



DEPARTMENT OF
ECOLOGY
State of Washington

Preparing for the Organics Management Laws

Ramping up in 2025-2030



ECY Organics & Food Center Team



Alli she/her



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Why we're here



1 WA State Organics Data

2 Collection & Management

- Business Organics Management Areas (BOMA)
- Organics Recycling Collection areas (ORCA)

3 Business Resources

- Use Food Well Campaign

4 Addressing Contamination

5 Success Stories

- Kizuki Ramen
- The Hilton
- Grocery Outlet
- Feed Spokane



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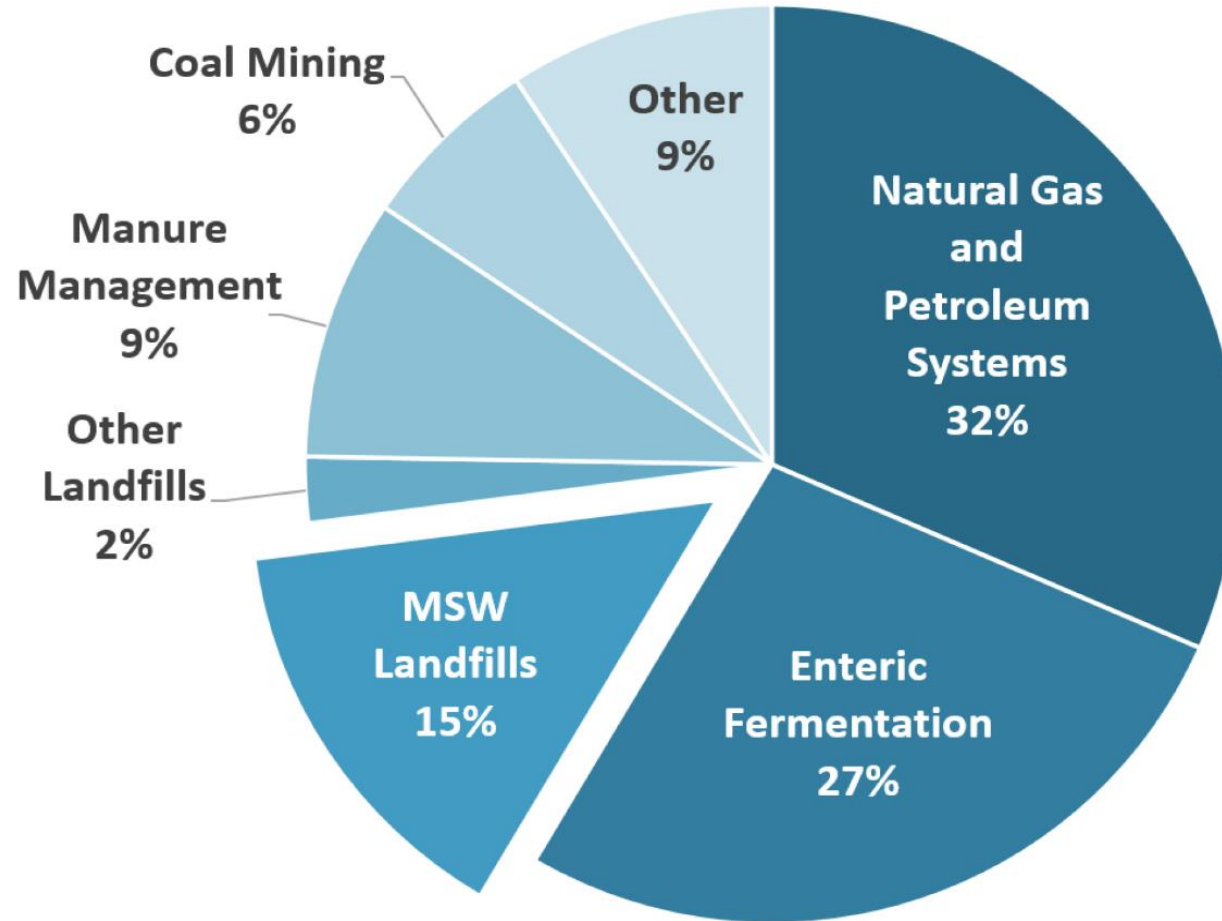
Organics Management Laws

The Basics

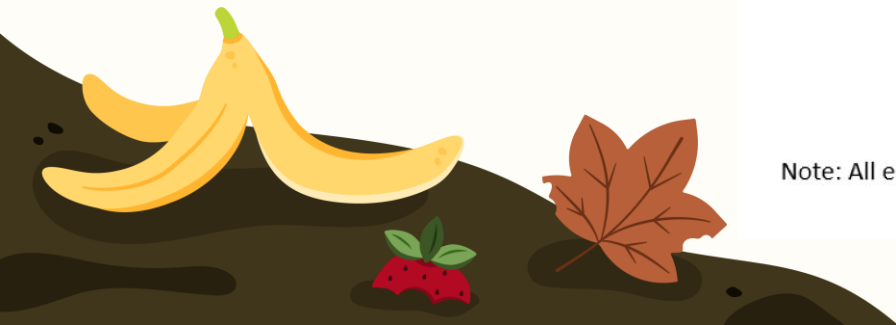
Why Organics?



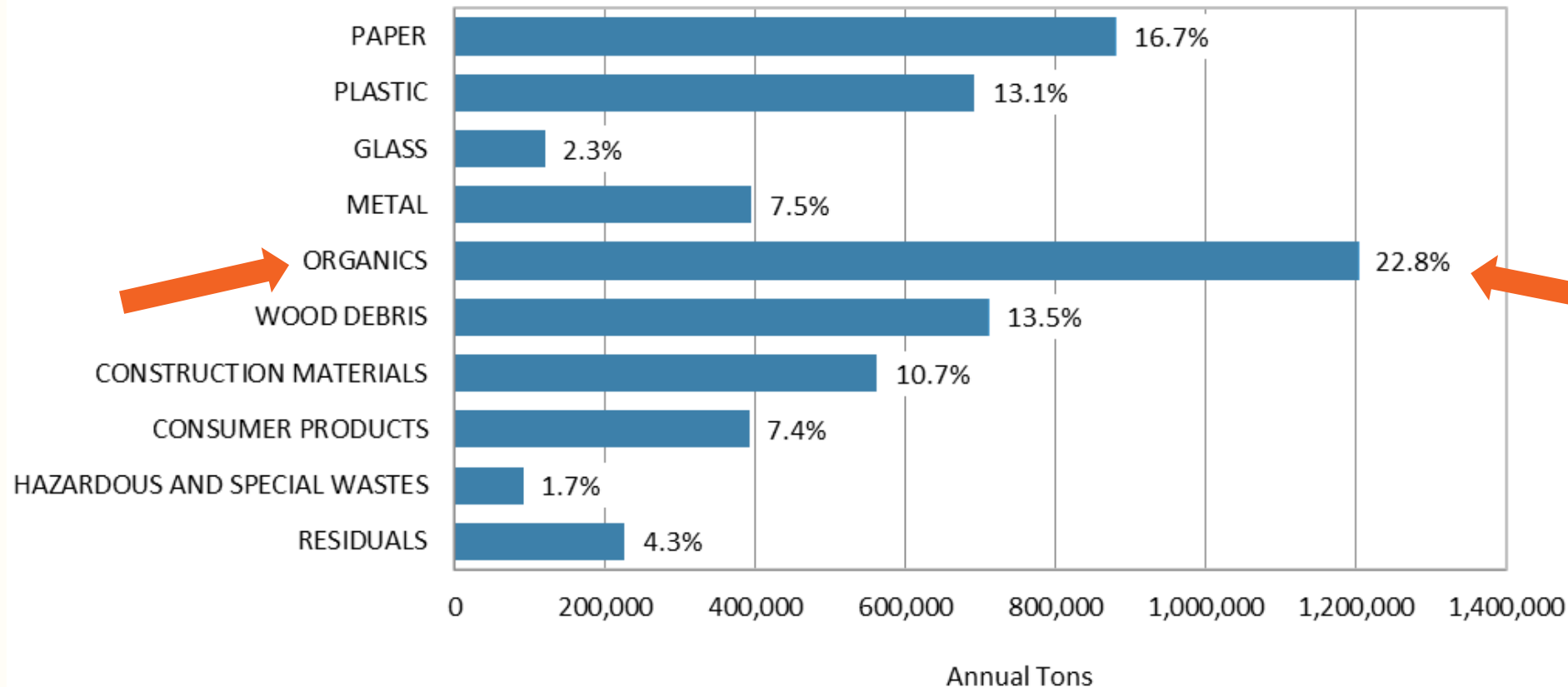
2020 U.S. Methane Emissions, By Source



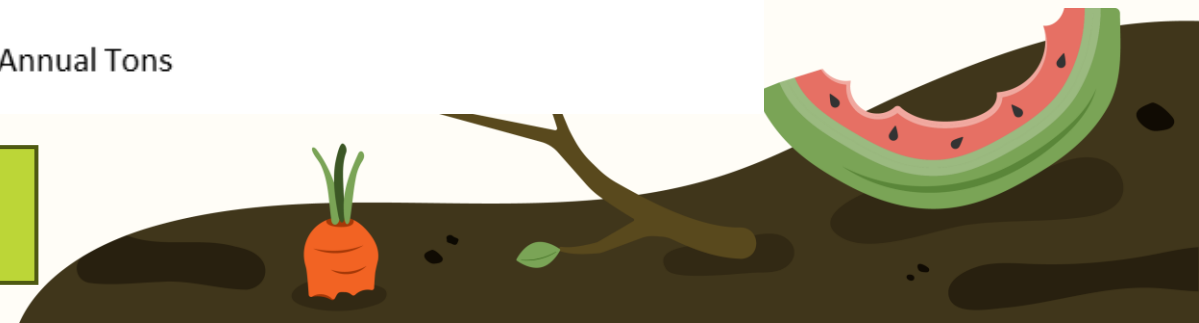
Note: All emission estimates from the *Inventory of U.S. Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Sinks: 1990-2020*. U.S. EPA. 2022.



Overall Statewide Disposed Waste Stream Composition by Material Class, 2020-21

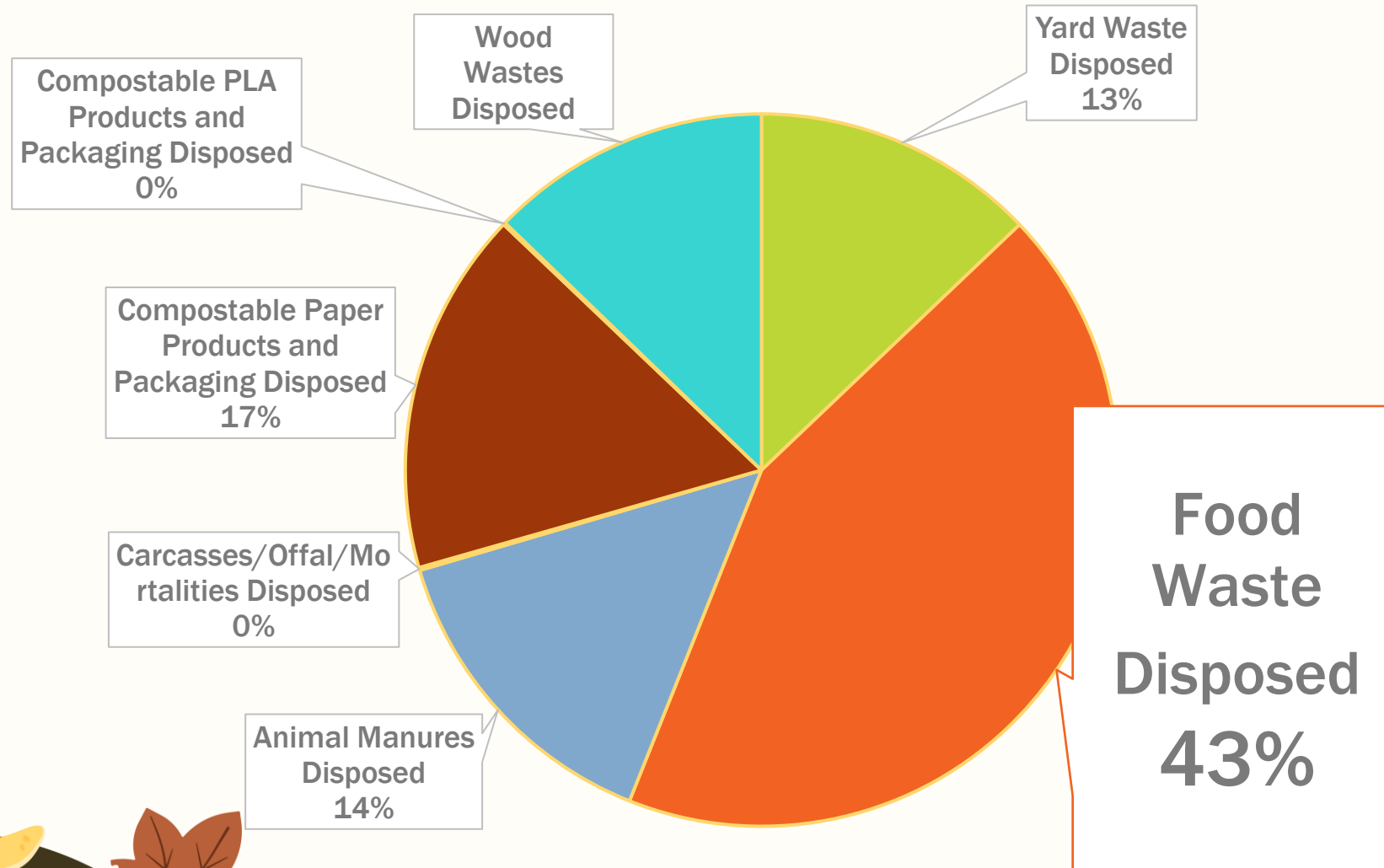


2.3 MMT CO₂e (72% of emissions from waste management) came from uncaptured methane in landfills.



Disposed OML Organic Materials, 2021

1,917,740 tons

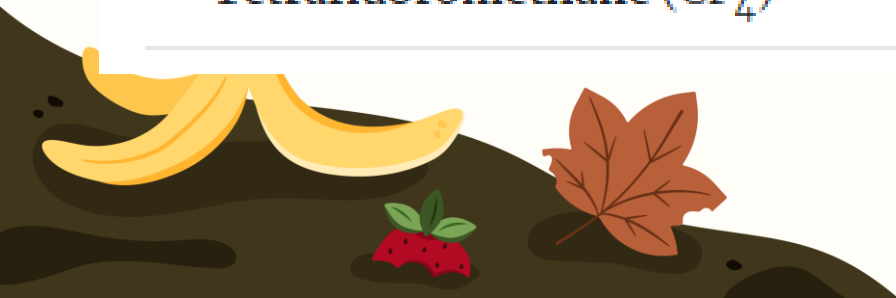


Methane is WHY

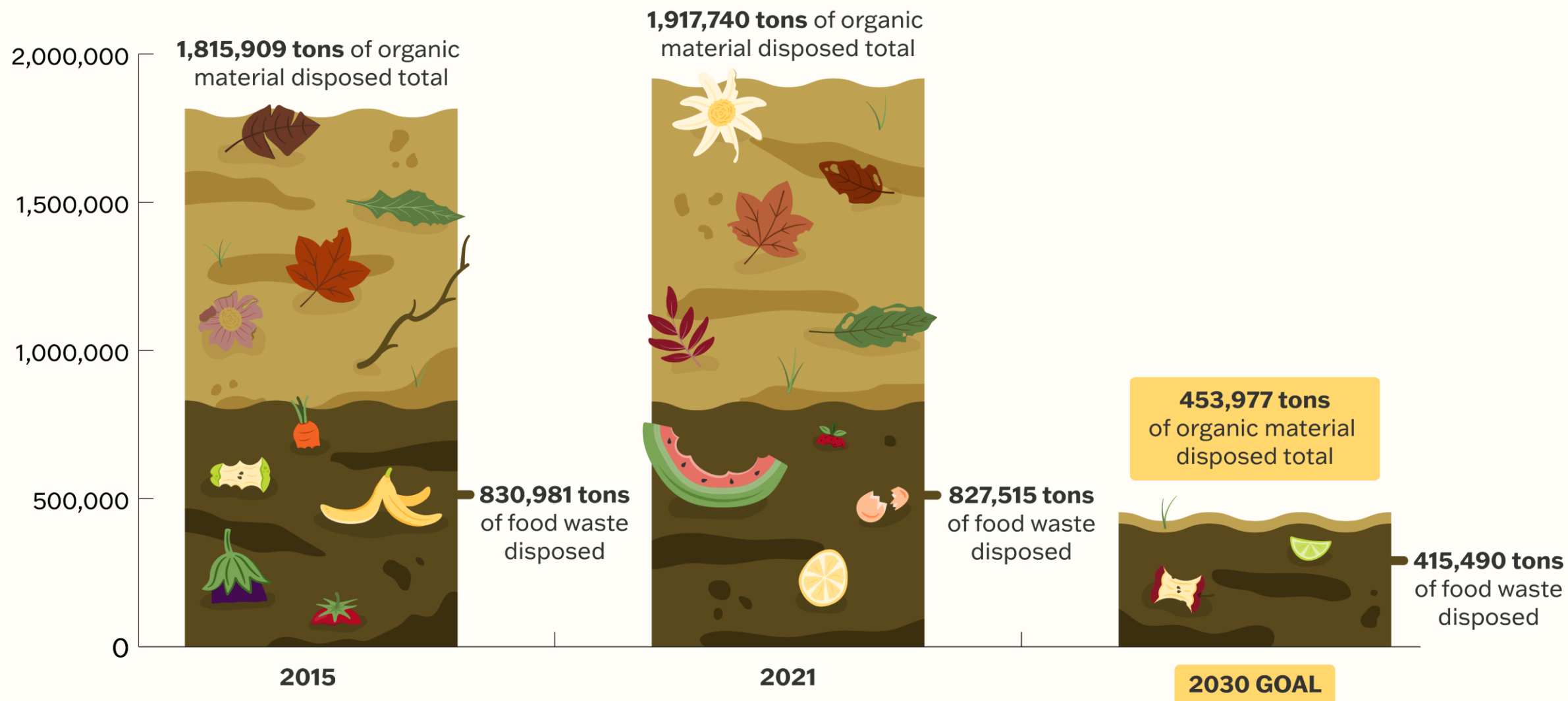
Methane is a potent greenhouse gas with a much higher Global Warming Potential (GWP) than CO₂



	Lifetime (years)	GWP ₂₀ (over 20 years)	GWP ₁₀₀ (over 100 years)
Carbon dioxide (CO ₂)	Varies (can be thousands)	1	1
Methane (CH ₄)	12.4	84	28
Nitrous oxide (N ₂ O)	121.0	264	265
Tetrafluoromethane (CF ₄)	50,000.0	4880	6630



Organic Material Disposed in WA Landfills



Business Organics Management Area (BOMA)

Requirement: a business may not throw organic material waste into the garbage stream



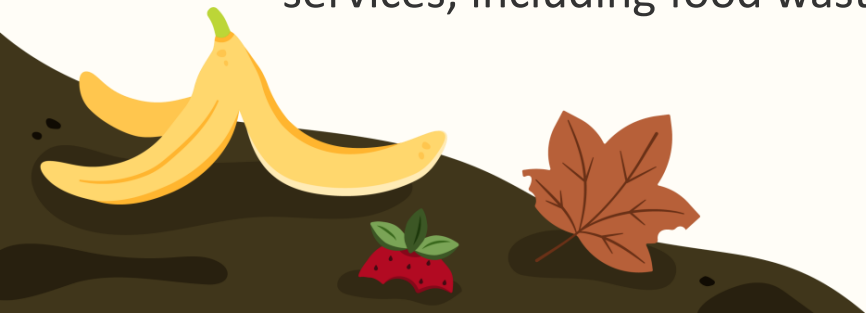
Businesses may need to comply based on:

1. If year-round curbside organics collection service including food is available to businesses
2. Organic management facilities are able and willing to accept additional materials
3. The amount of organic material waste produced by the business meets legal thresholds

Reminder: to meet the requirements of the law, curbside organic material collection services, including food waste, must be offered year-round.

This
law is
in
effect
now

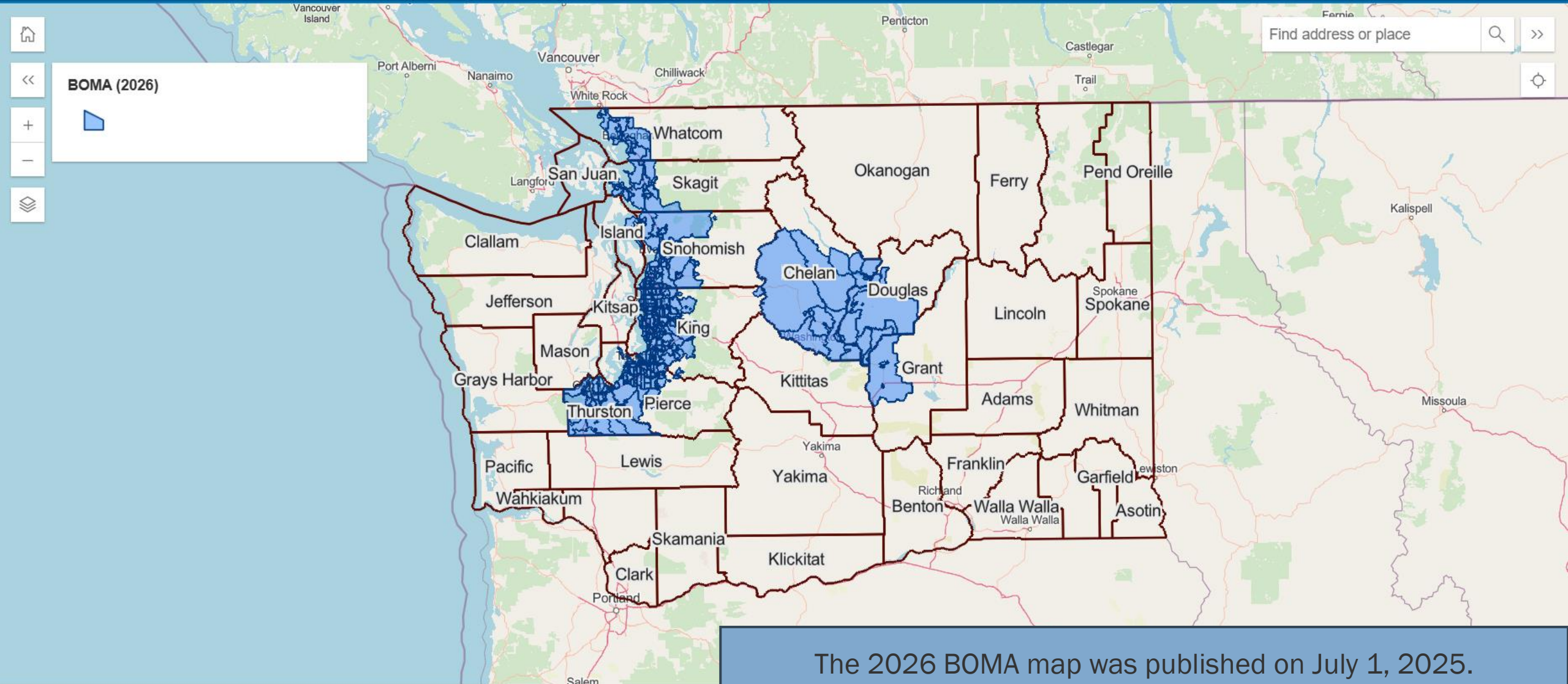
[RCW 70A.205.545](#)



2026 Business Collection Requirements



Business Organics Management Areas (BOMA)



BOMA Threshold Requirements



2024

January: at least 8
cubic yards
of organic material
waste/week

2025

January: at least 4
cubic yards
of organic material
waste/week

 **2026**

January: at least 96
gallons
of organic material
waste/week



2025 Minimum Threshold for Organics

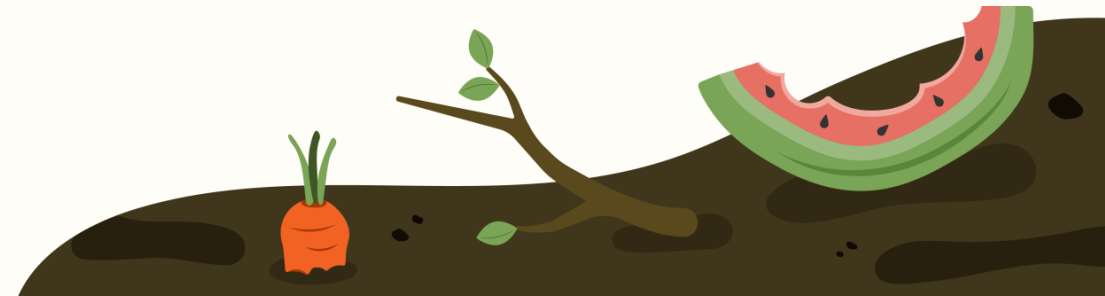


- 4 cubic yards is equivalent to eight “typical” 96-gallon rolling carts
- Large organics generator examples: grocery stores, restaurants, hospitals, colleges

What are your options?



- Separate organic waste and subscribe to a collection service
- Implement food waste prevention and food rescue strategies
- Manage organic waste on-site
- Self-haul organic waste to a compost facility
- If you grow, harvest, or process food or fiber, enter into an agreement to sell or donate organic materials to another business for off-site use, this is also a compliance pathway.



How will the requirements be enforced?



- Jurisdictions, including LHJs, may enforce
 - Primary focus is education and technical assistance
- Ongoing LHJ Monthly Community of Practice
- New optional penalties added in OML 3.0



Penalties for Non-Compliance



Starting July 1, 2026:

- Civil penalties apply **after** required notices have been issued

Penalty amounts (per day of violation):

- **\$500** – First violation
- **\$750** – Second violation
- **\$1,000** – Third or subsequent violations

Before penalties are imposed:

- Business must receive:
 - One **notification letter** (certified mail)
 - One **notice of violation** (certified mail)

Additional provisions:

Jurisdictions may impose higher penalties **small businesses** (per RCW 19.85.020) are capped at **\$10,000 per calendar year**

Published list of businesses coming soon!



A list of likely affected businesses with supporting methodology used to identify businesses subject to business collection requirements

For any current needs,
Ecology can share a
preliminary list created using
Data Axle

Data collection:

- Department may require **solid waste companies** to provide customer info to assess compliance needs

Purpose of the list:

- Aid **education and outreach**
- Support **enforcement** by local jurisdictions

Watch a short video for more BOMA
information!





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Center for Sustainable Food Management

Food Waste Reduction Strategies



Prevention: Prevent and reduce the amount of food wasted.

Rescue: Rescue edible food that would otherwise be wasted and ensure the food reaches those who need it.

Recovery: Support productive uses of inedible food materials, and close the important nutrient and energy cycle (anaerobic digestion, composting, vermicomposting, etc)

Use Food Well Campaign

www.usefoodwell.org

www.aprovechalosalimentos.org

- NEW Guidance for kitchens!
 - Video
 - Guides
 - Food waste prevention
 - Setting up food scraps bin
 - Poster/signage
 - Social media toolkit
 - Reports and Resources



New Resources for Prevention and Recovery – English and Spanish



¡Conviértete en líder contra el desperdicio de alimentos! Sigue la ley y ahorra dinero.

Reducir el desperdicio de alimentos vale la pena: cada año, los negocios ahorran un promedio de \$7 por cada \$1 que invierten.¹

No tires comida: ¡aprovechala! En Washington, muchos negocios de servicios de comida están ahora obligados a separar los residuos de comida del resto de la basura en un contenedor aparte. Reducir el desperdicio de alimentos también es una buena práctica para los negocios: se ahorra dinero y se conservan valiosos recursos.

Para empezar:

- 1. Evita el desperdicio de alimentos**
 - Mejora tus prácticas de compra:** Averigua en qué áreas de tu negocio se desperdicia comida y planifica formas de reducirlo.
 - Haz que tus alimentos duren más con un buen almacenamiento:** Almacena los alimentos de forma que se mantengan frescos y sabrosos.
- 2. Dona alimentos que todavía se puedan consumir.**

Colabora con las organizaciones locales de recuperación de alimentos y con el departamento de salud de tu distrito para donar los alimentos que te sobran. Muchas de ellas ofrecen servicios de recogida, lo que lo hace fácil y eficaz.
- 3. Recolecta residuos de alimentos para granjas o composta comercial**

¿Aún no separas los restos de comida? Los residuos de alimentos vienen de la cocina y de los platos. Dona a las granjas y/o suscríbete al servicio de recogida domiciliar para compostar tus restos de comida hoy mismo.

Infórmate sobre lo que puedes poner en el contenedor: puedes poner cosas como restos de fruta, granos de café, cascara de huevo, etc. Consulta con el servicio local de recolección para obtener una lista completa de las cosas que puedes echar. Etiqueta claramente los contenedores y enseña a tu equipo a minimizar la contaminación.

Descarga más recursos para negocios en www.aprovechalosalimentos.org.

¹ Champions 12.3 (2019, febrero). The business case for reducing food loss and waste: Restaurants. Champions 12.3 <https://champions123.org/publication/business-case-reducing-food-loss-and-waste-restaurants>.



Managing Food Scraps in Restaurants

Managing food scraps isn't just about waste — it's the law in many places in Washington. **It's also about savings, sustainability, and smart operations.**

Food Waste is Costly: Restaurants waste 4 to 10 percent of the food they purchase.

Big Savings: For every \$1 invested, restaurants can save \$7 by reducing food waste.

Environmental Impact: Food waste in landfills creates greenhouse gas that is worse than emissions from cars.

Customers care: Most diners (72 percent) care about how a restaurant handles food waste.

How to Set Up Food Scraps Collection

Signing up with a local service provider often reduces waste disposal costs.

- 1. Know What You Need**

Measure Your Food Waste: Measure how much food waste your restaurant generates on a weekly basis. Or, measure for one day and multiply by seven to estimate.

Check Local Laws: Scan the QR code to see if your restaurant is required to have its food and yard waste collected based on the new Organics Management Laws.
- 2. Look for Local Organics Service Providers**

Check Your City or County Webpage. You can also call or go to **1-800-RECYCLE**.

Contact Local Waste Management Companies: Call your current garbage or recycling service provider. Food scrap collection may already be included in your service!

Search Online: Use terms like "local composting hauler," plus your city name.

Ask Other Businesses: Restaurants in your area may be able to refer you.
- 3. Contact the Service Provider**

Ask Key Questions:

 - Are bins, signage, and training for staff provided?
 - What are the pricing options based on your volume?
 - How frequently is food and yard waste picked up?
 - Where is the best place for a food scrap bin to be accessed by the service provider?
- 4. Set Up Service**

Schedule Pick-ups: Arrange a regular schedule based on your restaurant's needs.

Keep Waste Sorted: Educate staff in separating food scraps and preparing them for pickup.
- 5. Promote Your Efforts**

Tell Your Customers: A "We Compost" or "We care about Using Food Well!" sign or logo can highlight your efforts.

Market Your Efforts: Share your commitment to reducing waste on your website, social media, and menu.



Help Businesses track their food waste



Use Food Well Tracker: Be a Food Waste Champion

Every crumb counts! Think of this log as your kitchen's secret weapon. By tracking what gets tossed – and why – you'll uncover hidden waste, and can take action to cut costs. Use it for every spoiled veggie, overcooked batch, or uneaten special. It's quick, simple, and saves you money!

Date Discarded	Category of Food (ex. dairy, protein, prepared food, ingredients)	Food Waste Description	Total weight or volume	Reason for Waste	Disposition (composted, donated, or garbage*)

*Food scraps should not go in the garbage except in rare circumstances

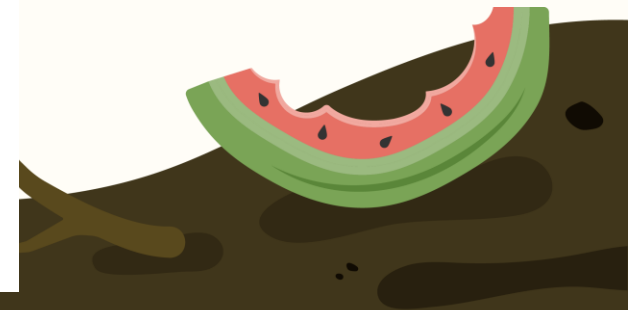
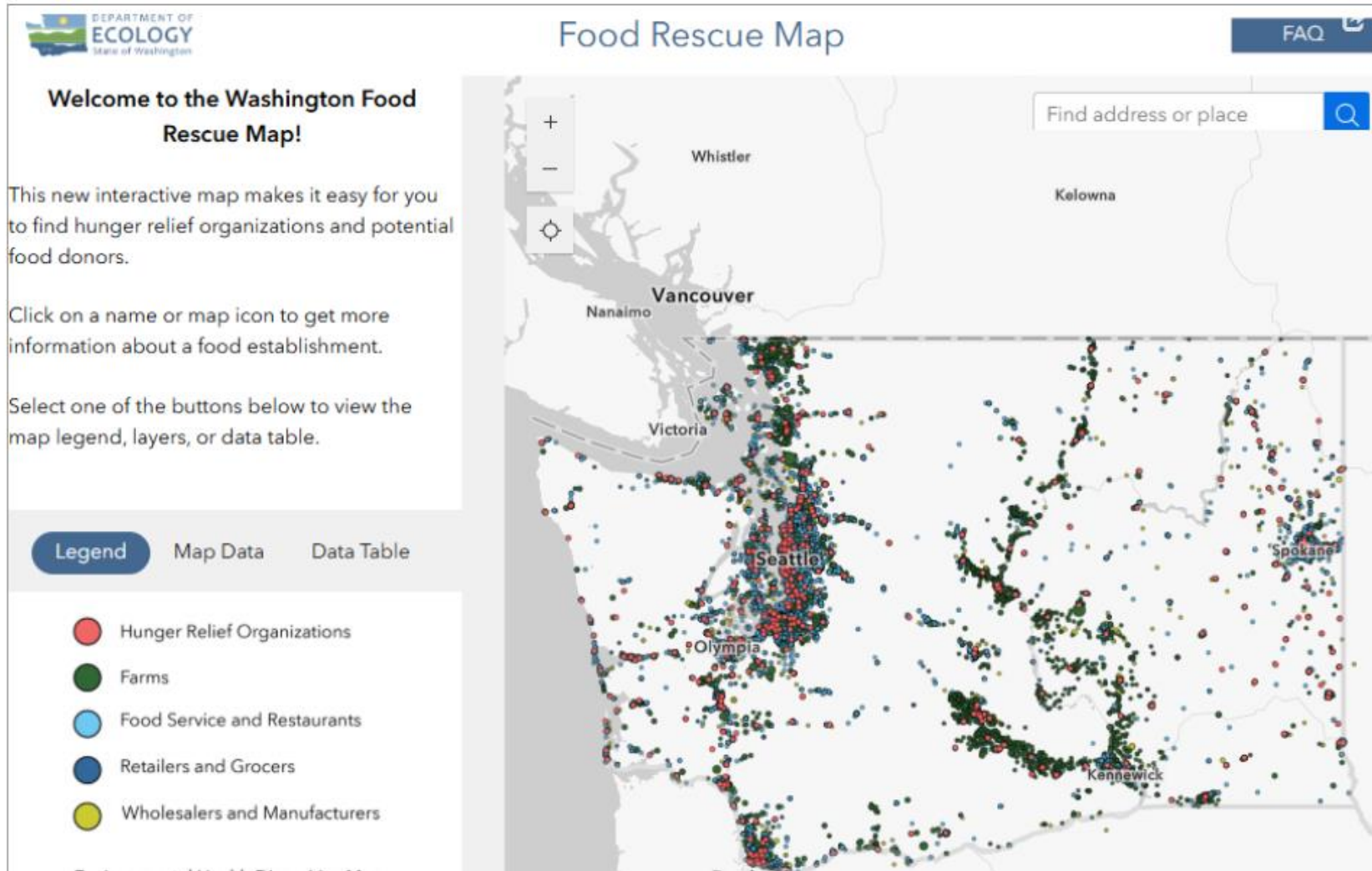
- Business often feel that they don't throw food waste in the garbage, until they start tracking it



Use the Food Rescue Map



A resource to connect businesses and hunger relief organizations for the purposes of food rescue.

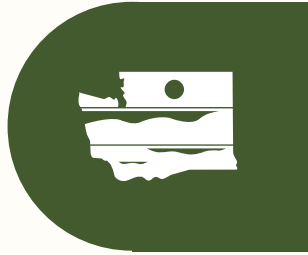


New Video for Restaurants



[Use Food Well | What Every WA Business Should Know with Calico Cupboard - YouTube](#)

All resources available here!





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[Resources](#)

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Businesses that reduce food waste save money!

Reducing food waste pays off – you can save \$7 for every \$1 you invest each year. Learn how your business can cut costs, [comply with Washington's new law](#), and be a food waste champion today.

[Get started](#)



www.usefoodwell.org



Organic Recycling Collection Areas (ORCA)

April 2027:

Year-round* collection for source-separated organic solid waste services is available to all business customers producing .25 cubic yards of organic material waste/week and single-family residences

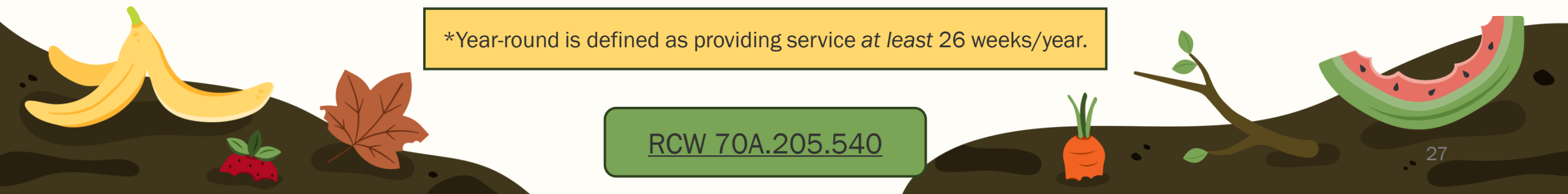
April 2030:

This law mandates businesses to have service by April 2030.

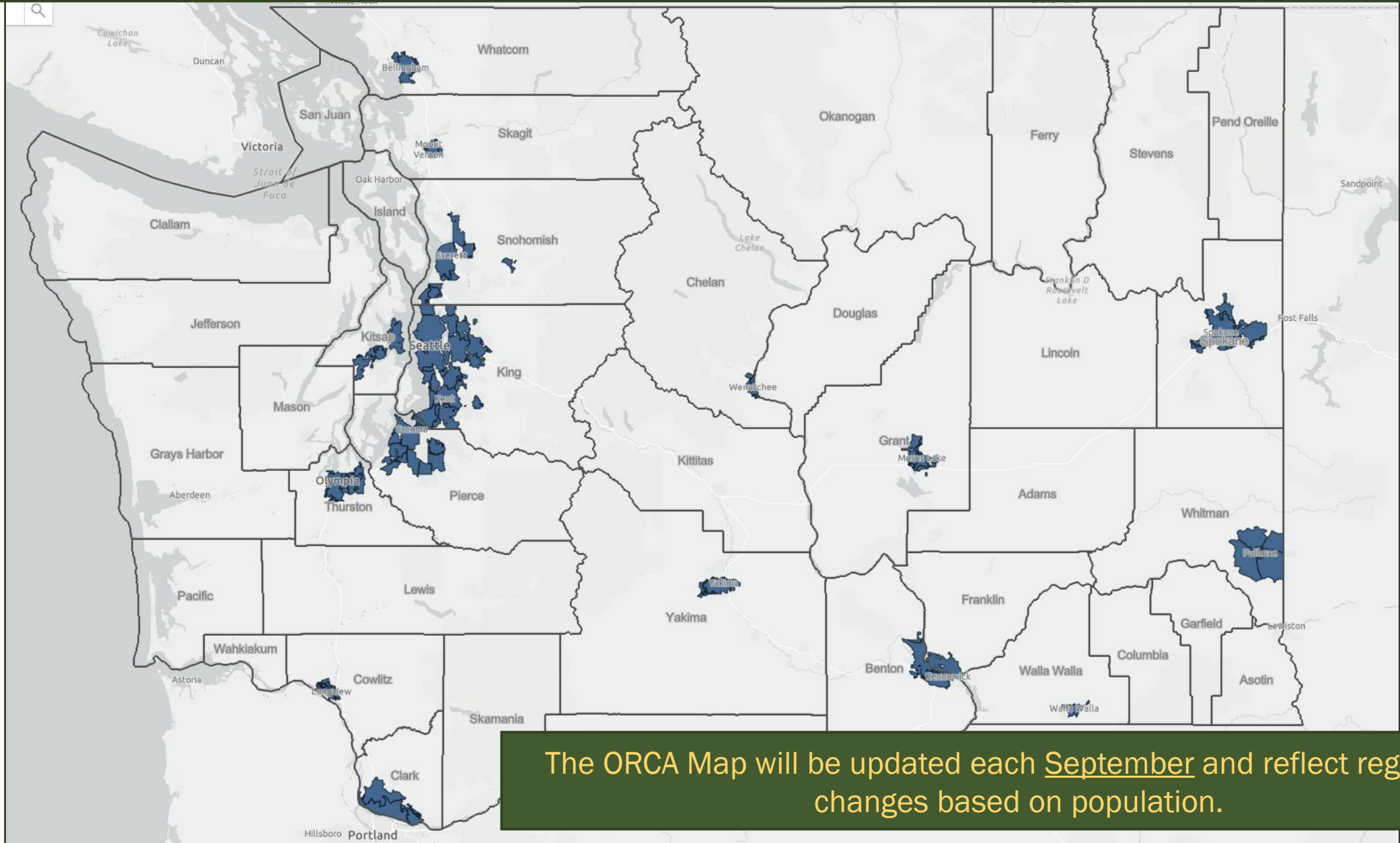
Nonelective collection is provided for both *food* and yard waste for impacted business customers and single family homes

*Year-round is defined as providing service *at least* 26 weeks/year.

RCW 70A.205.540



2027 Organics Collection Recycling Area (ORCA) Requirements



The ORCA Map will be updated each September and reflect regulatory changes based on population.

Watch a short video for more ORCA information!





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What is compost most afraid of?



CONTAMINATION

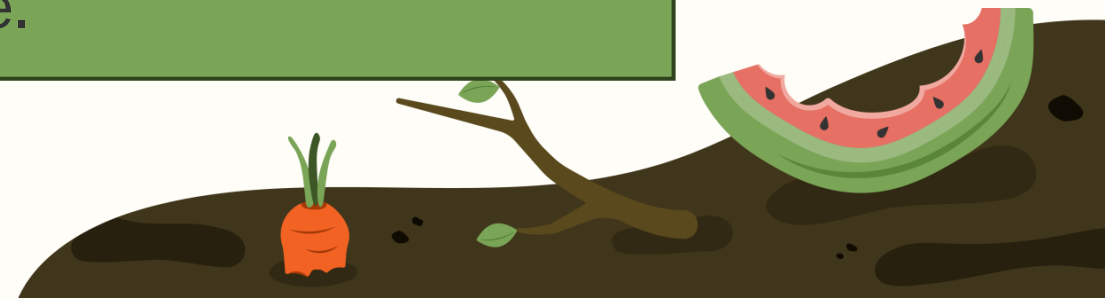


The Importance of Eliminating Contamination



- The commercial organics stream has the **highest** amount of contamination
 - Employee turnover, inconsistent training, inefficient collection programs
- Contamination affects facilities willingness to accept commercial organics

Commercial organics streams have the lowest participation in organics collection programs but the largest opportunity to divert food waste.



Contaminants in the Organics Stream



The most common contaminants at Washington organics management facilities are:



Plastic film



Plastic



Dog toys



Glass
and metal



Garbage



Lookalike
products

Based on qualitative interviews of 14 compost facilities for the [Compostable Products Management in WA State Study](#)



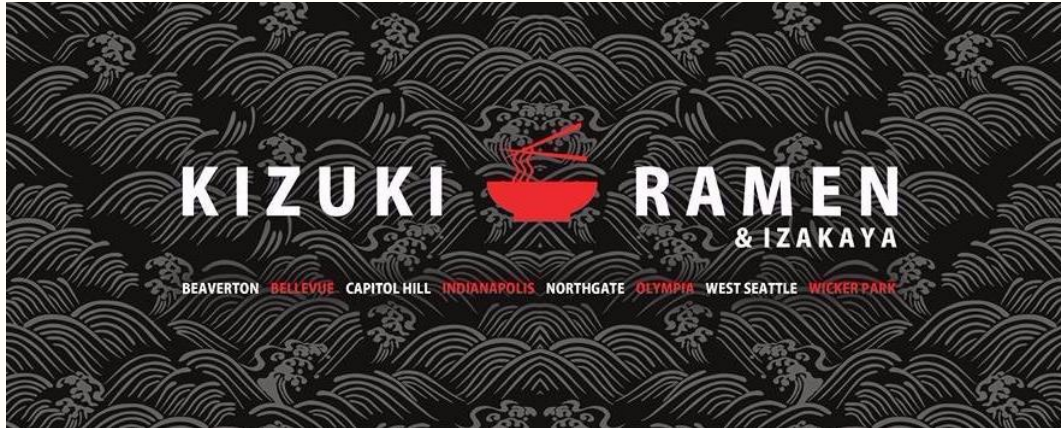


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What are businesses currently doing?

Kizuki Ramen, Renton



Kizuki Ramen

- Organics implementation support from the City of Renton and contracted consultants
- Provided bins, signage, and employee training as technical assistance

Feed Spokane

- Safely rescues food from restaurants, hotels, and small grocers to feed the Spokane region's hungry
- Rescued 970,000 lbs. of food in 2024
- Increased food rescue by 300%
- Contact
 - Facebook and Instagram
 - Website:
<https://feedspokane.org/>



Distribution Day !



The Hilton, Vancouver



- Re-implemented in 2024
- Worked with Waste Connections to implement collection bins outside and inside the hotel
- Employee training about acceptable materials and contamination
- Diverting ~1,500 lbs of food waste per week

Grocery Outlet (Hazel Dell Ave, Vancouver)



- Partners with Healthy Equitable Living Project (HELP)
 - Donate dry, refrigerated, and frozen groceries
- 2-3 full shopping carts of dry groceries per week
- 8-10 crates of refrigerated and frozen products per week
- Garbage generation and costs have significantly decreased



So, what should I remember?



There are two new laws that impact businesses:

- BOMA: in effect now
- ORCA: goes into effect in 2027/2030

BOTH require businesses to handle their organic material waste other than sending into the garbage stream

The most effective way to handle organic material waste:

1. Food waste prevention
2. Food rescue

LOTS of folks to help:

1. www.usefoodwell.org
2. Cities & Counties
3. Service Providers
4. Us!



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That was
bananas!

Do you have
questions?





Thank you.

Connect with us at:
organics@ecy.wa.gov

