



NC DEQ Food Waste Initiatives

2022 ESI Conference

October 24th, 2022



NC DEQ – DEACS - RMMS

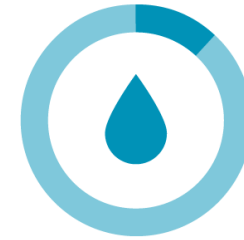
Division of Environmental Assistance and Customer Service (DEACS) Recycling and Materials Management Section (RMMS)

- Non-regulatory
- Local government assistance
- Recycling business assistance
- Grants
- Statewide data, reports, studies
- Conferences, workshops, events



Food Waste in US

- **One-third of the food** produced is never eaten.
- About **54 million tons** of food waste.
- Footprint equivalent:
 - 42 coal-fired power plants
 - Water for 50 million homes
- **Single largest material landfilled**
 - 24% according to EPA
 - Landfills are about 15% of US methane emissions
- **1 in 8 Americans are food insecure.**



14%
of all
Fresh Water Use



4%
of U.S. GHG
Emissions



18%
of all
Cropland Use



24%
of Landfill Inputs
#1 material (EPA Estimate)

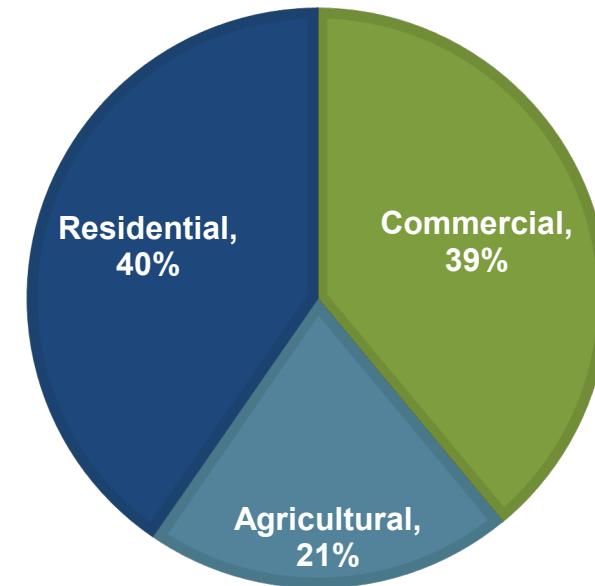
Source: ReFED

Food Waste in NC

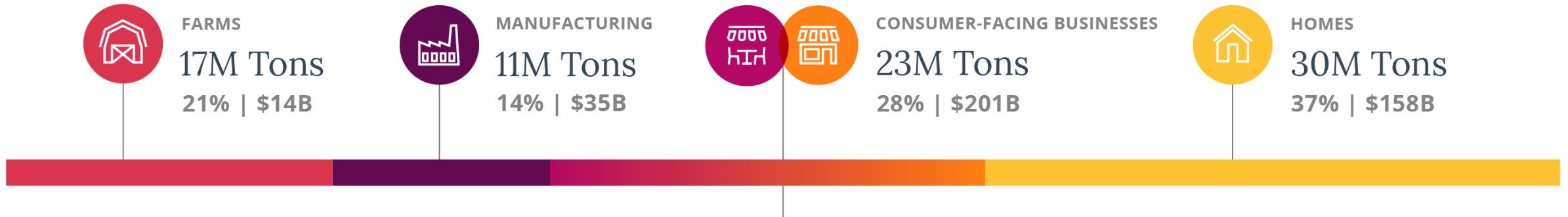
- **1.74 million tons** of food waste
 - 62% landfilled
 - 8.8 million tons CO2
 - 4 billion meals
- **1.2 million North Carolinians** faced hunger in 2020
 - Including almost 400K children
- **12.7 billion dollars** in surplus food in 2019.

ANNUAL TONS OF NC SURPLUS FOOD GENERATED BY SECTOR

■ Commercial ■ Agricultural ■ Residential



Where is the waste occurring?



CONSUMER-FACING BUSINESSES INCLUDE:



*Other Foodservice Includes Healthcare, Assisted Living, Military, and Other

Source: ReFED

Understanding Date Labels

- Date labels are set by manufacturers to indicate when they recommend consuming the product for peak quality.
 - Except for infant formula, product dating is not for safety.
- **Sell by** – tells store how long to display an item for sale.
- **Best before/best by/use by** – date for optimal flavor/quality

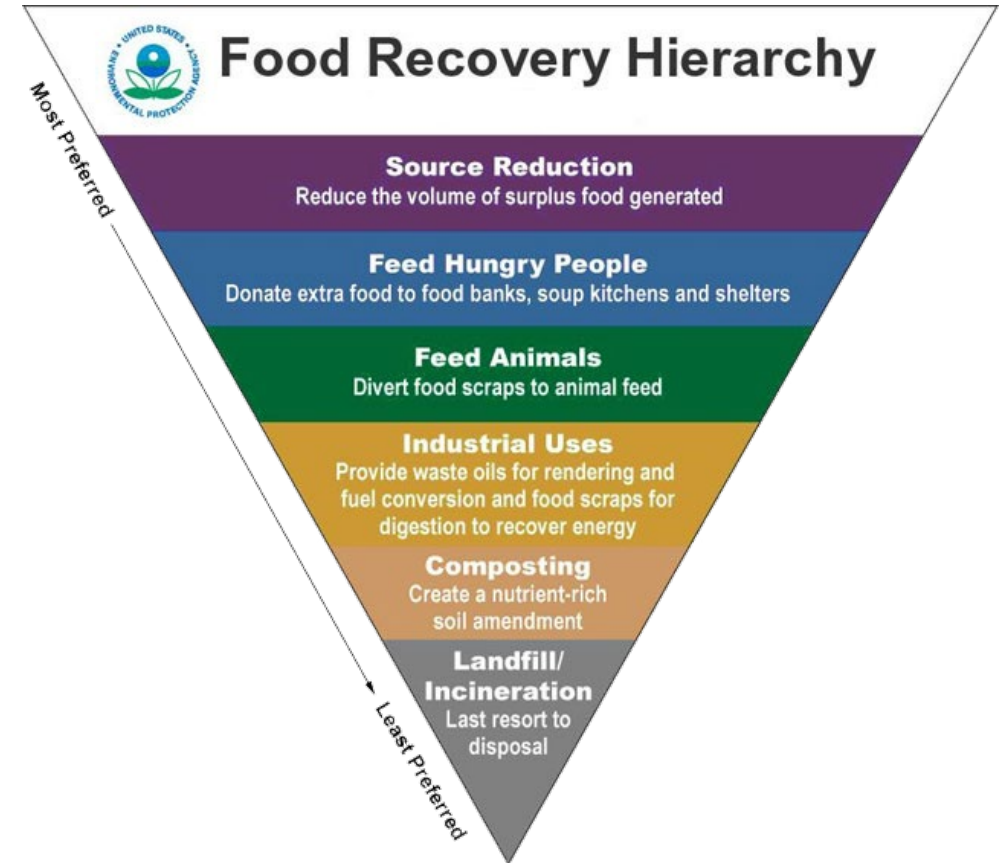


Trust your senses!



Food Waste is a Solvable Problem

- EPA and USDA goal: reduce food loss and waste by 50 percent by 2030
- NC DEQ Strategic Plan
 - Reduce and divert food waste to reduce emissions, foster economic growth and reduce food insecurity



Food Donation

- **Find a Food Bank** → Visit [Feeding the Carolinas](#)
- **Bill Emerson Good Samaritan Act (1996)**
 - Provides limited liability protection for people who make good faith food donations to nonprofit organizations.
 - Must go through a nonprofit organization for the protections to take effect.



Composting

Controlled aerobic decomposition of yard waste and food scraps that creates a natural soil amendment called compost



NORTH CAROLINA
Department of Environmental Quality



Examples of what you can compost:

Always

- Fruit and Vegetable scraps
- Egg and nut shells
- Rice, bread and wheats
- Coffee ground and tea bags

Sometimes

- Meat and bones
- Dairy products
- BPI Certified Compostable plastics
- Fats, oils and grease

Never

- Plastic bags and packaging
- Styrofoam
- Metal cans
- Labels and stickers
- Diseased plants
- Yard trimmings with herbicides

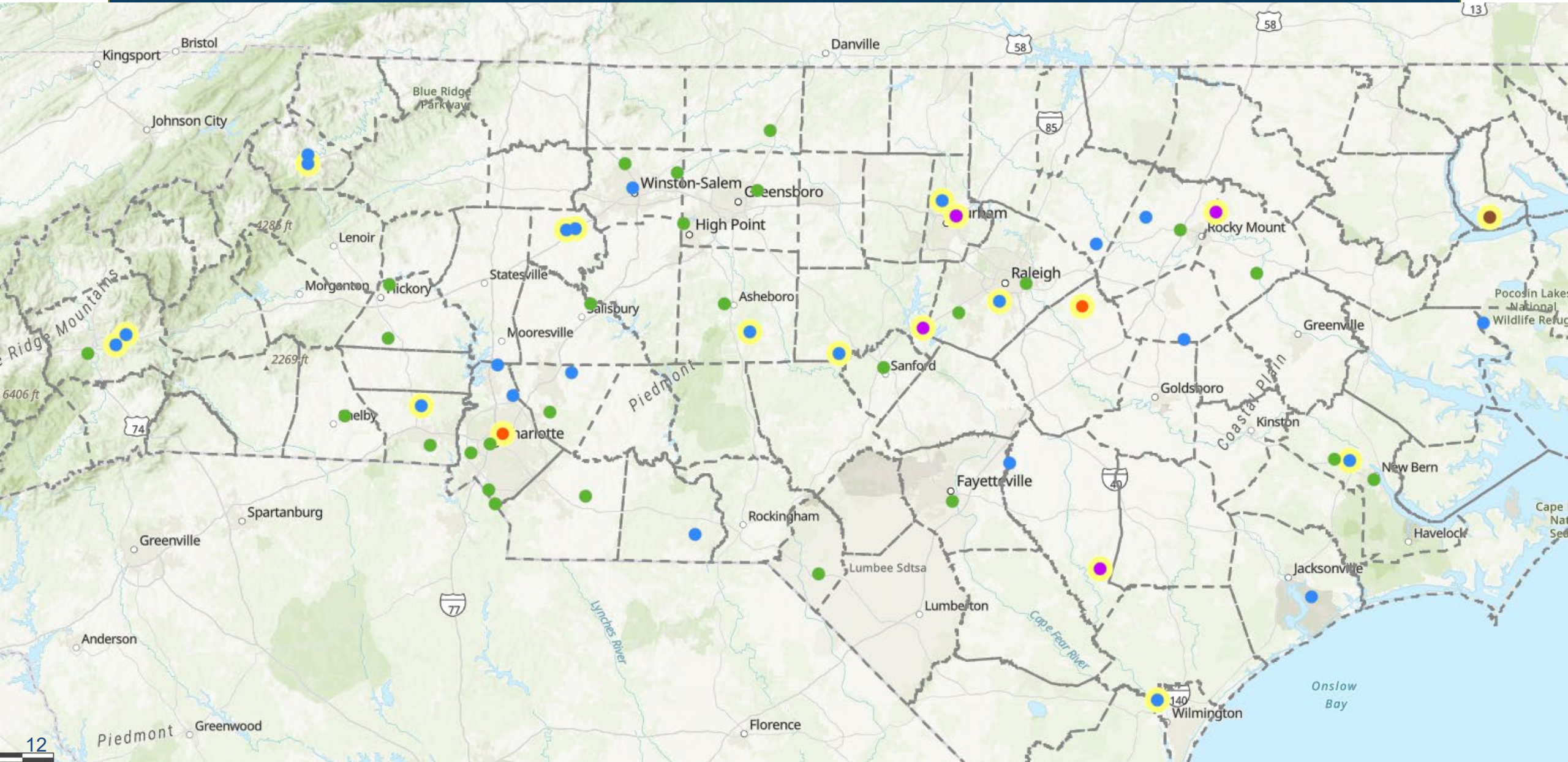


Large-Scale Facilities

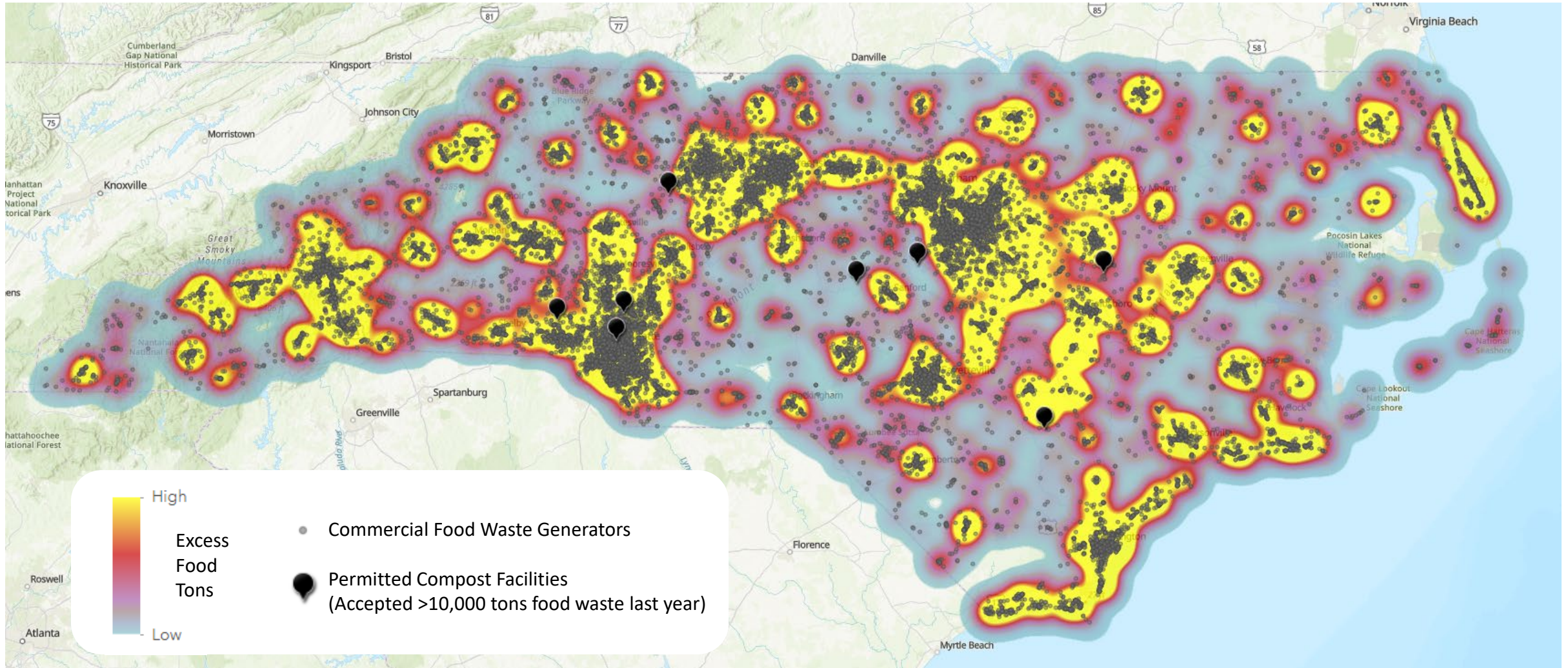
- Municipal, farm or commercial facilities
- Accept more material than in backyard systems.
 - Sustain 131° for multiple days
- Contamination is a common issue.
- Not yet accessible to everyone in the state.



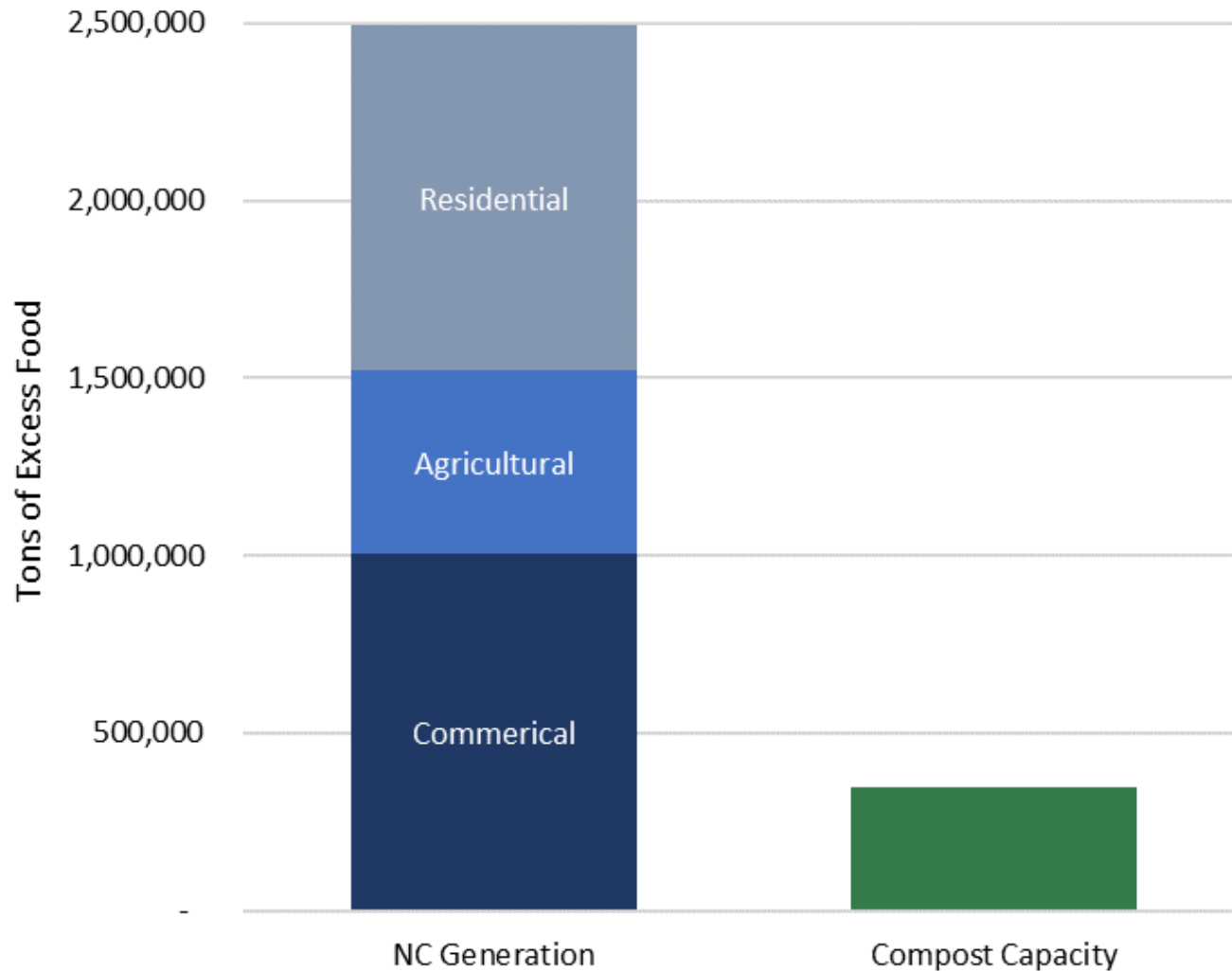
New NC Permitted Compost Facilities Map



Commercial Food Waste Generators



Surplus Food in North Carolina



2.1 million ton gap

- Food loss prevention
- Feed people
- Feed animals
- Industrial uses
- Compost

Sources: Commercial food waste - EPA Excess Food Opportunities Map; Residential and agricultural food waste - ReFED's 2019 Surplus Food Summary.

Food Waste Campaign

USE THE
Food**NC**
FOOD WASTE STOPS WITH ME



Use the Food NC for Consumers



Households are the largest producer of food waste, accounting for 37% of total surplus food (about 30-million tons). This is more than restaurants, grocery stores, farms and manufacturing facilities combined. As a result, the EPA estimates that reducing food waste in the consumption stage in the food supply chain will have the largest benefits in decreasing energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions ([From Farm to Kitchen](#)).

Minimizing food waste not only helps the planet, it helps families save money too. A family of four wastes \$1,500 on uneaten food every single year!

Food Waste Prevention Tips

+ Plan

+ Shop

+ ...

Use the Food NC

[Businesses](#)

Consumers

[Government](#)

[Food Loss](#)

[Understand](#)

[Prevention](#)

Food Donation



Help Feed Others

North Carolina ranks ninth in the country for food [insecurity](#), but only 3.4 percent of surplus food is donated. If you have excess food, consider donating it to a local food bank and help feed neighbors struggling to find consistent, nutritious food.

Find a Food Bank

1. Visit [Feeding the Carolinas](#)
2. Go to "Find a Food Bank" tab and search for your county.
3. Choose a food bank near you, and visit its website for specific instructions on how to donate food.

Use the Food NC for Businesses



Restaurants and Food Service

+ Reduce Waste

Social Media Toolkit

USE THE FoodNC
FOOD WASTE STOPS WITH ME

Social Media Guide for Food Waste Reduction

According to the EPA, more than one-third of the food produced in the United States is never eaten and food waste is the single largest type of material being landfilled or incinerated. The N.C. Division of Environmental Assistance and Customer Service (DEACS) has developed the Social Media Guide for Food Waste Reduction to educate the public on how to reduce household food waste in North Carolina. This kit provides helpful tips and insightful facts for everyone to join the fight against food waste. For more information or questions about the toolkit, contact Christine Wittmeier at christine.wittmeier@ncdenr.gov or 919-707-8121.

Do Your Part — Use the Food.
#UseTheFoodNC

IMAGE	TEXT FOR FACEBOOK AND TWITTER CAPTION
	First in, first out to reduce food waste! Place older food products in the front so that you use them before opening new products. #UseTheFoodNC #foodwastefriday #foodwastetips #foodwaste prevention #NCDEQ
	Save edible food from the garbage. Trust your senses — not just the date — to determine when food has gone bad. *No matter what, when in doubt, toss it out. #UseTheFoodNC #foodwastefriday #foodwastetips #foodwaste prevention #NCDEQ
	Bought too much? Remember, you can donate food to help those who are food insecure. Learn more about Feeding the Carolinas at www.feedingthecarolinas.org . #UseTheFoodNC #NCDEQ #donatefood #foodwaste prevention
	Food Fact: 40% of the food produced in the US is wasted. Some is thrown away simply because it looks different. Even if it is small, an odd shape, or a different color, it's still good to eat. Don't judge a banana by its peel! #UseTheFoodNC #foodwastefriday #foodwastetips #foodwaste prevention #NCDEQ

SOME FRUITS ARE FOES

Some fruits give off a gas that cause other fruits to spoil faster. Keep them separated.



USE THE FoodNC
FOOD WASTE STOPS WITH ME
usethefood.nc.gov

EAT THE FOOD

An average family of four wastes \$1,500 on uneaten food every year!



USE THE FoodNC
FOOD WASTE STOPS WITH ME
usethefood.nc.gov

JAN 27 22

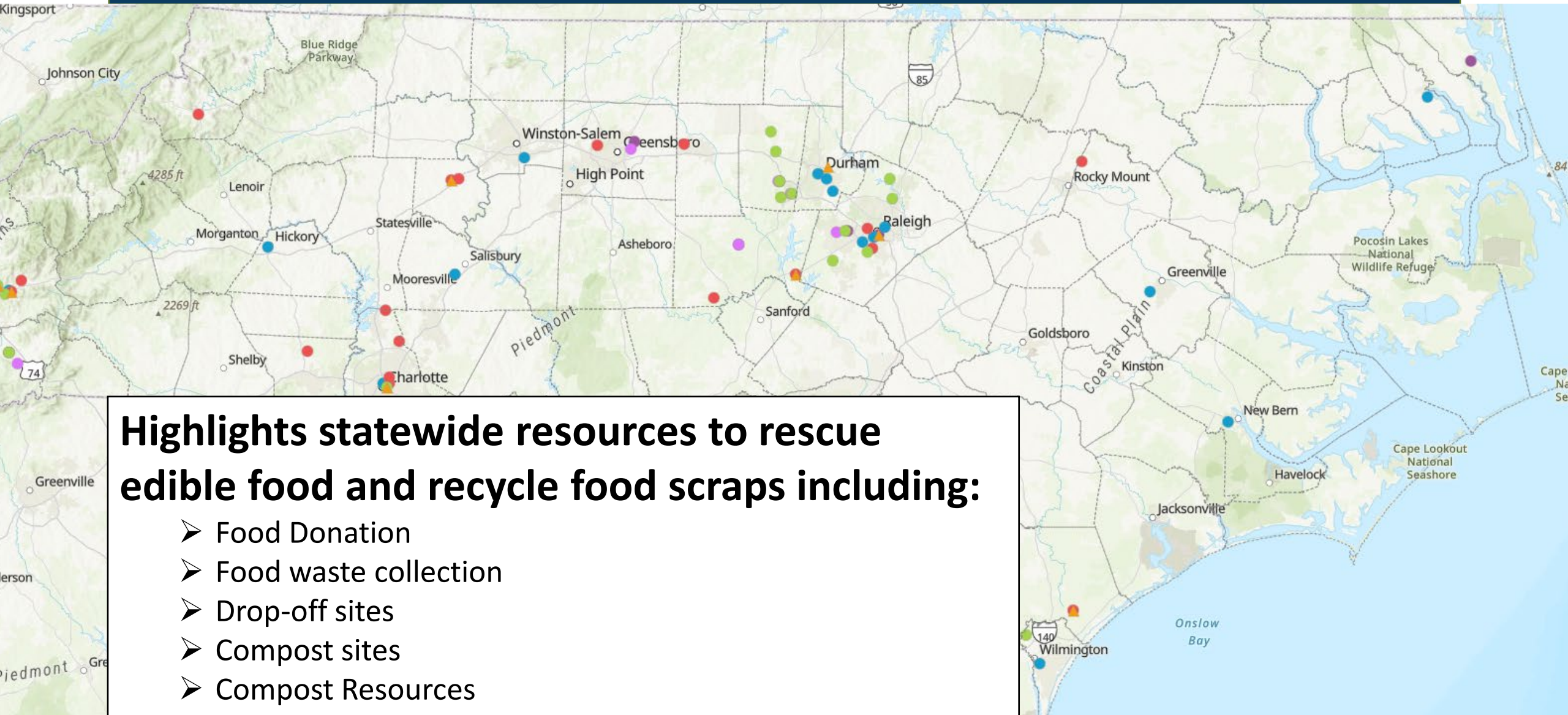
Food date to a product quality and it's unsafe to eat.



USE THE FoodNC
FOOD WASTE STOPS WITH ME
usethefood.nc.gov



NC Food Donation and Compost Resource Map



Food Waste Reduction Grant

- **Goal:** Reduce the amount of wasted food being disposed in landfills.
- **Deadline:** January 19, 2023
- **Maximum funding:** \$80,000
 - 20% cash match
- **Eligible entities include:**
 - Food rescue organizations
 - Local governments
 - Compost facilities and businesses
- **Contract period:** 1 year

Food Waste Reduction Grant
REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
N.C. Department of Environmental Quality
Division of Environmental Assistance and Customer Service

The purpose of this grant program is to help local governments, non-profits, and businesses reduce the amount of wasted food being disposed in landfills. The Division of Environmental Assistance and Customer Service (DEACS) administers the Food Waste Reduction (FWR) Grant through the Solid Waste Management Outreach Program.

With the release of this Request for Proposals (RFP), DEACS is seeking proposals that request grant funding to support food waste reduction through the expansion of food donation networks or compost operations, including collection and hauling. Proposals must be received by DEACS by 5:00 p.m. on Thursday, January 19th. Applicants should carefully read this entire RFP prior to submitting a proposal. Please address any questions about this grant program to Christine Wittmeier at 919-707-81217 or at christine.wittmeier@ncdeq.gov.

Available Funding:
Maximum funding: Applicants can submit grant proposals for a maximum award of \$80,000.

Grant funding will be paid through reimbursements of the grantee's expenditures. Ten percent of the grant award will be withheld until after the grantee submits an approved final report.

Cash Match Requirement:
Required Cash Match: FWR Grant winners must provide a cash match equal to or exceeding 20 percent of the requested grant funding. For example, a grantee requesting a \$10,000 grant must provide at least \$2,000 of matching funds for a total project cost of \$12,000.

Calculating Cash Match: To determine the necessary cash match for any grant project, first determine the total budget associated with the project and then use the following equation: total project budget ÷ 6 = required cash match.

Local governments may use distributions from the \$2 per ton Solid Waste Disposal Tax to cover cash match requirements. In-kind contributions will not be accepted in lieu of cash match.

Use of Funds and Description of Grant Program:
Grant funds must be used to develop food waste reduction infrastructure by expanding food donation networks or composting operations, including collection and hauling. Excess food donation occurs through food banks, food pantries, or nonprofit organizations in which packaged food, prepared food and/or produce is distributed to households or individuals in need. Composting operations occur at permitted or exempt compost facilities and include the collection of food scraps from generators or designated drop-off sites.

Successful applicants will demonstrate how the grant project will increase the tons of wasted food diverted from landfill disposal. Examples of approved uses of FWR Grant funds include site development costs, construction of facilities to handle wasted food, equipment or vehicle purchases, and equipment installation costs.

1



Additional Resources from DEACS

- Waste Reduction Partners (WRP)
 - FREE food waste reduction assessment
 - Schools, businesses, university
- Recycling Business Assistance
- Scoping meetings for permitting
- NC Recycling Markets Directory
- NC Waste Trader



Questions?

Thank you!

Christine Wittmeier

Chrisinte.Wittmeier@ncdenr.gov

919-707-8121

