



# Reducing Food Waste

**On July 1, 2020, VT State Law bans disposal of food waste in the trash.**

**Investing in ways to reduce food waste can save you time and money.**



Restaurants typically **save \$14 for every \$1** invested (World Resource Institute).  
72% of US diners care about how restaurants manage food waste and **47%** would be willing to spend more to eat at restaurants with food recovery programs (ReFED).

**Wasted food is paid for three times: purchasing, prepping, and throwing away.**

**Some food waste is inevitable, but much can be prevented.**

Figure out your biggest sources of food waste and target those areas:

- Spoiled food? Shift purchasing and/or storage plans
- Table scraps? Reduce portion size or track customer preferences
- Kitchen waste? Be strategic with recipe and menu planning
- Leftovers? Donate safely or repurpose into new dishes



## Resources to reduce food waste:

- [epa.gov/sustainable-management-food](http://epa.gov/sustainable-management-food): Food Recovery Challenge, Food Waste Assessment Guidebook, Food Waste Management Cost Calculator, Toolkit for reducing wasted food and packaging
- [foodwastealliance.org](http://foodwastealliance.org): Best Practices Guide for Reducing Food Waste, studies on food waste
- [refed.com](http://refed.com): Restaurant Guide to Reduce Food Waste, solutions with benefits that outweigh the costs
- [recyclingworksma.com](http://recyclingworksma.com): tips and resource links, case studies of MA businesses with successful programs
- [leanpath.com](http://leanpath.com): software and technology for measuring and tracking food waste, guides, webinars, articles
- [jamesbeard.org/wastenot](http://jamesbeard.org/wastenot): online course for Creating a Full-Use Kitchen, recipes and tips for full-use cooking
- [foodwastestopswithme.org](http://foodwastestopswithme.org): case studies and testimonials, videos, webinars, and podcasts
- [lovefoodhatewaste.com](http://lovefoodhatewaste.com): articles and tips on reducing food waste
- [hotelkitchen.org](http://hotelkitchen.org): toolkit and case studies for hotels and resorts, but applicable for any commercial kitchens

## How can I estimate how much food scrap my business generates?

Calculate:

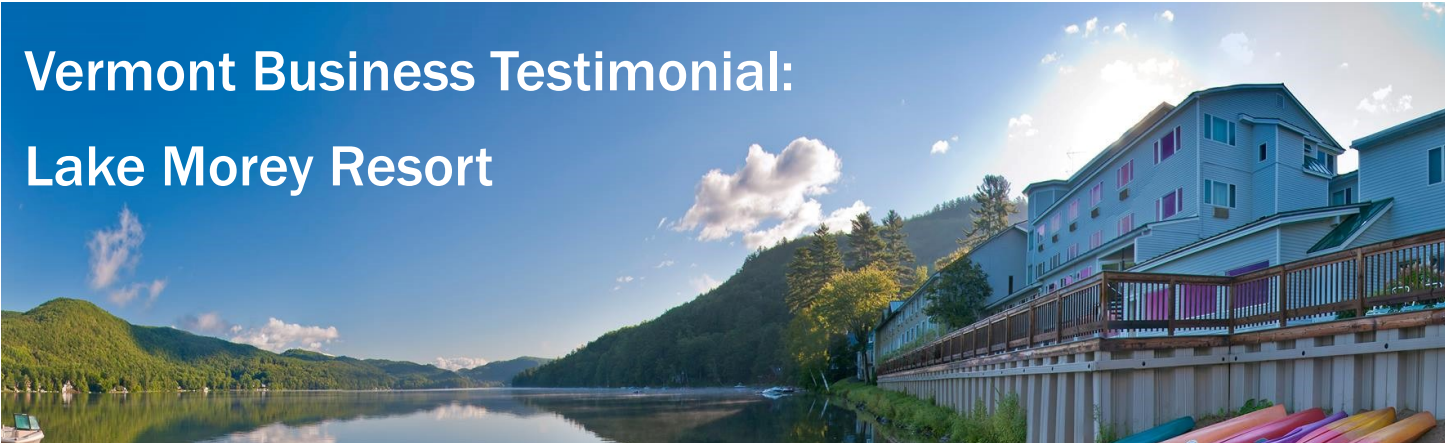
- A “typical” restaurant/cafeteria generates 0.5 lb of food scraps per meal
- Example: 1,400 meals/week x 0.5 lb/meal = 18.2 tons/yr

Track your waste with an audit:

- Define your goals
- Sort and separate materials
- Weigh and record waste
- Analyze the results



# Vermont Business Testimonial: Lake Morey Resort



**The Lake Morey Resort in Fairlee, VT has been separating food scraps from the trash since 2008. Resort owner Mark Avery describes his experience with composting:**

**“Over time, the changes become routine and it’s just another thing we do...The composting costs, compared to our benefits, I consider minimal.”**

“The change was the only stumbling block in the program; taking our normal routine and just modifying it a little bit. Over time, the changes become routine, and it’s just another thing we do. But it was a simple training of the dish washer and kitchen staff and wait staff for the composting.

I estimate we generate about 30 tons of food waste annually. [In addition to composting], we donate what we can to local establishments.

That 30 tons of food used to partly go in our septic system, but when you put that much food into a garbage disposal it can smell and leak, and attract flies. Some of that food waste would end up in our leach field. In 2008, we completely replaced our leach field, which cost around \$250,000. It had a lifespan of 25 years. Now that we’re composting, I estimate the life span of our leach field will be at least another 20 years over that. That is just a huge advantage.

We have two fewer garbage hauls going away because of less weight from less food in the trash. The composting costs, compared to our benefits, I consider minimal. I have been doing this since 2008 and it has been a joy. This whole system has just been wonderful to have. I think the biggest reason it has been such a success is our composter. He comes, he hauls everything away, he delivers something new, he makes it as easy as possible.”

**“The biggest reason [for] success is our composter. He comes, he hauls everything away, he delivers something new, he makes it as easy as possible.”**