



**NEW JERSEY
CLEAN AIR COUNCIL
PUBLIC HEARING**

**NEW JERSEY STATEWIDE
SUSTAINABLE FOOD
MANAGEMENT PLANNING
AND IMPLEMENTATION**

**GARY SONDERMEYER
BAYSHORE RECYCLING
(REPRESENTING THE NJ CLIMATE
CHANGE ALLIANCE AND
ASSOCIATION OF NJ RECYCLERS)**

APRIL 16, 2024

ASSOCIATION OF NEW JERSEY RECYCLERS (ANJR)

- **About 25%** of What is Left in the Garbage Can after 37 Years of Mandatory Recycling is Food Waste
- Formed a **“Food Waste Committee”** in June of 2013
- Submitted a **Legislative Proposal** to Senator Bob Smith on October 10, 2014
- Became the “Food Waste Recycling and Food Waste-to-Energy Production Law” (P.L.2020 c.24) – **[aka: Food Waste Disposal Ban Legislation]**
- Food Waste Disposal Ban Legislation **Passed April 14, 2020**
- Our Public Policy Theme: ***“If You Pass It – They Will Build It!”***



FOOD PROBLEM STATEMENT

- The NRDC estimates that 40% of all food grown in the USA is wasted;
- New Jersey is the 3rd most affluent State (median household income) in the US which is the most affluent industrialized nation on earth;
- Three New Jersey Counties are in the “Top 15” most affluent in the United States:
 - #13 Hunterdon
 - #14 Morris
 - #15 Somerset
- **Despite our relative affluence, 11% of New Jersey’s population and 15% of kids 18 years of age and younger are food insecure;**
- Wasted food is landfilled. Landfills are the 3rd largest source of human-related methane emissions in the US - some **15.1% of these emissions;**
- **Our goals are to dramatically advance food recovery systems while driving food waste away from landfills and to small and large-scale composting facilities.**



NJ CLIMATE CHANGE ALLIANCE

ORGANICS WORKGROUP EFFORT 2020/ 2021

Primary Goal: Unify the “Organics Community” in New Jersey, to connect the “Food Waste” and “Food Rescue” worlds & perform a Statewide “Gap Analysis” of Barriers we need to break down to practice “Sustainable Materials Management” through voluntary collaboration!



ORGANICS WORKGROUP EFFORT

- 80 Organization Stakeholder Process Over Three Months
- Drafted a “Sustainable Organic Material Management Plan” for the State to implement Chapter 5 (Waste & Agriculture) of the DEP GWRA 80 x 50 Report

- Focus Areas: **5 Chapters of the Book of Organics**

- Food Waste Reduction and Donation
- Food Waste Management in Schools
- Community Scale Composting
- Large Scale Organics Infrastructure
- Sustainable Animal Manure Management

- **Developed 17 Core Recommendations**

- Our Plan: <https://njadapt.rutgers.edu/images/Organics-Workgroup-SOMMP-Final-Sept-2021.pdf>

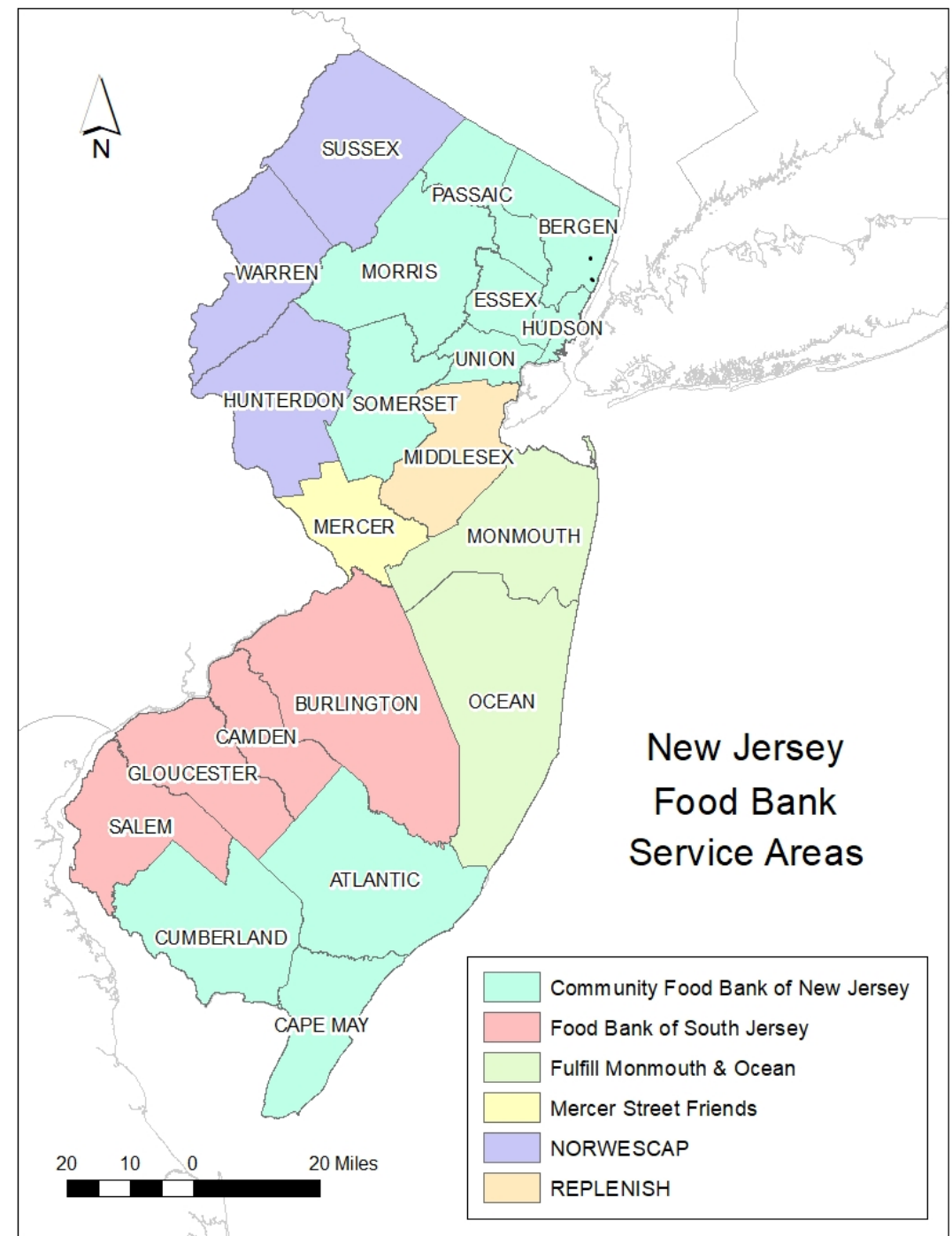


RELATED BASELINE WORK

- \$172,000 Stockton/Rutgers REA Grant: *“Food Asset Recovery Statewide GIS Mapping Project”*
- \$335,261 Rutgers REA Grant: *“New Jersey Leaves No Bite Behind”* Food waste/climate change curriculum
- \$18,000 NJ State Policy Lab Grant : *“Comparative analysis of State Food Recovery/Reduction Policies”*
- \$25,000 Center For EcoTechnology: US EPA *“Municipal, Business, Institution Education Grant”*
- \$235,000 REA Grant to Sustainable Jersey: *In-vessel compost units* in George Catrambone in Long Branch, Delran and Newton Elementary Schools and Sustainable *Food Management Tool Kit* Development
- Rutgers Cooperative Extension: *1-Hour Health Inspector Training Module*

NEW JERSEY FOOD ASSET RECOVERY SYSTEM

- National Oversight Organization – “Feeding America”
- Recognized “Food Banks” in New Jersey:
 - Community Food Bank of New Jersey
 - Food Bank of South Jersey
 - Fulfill Monmouth & Ocean
 - Mercer Street Friends
 - NORWESCAP
 - REPLENISH
- 843 Food Pantries Statewide (solid estimate)
- 150 Soup Kitchens Statewide (solid estimate)



FOOD ASSET MAPPING INVENTORY CATEGORIES

Excess Food & Food Waste Generators	Excess Food Distributors	Food Waste Processing Facilities
Food & Beverage Manufacturers	Food Banks	Compost Pick-Up Businesses
Wholesalers & Distributors	Food Pantries	Aerobic & Anaerobic Digestion Facilities
Grocery Stores	Soup Kitchens	Co-digestion Facilities
Restaurants & Food Service	Faith-based Organizations	Food Waste Recycling Facilities
Hotels & Motels	Non-profit Organizations	Composting Facilities
Casinos	Food Rescue Organizations	
Event Venues	Food Delivery Organizations	
Major Private Employers		
K-12 Schools		
Post-Secondary Schools		
Healthcare Facilities		
Correctional Facilities		
Farms & Fisheries		
Farmers Markets		

Who Generates the Food?

Composition Estimate From NRDC:

- 43% Residential
- 26% Restaurants
- 14% Retail Supermarkets
- 9% Institutions (Hospitals, Prisons, Schools)
- 8% Food Manufacturers & Processors

Table Source: Food Asset Recovery GIS Mapping Project – Stockton & Rutgers Universities



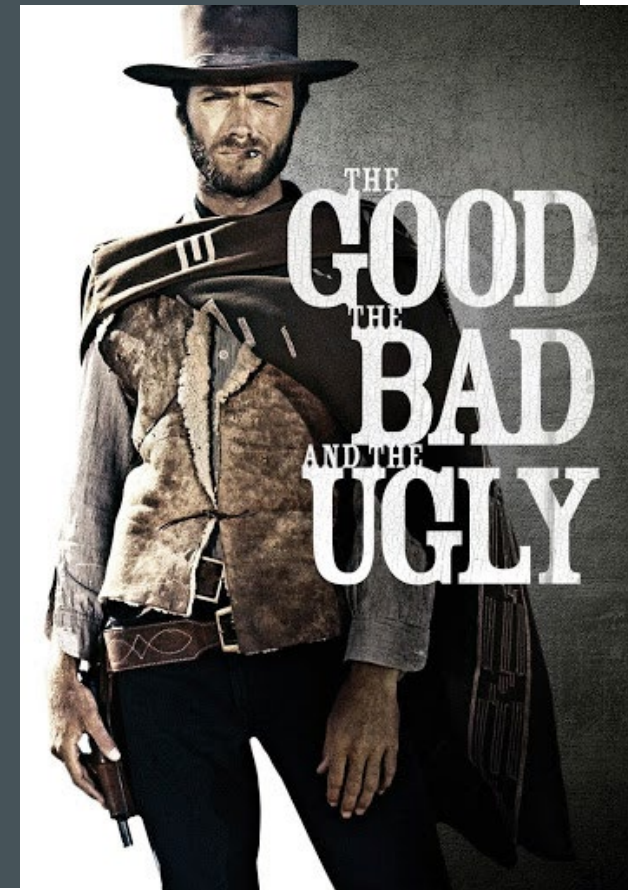
Sector names	Total number of entities
Food and Beverage Manufactures	1,696
Wholesalers and Distributors	937
Supermarkets	5,612
Supercenters	67
Hospitality	1,580
Casinos	27
Full-service Restaurants	16,653
Limited-service Restaurants	2,408
Snack Bars	3,262
Colleges and Universities	164
Public Elementray and Secondary Schools	2,546
Private Elem entray and Secondary Schools	702
Correctional Facilities	13
Hospitals	108
Long-term Care Facilities	943
Major Private Employers	120
Event Venues	1020
Food Pantries	843
Food Banks	10
Farms and Farmer's Markets	1,311

LEGISLATIVE INITIATIVES IN PROCESS

- S200/A1418 – Date Label Legislation, Senator Bob Smith/Assemblywoman Shama Haider
https://pub.njleg.state.nj.us/Bills/2022/S0500/418_R1.PDF
Passed Senate Environment, Referred to Senate Appropriations and Assembly Community Affairs
- S2426/A2090 – County Food Recovery Planning Act, Assemblyman Jim Kennedy
https://pub.njleg.state.nj.us/Bills/2022/A1500/1439_I1.PDF
Passed Senate and Assembly Environment Committees, Referred to Senate Appropriations
- S1040/A2102 – Community Garden Composting Exemption Bill, Assem. Kennedy/Sen. Greenstein
https://pub.njleg.state.nj.us/Bills/2022/A5000/4547_I1.PDF
Passed Both Senate and Assembly Environment Committees, Referred to Senate Appropriations
- P.L.2023, c.193 S3153/A4548 – Regional School Composting Bill, Assemblyman Kennedy/Senator Cody
https://pub.njleg.state.nj.us/Bills/2022/A5000/4548_R1.PDF
Enacted by Legislature, Conditionally Vetoed by Governor, Adopted with Modifications
- S203/A4118 - Establishes Statewide targets to reduce organics to landfills: Senator Smith and Assemblyman Calabrese
https://pub.njleg.state.nj.us/Bills/2022/S0500/421_I1.PDF
Passed Senate Environment and Referred to Senate Appropriations

THE GOOD, THE BAD & THE UGLY!

- **The Good:** DEP Effort & Support of Sustainable Food Waste Management
 - Substantial Funding Through Recycling Enhancement Act
 - Implementation of Food Disposal Ban Legislation (P.L. 2020 Ch. 24)
 - Food Waste Reduction Plan Adoption, October 2023
 - USEPA “Solid Waste Infrastructure For Recycling” (SWIFR) Grant
 - USEPA Climate Pollution Reduction Grant Focus on Food
 - Food Waste Website & New Toolkit
 - Purchase of the “Recycle Coach App” for All Towns & Counties
- **The Bad:** Oppressively Stringent Composting Regulations!
- **The Ugly:** Failure to Enact Small Scale Composting Exemptions!



POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS



- A **“Tiered Regulatory System”** is needed:
 - Small-scale facility exemptions are essential:
 - Community Garden Composting
 - Regional In-Vessel Composting in Schools
 - Backyard Composting
 - Streamlined County planning provisions under N.J.A.C. 7:26-6.10 and 6.11
 - Use of registrations, general permits and permit-by-rule where appropriate
- DEP leadership to **assess wastewater treatment plant digester capacity** to accept food waste (Waste Management CORe and Rahway Valley Template)
- Expansion of **“Recycle Coach App”** to coordinate real-time food recovery from New Jersey Restaurants
- Advancing **“Waste Reduction”** holistically with recommendations of the Plastics Advisory Council