



What is Food Wasted?

There has been a lot of buzz about how the City is going to manage "Organics" in light of new State of California Mandates including AB1826-Mandatory Commercial Organics Recycling and SB1383 Short-lived Climate Pollutant Reduction Strategy.

Below are some common questions that have been posed by the public.

What are "Organics"?

The term "organics" has different meanings in different conversations and frameworks. In the Solid Waste and Recycling Industry, organics are defined as material that comes from organisms that were once alive; in other words plants and food.

Why is it important to reduce organics in our landfills?

When organic materials decompose in landfills, methane gas is produced. Methane is a very powerful greenhouse gas, which is more than 21 times more potent than carbon dioxide in our atmosphere. Removing organic material from landfills reduces the production of methane gas. In addition, there are better options to process organic materials which also reduce greenhouse gas production and create beneficial by-products.

What is the City of Oceanside doing to manage organics?

Oceanside is fortunate to have the [El Corazon Compost Facility](#) that is currently diverting the majority of the green waste (organic plant materials) generated by residents and businesses from the landfill and processing it into mulch and compost.

But what about all the food waste?

Currently the City is conducting a feasibility study to determine the best option for Oceanside to collect and process food that would otherwise be sent to the landfill.

One of the first steps in this feasibility study was to examine exactly how much food is being sent to the landfill in Oceanside. Through a Waste Characterization Study conducted in 2016, it was estimated that approximately 33% of the material being sent to landfill is food. That is approximately 115 tons per day! While a large scale option for the collection and processing of food waste is on the horizon, there are some strategies that residents can incorporate today.

What can you do?

While the City is looking into ways to manage the food that ends up in the landfill, we all need to look at how it got there in the first place.

A statewide waste characterization study that was performed in 2014 by CalRecycle found that of the food going into the landfill in California, 18% was edible. That's right! We are collectively dumping good food in the landfill. There are a few strategies that can easily be implemented to reduce food going to waste.

- Shop Smart! Make a list, only buy what you need and shop your refrigerator first. Remember to account for days that you will not be eating at home.
- Store your fruit and vegetables properly to prolong their freshness.
- Prep now, eat later! Prep your fruits and vegetables as soon as you get home from the store. This will allow you to easily grab a snack and save lots of time for meal preparation.
- Eat what you buy! Use up ingredients before heading to the store and cook with leftovers.



Another way to help the Oceanside community reduce overall food waste is to buy the "ugly" fruits and vegetables that taste just as wonderful as the "pretty" ones.



A local farmer that is a regular at the City of Oceanside's Farmers' Market on Thursdays is promoting these "uglies." Mike Clark of JR Organics is selling the less than perfect crop at a discount and convincing his customers by giving "ugly" samples that it tastes just as great!