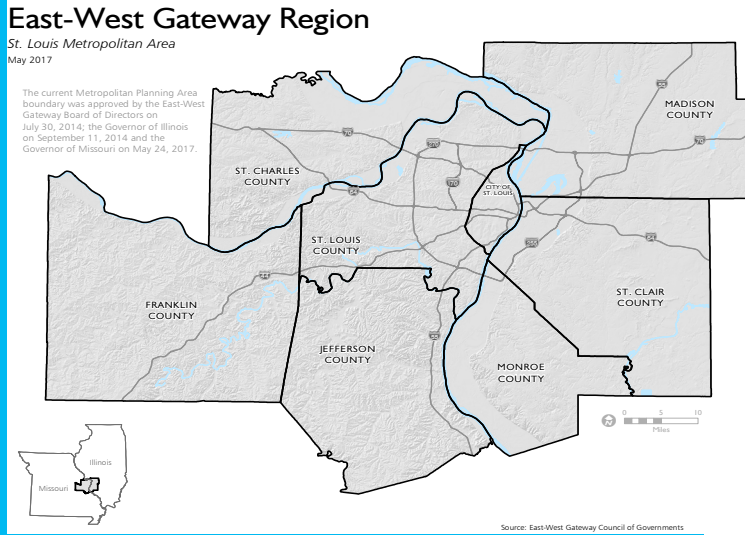


# FOOD WASTE & RESCUE POTENTIAL IN


## ST. LOUIS


By tackling food waste, cities can rein in climate emissions, reduce municipal waste costs, and help relieve community food insecurity.





Through NRDC's Food Matters project, we have estimated a city-wide baseline level of food waste generation and assessed the potential for increased rescue of surplus food. This snapshot can help identify opportunities for policy, outreach, and interventions to achieve the city's goals.

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE ACTION IN ST. LOUIS

 Together, households and restaurants likely contribute more than three-quarters of the food waste generated in St. Louis. Engaging residents in educational outreach about food waste prevention should be a key element of food waste reduction efforts in the city. Additionally, food scraps collection from urban residences and consumer-facing businesses will pose challenges but is a critical component of meeting food waste reduction and zero waste goals.

 Targeting restaurants with food waste prevention and recycling technical assistance may prove to significantly curtail the amount of food going to waste in St. Louis. Some of them may already be implementing food waste prevention techniques; a restaurant challenge could be another method for ramping up solutions and engaging businesses in food waste reduction and recycling to improve waste management.

 Small retail stores and corner markets are often less familiar with donation incentives, and fewer of them currently donate. When corner stores are located near one another or near last-mile food organizations logistical challenges may be surmountable. Food donation, food scrap recycling, and food waste prevention education could pair well with existing outreach efforts to these businesses.

 Local rescue organizations likely have information about what food is currently being donated and from where. We recommend future coordination with rescue organizations operating in St. Louis to identify current donation levels and the untapped portion of the estimates above.

## KEY FACTS

8%

food insecurity in St. Louis

667K

tons of food waste in St. Louis

40%

of all food in the U.S. is wasted

\$400B

of food waste each year in the U.S.

8%

of global greenhouse gas emissions come from food waste



FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT NRDC'S FOOD MATTERS INITIATIVE

[www.nrdc.org/food-matters](http://www.nrdc.org/food-matters)  
[foodmatters@nrdc.org](mailto:foodmatters@nrdc.org)

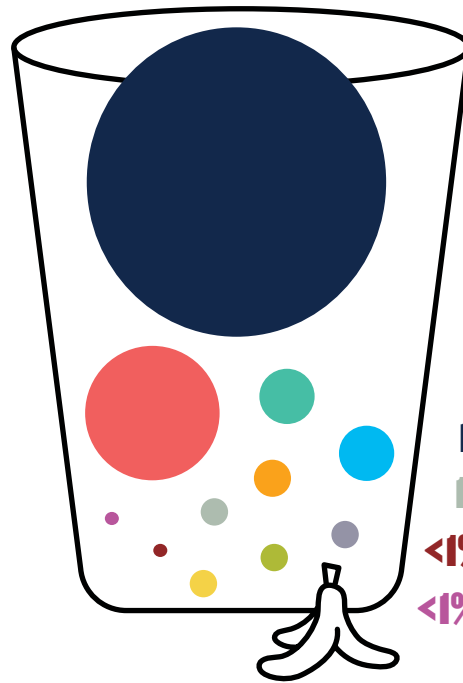


DOWNLOAD THE FOOD MATTERS TOOLKIT

# FOOD WASTE IN ST. LOUIS

We estimate more than 666,600 tons of food waste are generated in St. Louis each year. The residential sector is the highest food waste producing sector at 422,500 tons of food waste per year. The largest industrial, commercial, and institutional (ICI) sector generating food waste is restaurants, totaling 144,000 tons.

Though actual measurement of wasted food is optimal, waste audits can be costly, time-consuming, and sometimes impractical. The model for calculating these estimates using proxy metrics was identified from a range of national sources and NRDC's original research.



- 63% RESIDENTIAL**
- 22% RESTAURANTS**
- 4% MANUFACTURING & PROCESSING**
- 4% GROCERS & MARKETS**
- 2% HOSPITALITY**
- 1% WHOLESALERS & DISTRIBUTORS**
- 1% EVENTS & RECREATION**
- 1% K-12 SCHOOLS**
- 1% HEALTHCARE**
- <1% COLLEGES & UNIVERSITIES**
- <1% CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES**

# FOOD RESCUE OPPORTUNITIES

Donation of surplus food serves an important role in meeting the immediate needs of those facing food insecurity. The ambitious scenario used realistic assumptions and existing donation patterns to estimate an ambitious but attainable expansion of food donation efforts.

While restaurants represent a larger portion of overall wasted food, much of that waste occurs after the food is served and is unsuitable for rescue.

