The Nashville Food Waste Initiative (NFWI), a project of the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC), recently collected, sorted, and categorized a sample of waste material from dozens of businesses and institutions in Nashville. This information will be used to help set a baseline for how much and what types of food are wasted in Nashville.

Below are general recommendations for reducing the amount of food in your waste stream as well as information on organizations and resources in Nashville that might be useful to your facility. Page Two of this document provides details on what types of food and non-food materials were found in your waste stream during our audit. Page Three provides individualized recommendations based on the findings from your facility.

**General Recommendations**

Reducing the amount of food in your waste stream can help save money as well as reduce your ecological impact. Here are some easy steps you can take to minimize wasted food in your operations:

- **Prevent food waste:** The Nashville Food Waste Initiative is partnering with select Nashville businesses to prevent food waste and reduce food costs in foodservice environments by using LeanPath’s [innovative food waste tracking software](http://www.leanpath.com). NFWI is offering a stipend of $5000 to selected businesses. Please contact Linda Breggin (breggin@eli.org) if you are interested in participating.

- **Donate food surpluses:** Donating food can yield valuable tax benefits, is protected from liability by federal law, and is a way your business can help address food insecurity in Nashville. Organizations that receive or help direct donated food in Nashville include the Second Harvest Food Bank of Middle Tennessee ([secondharvestmidtn.org](http://www.secondharvestmidtn.org)), The Nashville Food Project ([www.thenashvillefoodproject.org](http://www.thenashvillefoodproject.org)), Zero Percent ([www.zeropercent.us](http://www.zeropercent.us)), and the Food Donation Connection ([www.foodtodonate.com](http://www.foodtodonate.com)).

  More information on food donation from the Metro Nashville Department of Health is available at [http://www.nashville.gov/Health-Department/Environmental-Health/Food-Protection-Services.aspx](http://www.nashville.gov/Health-Department/Environmental-Health/Food-Protection-Services.aspx).

- **Recycle food scraps:** After maximizing waste prevention and food donation, you can help keep food waste out of the landfill by sending it to a composter or anaerobic digester. Resources on composting in Nashville include The Compost Company ([www.compostcompany.com](http://www.compostcompany.com)), Compost Nashville ([www.compostnashville.org](http://www.compostnashville.org)), and Nashville Public Works ([www.nashville.gov/Public-Works/Neighborhood-Services/Yard-Waste-Composting/Backyard-Composting](http://www.nashville.gov/Public-Works/Neighborhood-Services/Yard-Waste-Composting/Backyard-Composting)). In addition, Resource Capture LLC, a local nonprofit, is working on siting and developing an anaerobic digester that can help supplement the local composting infrastructure.

For more information on the environmental impacts associated with food waste, please see NRDC’s food waste resources ([www.nrdc.org/issues/food-waste](http://www.nrdc.org/issues/food-waste)). For more information on tracking your food waste, see the Environmental Protection Agency’s Tools for Assessing Wasted Food ([www.epa.gov/sustainable-management-food](http://www.epa.gov/sustainable-management-food)). And for free ads and media your business can use to raise awareness, see our Save the Food campaign materials ([www.savethefood.com](http://www.savethefood.com)).

Every citizen and business in Nashville, as well as Metro government, can help reduce food waste. Please contact Linda Breggin, Project Coordinator, Nashville Food Waste Initiative (breggin@eli.org) or Darby Hoover, NRDC (dhoover@nrdc.org) for more information or to learn more about reducing food waste in Nashville.
## Natural Resources Defense Council Food Waste Assessment Study Results

### Harpeth Hall
Nashville, TN
October 3, 2016

### What is in your trash?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Material Categories</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Edible Food</td>
<td>Meat, fish, dairy, eggs, vegetables, fruits, baked goods, dry goods, grains, pastas, cereals, snacks, condiments, canned goods, candy, snacks, drinks, water, oil, fats, cooked meals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inedible Food</td>
<td>Inedible peels (banana, citrus, melon, winter squash), apple cores, pits, shells, bones, husks, animal fat and tendons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Compostable Materials</td>
<td>Food-soiled paper, pizza boxes, paper cups, paper towels/napkins, grass, leaves, branches, yard trimmings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recyclable Materials</td>
<td>Paper, cardboard, metal containers, glass containers, rigid plastic containers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Materials</td>
<td>All other materials such as non-container glass, plastic bags, plastic wrap, polystyrene foam, hygiene products, clothing, electronics</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### What types of food waste are in your trash?

- **Cooked or Prepared Food & Leftovers**: 67%
- **Liquids, Oils, & Grease**: 0%
- **Snacks & Condiments**: 0%
- **Dry Foods (Grains, Pasta, and Cereals)**: 0%
- **Baked Goods**: 3%
- **Vegetables & Fruits**: 10%
- **Dairy & Eggs**: 0%
- **Meat & Fish**: 1%
- **Inedible**: 19%
Natural Resources Defense Council  
Food Waste Assessment Study Results  
Harpeth Hall  
October 3, 2016

A sample of your trash (up to 220 lbs) was sorted and categorized into 9 food waste categories and 6 other materials categories. Results can be found on page 2. Below are individualized suggestions for reducing your waste.

The individual results provided in this report will not be shared with anyone other than your organization. Any results reported by NRDC will be reported in aggregate and your facility participation will be kept confidential, unless you wish for your organization's name to be acknowledged as a research participant in our reporting.

Please contact Darby Hoover, dhoover@nrdc.org, if you have any questions or would like to be acknowledged by the NRDC as a research participant.

**Individualized Recommendations**

**Notable Findings**
- 83 lbs of waste material were taken from your facility (cafeteria waste).
- 98% of the material in your trash is compostable, with a majority being edible food.
- Of the food found in your trash, 81% was considered edible.
  - 67% of discarded food was cooked or prepared foods
  - 10% was fruits and vegetables

**Potential Strategies to Reduce Wasted Food**
- A majority of your wasted food was cooked or prepared food, which appeared to mostly originate from the front-of-the house. Potential strategies to decrease post-consumer food waste include:
  - Performing a quick assessment to understand which types of food are most frequently wasted by students (and reduce preparation of those items);
  - Reducing portion sizes or allowing half orders;
  - Implementing an outreach program to encourage students to take only what they can eat.

- Since a majority of your facility's waste is compostable (including food and food-soiled paper), this facility could significantly reduce landfilled material through composting, either on-site (e.g. in-vessel composting system) or using a hauler.

**Pictures**