

# Food Waste Diversion

Almost 15% of the waste stream is food waste.  
Let's start planning on how to divert this material!



## The Value of Composting Food Waste

- **Closes the circle: uses food waste to create nutrient-rich soil amendments, which in turn grow healthy food**
- **Compost saves water needed to grow food**
- **Reduces the need for fertilizers and pesticides**
- **Promotes a healthy agricultural system**
- **Reduces methane and leachate formation in landfills**



## Diverting Food Waste

**Food waste represents 14.5% of the generated waste stream, with only 2% of the material recovered for diversion, according to national averages.**

Planning for the diversion of this material, which can be made into compost, is a wise strategy that will lead your community to increased diversion rates. Your community can provide these services using drop-off or collection opportunities, or can choose to work with the private sector through the Request for Proposal (RFP) and contracting process to manage this material. Ensuring that a local/regional compost facility is able to manage the material and then market the valuable end-product of composted soil amendments is another aspect of planning and can be municipally or privately managed.



[www.RecycleNewMexico.com](http://www.RecycleNewMexico.com)



# Diverting a Valuable Material

Managing food waste first by source reduction tactics, then donation to those in need, feed for animals and then composting are the top tiers in the US EPA's "Food Recovery Hierarchy".

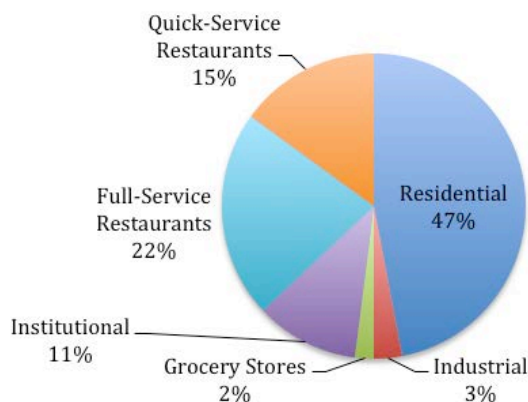
Planning for a food waste diversion program will be a natural next step to a local community's mature recycling program that already offers easy and convenient recycling of traditional household/business recycling items and may have an established yard waste diversion program as well. Food waste can be managed in

both rural and urban communities. A community drop-off opportunity for food waste is a perfectly acceptable option in a rural area. Communities can also consider providing the collection service themselves or can work with the private sector to provide services. Ensuring that there is a

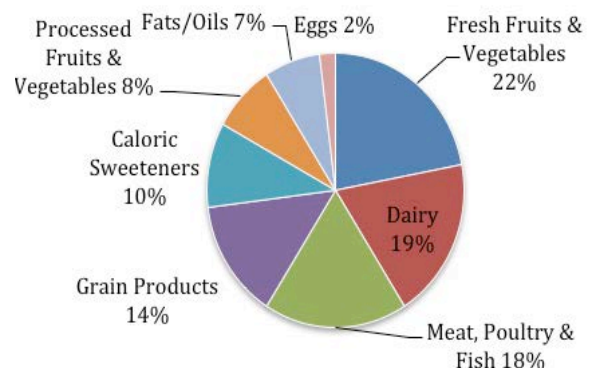
local/regional composting facility that can add food waste to its process will be an important strategic step as well. If no private businesses or composting facilities exist, the local community could ask for proposals to stimulate the development of these services and support the creation of new business.

## Almost Half of Food Waste is Generated At Residences

**Food Waste Sector Percentages**



**Total Food Loss From Retail, Food Service and Households**



Source: Food Waste Reduction Alliance, "Best Practices & Emerging Solutions Toolkit", Spring 2014

Source: Journal of Consumer Affairs, Fall 2011, 492-515





# Planning To Divert Food Waste In Your Community

Managing a material that is wet and heavy requires planning for collection containers, transportation and local management tactics.

## Considerations

### Registered Composting Facility

Is there an existing yard waste management program or registered compost facility in the area? If not, what needs to be developed in order to have proper processing infrastructure to turn food waste into compost? An existing composting facility will need to update its operations plan with the NM Environment Department: Solid Waste Bureau before accepting food waste.

### Public or Private Collections?

Who will collect the food waste? Will the municipality collect from all households curbside? Will the community contract with a private business to collect from businesses and/or residences? Can the community support the development of a food waste collection and/or composting business by providing equipment or land?

### Items To Collect

Working with the local composting facility; determine whether collections will include “anything that was once alive”? Will

collections exclude meat and dairy? Will collections include yard trimmings and other organic materials? What about soiled papers or waxed/soiled cardboard?

### Pilots

Currently around the US, many communities step into food waste collections with a pilot collection program. This allows the challenges to arise so that full expansion can be properly planned for.

### Collection Containers and Equipment

When planning for collection containers and transportation, ensuring equipment is leak-proof, water-proof sealed, and securely covered is essential.

### Education and Outreach

Signage on what is acceptable and not acceptable is critical to a successful food waste diversion program. Being clear about what constitutes acceptable compostable service-ware will be important. NMRC can assist with signage for your program.





## Signage

NMRC has designed Food Waste and Compost diversion signage that can be customized for your community or business.



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## Resources:

### Food Waste Collection Services Currently in NM

Reunity Resources, Santa Fe, (505) 629-0836

[www.reunityresources.com](http://www.reunityresources.com)

Soilutions, Albuquerque, (505) 877-0220, [www.soilutions.net](http://www.soilutions.net)

### Food Waste Composting Facilities

Albuquerque Bernalillo County Water Utility Authority, (505) 768-2800,

[www.abcwua.org](http://www.abcwua.org)

Payne's Organics Soil Yard, Santa Fe, (505) 424-0336,

[www.paynes.com/organic-soil-yard/](http://www.paynes.com/organic-soil-yard/)

Soilutions, Albuquerque, (505) 877-0220, [www.soilutions.net](http://www.soilutions.net)

Contact NMED for a list of all registered composting facilities

### Composting Facility Expansion

Technical assistance on how to update your Composting Facility

Registration and Operations Plan to include food waste is available!  
Contact Joan Snider at the NM Environment Department: Solid Waste Bureau, 505-827-0197 or email [JoanM.Snider@state.nm.us](mailto:JoanM.Snider@state.nm.us)

### Technical Assistance & Resources to Develop Food Waste Collection, Public-Private Partnership Guidance and Composting Facility Development to Manage Food Wastes

NM Organics Recycling Organization, 505-796-8323

NM Environment Department: Solid Waste Bureau, Tim Gray or Joan Snider, 505-827-0197

NM Department of Agriculture Fertilizers and Soil Conditioners Rules, [www.nmda.nmsu.edu/fsf/fertilizer-and-soil-conditioners/](http://www.nmda.nmsu.edu/fsf/fertilizer-and-soil-conditioners/)

NM Recycling Coalition, 575-224-2630



The Grove Cafe and Market in Albuquerque has switched over to certified compostable serveware and ensures quality control in the compost collection containers by bussing tables for guests.