



State of Nevada
Food for People
Not Landfills
Program

2019

Annual Report

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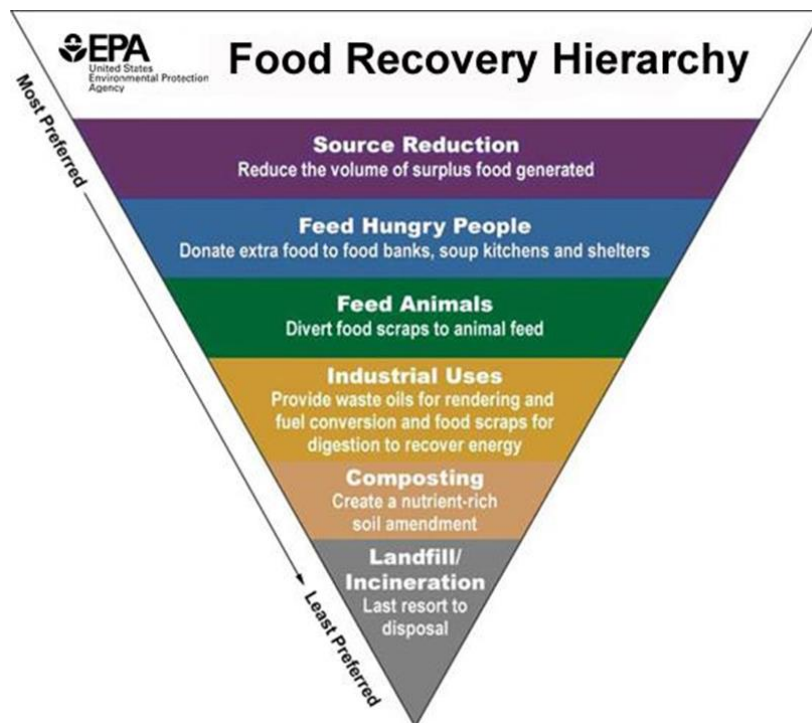
BACKGROUND

1.1 FOOD WASTE IN THE UNITED STATES

According to the United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Economic Research Service (ERS) food loss/waste is defined as the edible amount of food, postharvest, available for human consumption but is not consumed for any reason.¹ In the United States, food waste is estimated at between 30-40 percent of the food supply. This corresponds to approximately 133 billion pounds and \$161 billion worth of food in 2010.¹ It is estimated 25-40 percent of the food grown, processed, and transported in the United States will never be consumed.² In addition, per capita food waste in the United States has increased by approximately 50% since 1974.³ Food waste has a far-reaching impact on the environment, society, and the economy.

There are several alternatives for food before it becomes waste, as illustrated by the United States Environmental Protection Agency's Food Recovery Hierarchy (Image 1).

Image 1:



¹ <https://www.usda.gov/foodwaste/faqs>

² <https://foodwastealliance.org/services/>

³ Hall KD, Guo J, Dore M, Chow CC. The progressive increase of food waste in America and its environmental impact. PLoS One 2009;4(11):e7940.

Nationally, there are several initiatives supporting reduced waste. At the Federal level, [House of Representatives 3444](#) (H.R.3444) introduced the Food Recovery Act of 2017, which in part, authorized grants or loans for activities related to:

- raising awareness about wasted food and food recovery efforts to reduce the quantity of wasted food;
- reducing food waste at schools and farms; and,
- installing facilities that include composting or anaerobic digesters that use food or crop waste to produce energy.

In addition, a number of states are working to decrease food waste. Vermont, California, Connecticut, Maryland, New York, and Rhode Island are all working to implement programs that, in part, address both waste and food security through redirecting edible food to needy families.

1.2 FOOD WASTE IN NEVADA

In Nevada, food waste was the third largest component of Nevada’s municipal organic material waste, about 24,488.91 tons, in 2018.⁴ Several Nevada organizations, businesses, and state agencies are already working to reduce food waste in Nevada. Despite these efforts, Nevada lacked a state goal for waste reduction and a program to enhance/promote collaboration among efforts statewide. To address this issue, in the 80th Nevada Legislature [Senate Bill 178](#) (SB178) was passed, establishing the Council on Food Security (CFS) and the Food for People Not Landfills Program. The Food for People Not Landfills Program was established within the Nevada Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) to increase food security by decreasing food waste and redirecting excess consumable food to hungry Nevada communities.

NEVADA FOOD FOR PEOPLE NOT LANDFILLS PROGRAM

The Nevada Food for People Not Landfills Program is administered by the Director of DHHS, with support and guidance from the Nevada Council on Food Security (CFS) and the Office of Food Security. To assist with development and implementation of the program, CFS Chair, Steve Fisher, established the Food for People, not Landfills Subcommittee at the July 2019 CFS meeting. The Subcommittee is comprised of various cross-sector partners, consisting of both voting and ex-officio members. Members include representation from the Nevada Department of Agriculture, Division of Welfare and Supportive Services, Three Square Food Bank, Food Bank of Northern Nevada, University of Nevada Cooperative Extension, Catholic Charities of Northern and Southern Nevada, the Retail Association of Nevada, and Helping Hands of Vegas Valley. Per SB178, the Subcommittee is tasked with the following:

- establish goals and objectives for the ensuing five (5) years to increase the amount of food diverted from landfills and use to increase food security in Nevada;
- establish the criteria for eligibility for a food donor to participate in the program; and

⁴ https://ndep.nv.gov/uploads/recycles-docs/Copy_of_Official_State_RecyclingRate2018.pdf

- create an official seal for the program.

The Subcommittee's first meeting took place January 13, 2020. At this meeting, the Subcommittee worked to establish a "working dictionary" of terms specific to the industries involved in these rescue efforts. Since Nevada efforts require cross-industry collaboration, many of these terms were new and creating a foundation of technical language was necessary.

Subcommittee members and guests also listened to presentations from partnering agencies and businesses on existing cold and hot-food rescue programs statewide. Representatives from Three Square Food Bank, the Food Bank of Northern Nevada, Catholic Charities of Northern Nevada, MGM Resorts, and Caesars Entertainment all presented on their food rescue initiatives.

In addition, the Subcommittee members and ex-officio members weighed in on priorities to be addressed in addition to those described in SB178. The priorities identified will be ranked via a survey by Subcommittee members. An addendum to this report will be shared once 2020 priorities are identified.

NEXT STEPS

The OFS will use the terms, data presented in the presentations, agreed purview/scope of the committee, and the timeline priorities for 2020 to establish the benchmark and recommend five (5) year goals for which the subcommittee will discuss and approve. The Subcommittee will do so via seven (7) additional meetings throughout 2020.