekly or monthly.* Come up with a creative recipe to use leftover ingredients in a delicious way; your customers may love the idea of purchasing a meal that reduces food waste!
- *Source "ugly" produce.* Fruits and vegetables that don't fit retail aesthetic criteria are some of the first to be thrown out. Consider purposefully purchasing ugly produce from your retailer as a way to help them tackle waste.
- *Ensure ingredients are multi-use.* If your business tends to throw out one specific ingredient used for just a handful of recipes, see if you can incorporate that ingredient into other meals in a creative way.
- *Sell food at a discount.* Maybe it's the "leftover" meal mentioned above or yesterday's muffins — run a special to try and sell food before it expires!
- *Come up with creative ways to use trimmings.* Incorporate things like vegetable stems into a sauce, or use leftover trimmings or bones in a broth.
- *Make smaller batches.* Conduct an inventory of what food is being wasted. If you're repeatedly throwing out the same things, cut down on the amount of that item you produce.



Feed People

After source reduction, the next best thing you can do to reduce food waste is to get extra food to people — typically by donating to local hunger relief organizations.

Donate:

- Unserved hot food that was kept at temperature and/or cooled properly (e.g., entrees and soups)
- Unserved cold food that was kept at temperature (e.g., sandwiches, yogurt, parfaits, and salads)
- Produce (e.g., strawberries, lettuce, onions, tomatoes, and herbs)
- Beverages (e.g., juice, bottled water, lemonade, and tea)
- Packaged items (e.g., dry pasta, canned vegetables, and pudding)
- Dairy products (e.g., sour cream, milk, yogurt, and cheese)
- Raw meat (e.g., beef, chicken, and pork)

Do NOT donate:

- Previously served foods (including, but not limited to, foods from a buffet, foods served to a guest, or returned food)
- Foods in sharply dented or rusty cans
- Spoiled food (although if portions of the food are not spoiled, you could donate those portions by just removing the spoiled bit — for example, a container of strawberries with one moldy berry)
- Foods in opened or torn containers
- Potentially hazardous foods that are past their expiration date
- Distressed foods (foods that have been exposed to fire, flooding, and smoke, for example)

If donating excess ingredients or leftover foods makes you a bit wary of running into some legal concerns, don't worry: the federal government has [several provisions](#) (namely, the [Bill Emerson Good Samaritan Food Donation Act of 1996](#)) meant to protect businesses who donate food to people in need.

The kinds of food you can donate depend on the hunger relief organizations in your area; some may only take unused, shelf-stable ingredients or fresh produce where others may have the capacity to take prepared and cooked foods. Additionally, the organizations may want you to drop off the donation or have the capacity to pick it up from you. **Please contact any of the following organizations to discuss what foods they would accept from your business as well as delivery logistics before donating:**

Boulder County AIDS Project Boulder (303) 444-6121 info@bcap.org bcap.org	Boulder Food Rescue Boulder (720) 445-5237 info@boulderfoodrescue.org Boulderfoodrescue.org	Boulder Shelter for the Homeless Boulder (303) 468-4312 tiffany@bouldershelter.org bouldershelter.org
Bridge House Boulder (720) 235-6050 scott@boulderbridgehouse.org boulderbridgehouse.org	Coal Creek Meals on Wheels Lafayette (303) 665-0566 director@coalcreekmow.org coalcreekmow.org	Community Cupboard Food Bank at the Old Gallery Allenspark (303) 747-9172 StVrain3@aol.com theoldgallery.org/services/
Community Food Share Louisville (303) 652-3663 info@communityfoodshare.org communityfoodshare.org	Community Fridges Denver and Boulder denvercommunityfridge.com	Emergency Family Assistance Association Boulder (303) 442-3042 efaa.org
Harvest of Hope Boulder (720) 382-1971 info@hopepantry.org hopepantry.org	Homeless Outreach Providing Encouragement Longmont (720) 494-4673 hopeforlongmont.org	Lyons Emergency & Assistance Fund Lyons (720) 864-4309 foodpantry@leaflyons.org leaflyons.org
Longmont Food Rescue Longmont info@longmontfoodrescue.org longmontfoodrescue.org	Meals on Wheels Longmont (303) 772-0540 Info@lmow.org Longmontmeals.org	Meals on Wheels Boulder Boulder (720) 780-3380 info@mowboulder.org mowboulder.org
Nederland Food Pantry Nederland (720) 418-0892 nedfoodpantry@gmail.com	OUR Center Longmont (303) 772-5529 info@ourcenter.org ourcenter.org	Safe Shelter of St. Vrain Valley Longmont (303) 772-0432 Email here Safeshelterofstvrain.org

St. John the Baptist Food Bank Longmont (303) 678-1469 foodbank@johnthebaptist.org johnthebaptist.org/food-bank	Sister Carmen Community Center Lafayette (303) 665-4342 info@sistercarmen.org sistercarmen.org	Safehouse Progressive Alliance for Nonviolence Boulder (303) 449-8623 info@safehousealliance.org safehousealliance.org
TGTHR (formerly Attention Homes) Boulder (303) 447-1206 contactus@TGTHR.org tgthr.org	The Inn Between of Longmont Longmont (303) 684-0810 theinn@innbetween.org Theinnbetween.org	There With Care Boulder (303) 447-2273 Therewithcare.org
We Don't Waste Denver and Boulder Area (720) 443-6113 info@wedontwaste.org wedontwaste.org	Westview Presbyterian Church Round Pantry Longmont (303) 776-3242 westviewpres.org	

Know of a hunger relief organization in Boulder County that's not listed above? Email info@PACEpartners.com to let us know. Also, consider donating food to a place of worship! Many of these organizations host meals for people in need; reach out to the congregational leader to see if your business can support them.

COSTCO TO THE RESCUE

With fewer people stopping for a snack during the coronavirus pandemic, the Costco food court in Superior had more than 1,800 pounds of food including churros, pretzels, pizzas, chips, and more. Instead of letting the food go to waste, Costco donated it to Community Food Share in Louisville where it was distributed through their drive-through pantry to neighbors in need.





Feed Animals

Donating food for animal feed can help Boulder County's farmers or other local animal caretakers save money while keeping food out of the landfill. These donations may include foods that are suitable for human consumption but may have food quality issues — like stale or wilting items or items past a quality date — and food scraps, like carrot peelings and apple cores.

Here are a few things to keep in mind when donating food for animals:

- Farmers may lack capacity to handle some logistics of food pick-up, coordination, and delivery. Make sure to discuss the details!
- Packaging and trash contamination in food is dangerous for animals. Make sure any food you're donating for animals remains trash-free, perhaps by setting aside a special bin.
- Depending on the animals they have, farmers may prefer some food types (fruits and vegetables, for example) over others (e.g., grains and citrus). Ask what they need.
- Legally, pigs can only be fed a [vegetarian diet](#), so ensure that any meat trimmings are not being placed in food destined for pigs.
- A farmer may or may not prefer pre- or post-consumer food waste. Again, just ask!
- Please ensure minimal rotting or fermented foods in your donation, as they can hurt animals.

See the following for a list of farms in Boulder County. As there are no universal guidelines on what farms may accept for animal feed, be sure to contact the farms you're interested in supporting to see what food items they are in need of and if you can form a relationship. Farmers may find it helpful to receive regular, ongoing donations from you.

<p>63rd St. Farm Boulder (720) 938-3059 info@63rdStFarm.com 63rdstfarm.com</p>	<p>Aspen Moon Farm Longmont info@aspenmoonfarm.com aspenmoonfarm.com</p>	<p>Black Cat Farm Boulder (303) 444-5500 jillskokan@aol.com blackcatboulder.com</p>
<p>Capricious Ventures Boulder (720) 231-6311 capriciousventures@gmail.com capriciousventures.com</p>	<p>Cure Organic Farm Boulder info@cureorganicfarm.com cureorganicfarm.com</p>	<p>Dharma's Garden Boulder (720) 893-2223 hello@dharmasgarden.com dharmasgarden.com</p>
<p>Flatiron Young Farmers Coalition flatironsyfc@gmail.com</p>	<p>Golden Hoof (720) 900-9494 thegoldenhoof@icloud.com thegoldenhoof.com</p>	<p>Growing Gardens Goat Dairy Boulder (303) 443-9952 info@growinggardens.org growinggardens.org/goat-dairy</p>
<p>Jacob Springs Farm Boulder (720) 201-5725 ahoussney@gmail.com</p>	<p>McCauley Family Farm Longmont (303) 485-7688 mccauleyfamilyfarms@gmail.com fromourfarm.org</p>	<p>Ollin Farms Longmont info@ollinfarms.com ollinfarms.com</p>
<p>Oxford Farms Longmont (303) 877-4599 oxfordfarmsboulder@gmail.com oxfordfarmsboulder.com</p>	<p>Pastures of Plenty Longmont (303) 440-7103 pasturesofplenty@aol.com pasturesofplentyfarm.com</p>	<p>SkyPilot Farm Longmont (970) 888-2263 info@skypilotfarm.com</p>



Feed the Soil

Nearly 20% of the waste stream in Boulder County is food waste and plant trimmings which, if not first diverted for human or animal food, could be recycled as compost. Composting is a natural process of decomposition. Compost can be used on farms and in gardens to boost soil health, sequester more carbon, and retain more water. Composting also extends the life of our landfills and reduces greenhouse gas emissions.

Instead of sending food to the landfill, choose to compost it instead. That way, essential nutrients get returned to the soil.

To get started composting at your business, contact [Partners for a Clean Environment](#) (PACE)! PACE is the one-stop shop for business sustainability in Boulder County. If you'd like to conduct a free waste and composting assessment of your business or get some tailored advice on how you can reduce food waste, [contact them](#) today. PACE may also be able to provide you with free compostable bags, signage, training, bins, and more.

See the chart to the right for the compost providers within the County that may service your area. **Please call or email them to ensure that your business is eligible for their services!**

Compost Provider	Service Area	Services
Eco-Cycle (303) 444-6634 ecocycle.org	Boulder County	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Single-Stream Recycling • Compost • Hard-to-Recycle Pickup
Green For Life (303) 744-9881 gflenv.com	Boulder, Broomfield, Erie, Lafayette, Longmont, Louisville, Superior	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Single-Stream Recycling • Compost • Hard-to-Recycle Pickup
Green Girl Recycling (303) 442-7535 greengirlrecycling.com	Boulder County	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Single-Stream Recycling • Compost • Hard-to-Recycle Pickup
Republic Services 303-286-1200 republicservices.com	Visit their website to see if your location is eligible	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Single-Stream Recycling • Compost
Waste Connections (303) 268-2100 wcdenver.com	Erie, Lafayette, Louisville, Superior, and some of outside Boulder city limits (call for availability)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Single-Stream Recycling • Cardboard-Only Recycling • Compost
Waste Management (303) 278-8600 wm.com	Boulder, Erie, Lafayette, Louisville, Longmont	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Single-Stream Recycling • Cardboard-Only Recycling • Compost
Western Disposal Services (303) 444-2037 westerndisposal.com	Boulder County	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Single-Stream Recycling • Cardboard-Only Recycling • Compost



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