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Courtesy of Lili Orphan Hammies



SANTA BARBARA COUNTY  
**Resource Recovery &  
Waste Management Division**  
*Innovative Environmental Solutions*

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# FOOD FORWARD

## Simple Tips for Reducing Food Waste



SANTA BARBARA COUNTY  
**Resource Recovery &  
Waste Management Division**  
*Innovative Environmental Solutions*

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**www.LessIsMore.org**

# Food Waste 101

**In America, an average of 40% of food is wasted.** Food waste is created throughout the entire supply chain: the farm, the grocery store, and at home. **But there are many ways we can prevent wasted food.**

**We can buy only what we need, donate unused items, or even compost in our own backyards!**

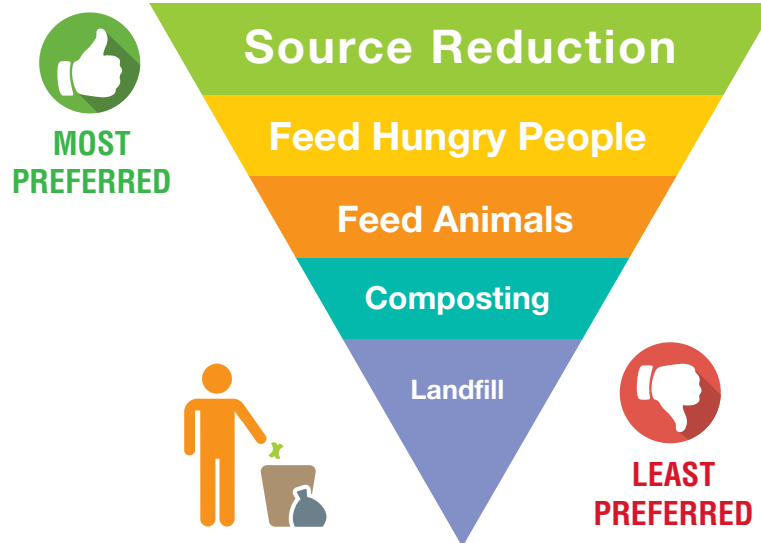


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## FOOD RECOVERY HIERARCHY



**In Santa Barbara County, 20% of our waste is food.** These extra pounds of waste can be put back into the soil through compost, or donated to the community.

**YOU HAVE THE POWER TO REDUCE FOOD WASTE!**

**BROUGHT TO YOU BY YOUR**  
Resource Recovery and  
Waste Management Division  
of the Santa Barbara County  
Public Works Department

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## Reduce Your Food-Print

The most preferred method of reducing your food waste is **preventing waste at its source**. The Environmental Protection Agency estimates that a family of four can **save more than \$2,000 a year** by implementing simple methods to reduce waste.

### SIMPLE WAYS TO REDUCE FOOD WASTE

**TIP 1** Inventory and use what you have before you buy more.

**TIP 2** Be creative by using the edible parts of foods that you normally throw away.

**TIP 3** Donate healthy, safe, and untouched foods to food banks.

**TIP 4** Freeze or preserve surplus fruits and vegetables.

**TIP 5** Know how much food you're actually wasting by measuring your waste.

**TIP 6** Reduce plate waste. Start with a small serving—only what you can eat.



Have a green thumb?  
Find ways to save seeds  
or roots to regrow your  
favorite snack!



See Page 6 for some helpful hints on expiration dates and food safety.



Visit [LessIsMore.org](http://LessIsMore.org) for more information.

## Feed People, Not The Landfill

Even after planning and shopping for food that we know we will eat, there might be extras. **Spare food items that are safe to eat and unopened can be donated to local agencies.** Below are some great examples of foods that are accepted at local non-profits.

### WHAT TYPES OF FOOD CAN BE DONATED?

#### Packaged foods:

- Bread
- Cereals
- Whole grains such as oats, rice, and quinoa
- Nuts and nut butters
- Dried beans, lentils, and pasta
- Coffee and tea

#### GENERAL CRITERIA FOR DONATIONS:

- In original packaging
- Unopened
- No candy or soda
- No home-canned foods

#### Produce and canned goods:

- Fruits and vegetables
- Beans
- Tuna
- Soups
- Juices



### DONATE YOUR BACKYARD HARVEST!



If you have fruit trees on your property, you can donate your harvest to the **Foodbank of Santa Barbara County**.

If you have five or more trees, call the Foodbank's Backyard Bounty program to see if their team can help you harvest.

**(805) 967-5741**

For more details visit:  
[www.foodbanksbc.org/backyardbounty](http://www.foodbanksbc.org/backyardbounty)



Visit [LessIsMore.org](http://LessIsMore.org) for more information.

# Where Can You Donate Food?

Every location listed accepts donations of non-perishable food.

## SOUTH COAST

### Catholic Charities

609 East Haley Street  
Santa Barbara  
(805) 965-7045

[www.catholiccharitiesla.org](http://www.catholiccharitiesla.org)

### Foodbank of

### Santa Barbara County

4554 Hollister Avenue  
Santa Barbara  
(805) 967-5741

[www.foodbanksbc.org](http://www.foodbanksbc.org)

### Good Shepherd

### Lutheran Church

380 North Fairview Avenue  
Goleta  
(805) 967-1416

[www.gslcms.org](http://www.gslcms.org)

### Salvation Army

4849 Hollister Avenue  
Santa Barbara  
805-964-8738

[santabarbara.salvationarmy.org](http://santabarbara.salvationarmy.org)

### Unity Shoppe

1401 Chapala Street  
Santa Barbara  
(805) 965-4122

[www.unityshoppe.org](http://www.unityshoppe.org)

### UCSB

### Associated Students Foodbank

University of California,  
Santa Barbara  
University Center, Second Floor  
Santa Barbara  
(805) 893-2276

[www.foodbank.as.ucsb.edu](http://www.foodbank.as.ucsb.edu)

## QUICK TIP!

Always call ahead to confirm that your food will be accepted and when you can drop it off.



## BY DONATING, WE:

- Feed hungry people
- Support local non-profits
- Help the environment

## NORTH COUNTY

### Catholic Charities

325 North Second Street  
Lompoc  
(805) 736-6226

[www.catholiccharitiesla.org](http://www.catholiccharitiesla.org)

### Catholic Charities

607 West Main Street  
Santa Maria  
(805) 922-2059

[www.catholiccharitiesla.org](http://www.catholiccharitiesla.org)

### Central Coast Rescue Mission

1207 North McClelland Street  
Santa Maria  
(805) 614-0220

[www.centralcoastrescuemission.org](http://www.centralcoastrescuemission.org)

### Foodbank of

### Santa Barbara County

490 West Foster Road  
Santa Maria  
(805) 937-3422

[www.foodbanksbc.org](http://www.foodbanksbc.org)

### Vandenberg Air Force Base Food Pantry

Building 10525, Nebraska Avenue  
Vandenberg Air Force Base  
(805) 606-2960

Donations accepted from anyone with base access.



Visit [LessIsMore.org](http://LessIsMore.org) for more information.



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## Making Sure Your Food Is Safe

It's easy to think that food is bad based on the printed date. In reality, **food items typically last longer than we think**. With the exception of infant formula, all foods have a life beyond their printed date.

### Here are some quick tips on food safety:

- Depending on the product, most shelf-stable foods like pasta and products packaged in cans will last for a year or more past their printed date. But if the package is open, rusted, smelly, torn, swollen or dented, throw it away.
- Frozen foods can also be safe for months. However, we can't guarantee that they'll taste the same. Frozen foods will get dry, so try slow cooking meats, or making soup from veggies.



### THE FINE PRINT

**Food safety is extremely important, especially when donating it. BUT DON'T WORRY.** If you accidentally give something that is bad, the Bill Emerson Good Samaritan Food Donation Act will protect your contributions from liability as long as they were donated in good faith.

FOOD for  
THOUGHT

**We're wasting more than just food.**

It takes a tremendous amount of effort to grow, process, distribute, sell and consume food. Wasting less food reduces the use of water, energy and land needed to sustain our food system.



Visit [LessIsMore.org](https://LessIsMore.org) for more information.

## Helping Animals and the Planet

Once our two-legged neighbors have food, we can help out our four-legged friends. **Extra produce**, from the store or our gardens, **can be donated**. Remember to **call ahead** before dropping off your donation.

### These organizations accept surplus produce donations:

#### Bunnies Urgently Needing Shelter (BUNS)

5743 Overpass Road  
Santa Barbara, CA 93111  
(805)-681-5285  
(County Animal Shelter Office)  
[www.bunssb.org](http://www.bunssb.org)

Accepts fresh greens and vegetables (e.g. beets, broccoli, carrots, celery, lettuce).



**DONATE  
FRUITS AND  
VEGGIES TO LOCAL  
ANIMALS!**

#### Lil' Orphan Hammies

Sue Pakinson, Founder  
P.O. Box 924  
Solvang, CA 93464  
(805) 693-9953  
[www.lilorphanhammies.org/home](http://www.lilorphanhammies.org/home)  
Accepts fresh produce and bread products.



Courtesy of BUNS



Courtesy of Lil'Orphan Hammies



Visit [LessIsMore.org](https://LessIsMore.org) for more information.

# Compost

Even after feeding our human and animal neighbors, we might have some food items that we just can't eat. Some food waste is unavoidable. Luckily, **composting is a great way to prevent these organics from going in the trash**, and can really help our gardens!

## WHAT IS COMPOST?

Composting is the **natural breakdown of organic materials**, like fruits and vegetables. After the material breaks down, you can use the compost as fertilizer. The nutrients in our food will go back into the soil and help more plants grow, completing the cycle.

## HOW DO I COMPOST AT HOME?

**STEP 1** Download our free digital **composting booklet**.



**STEP 2** Make a **worm bin**, or purchase an **Earth Machine!**



**STEP 3** Attend a free and fun **composting workshop!**



**STEP 4** Keep your compost happy and **watch your garden grow!**

Find downloadable booklets, workshop schedules and more compost tips and tricks at [www.LessIsMore.org/compost](http://www.LessIsMore.org/compost).



Visit [LessIsMore.org](http://LessIsMore.org) for more information.



## EARTH MACHINE COMPOSTING BINS

Available year-round from the County for **HALF PRICE**

**\$45.00**

Get them at these locations:

**South Coast Recycling and Transfer Station**

4430 Calle Real  
Santa Barbara  
(805) 681-4345

**Santa Ynez Valley Recycling and Transfer Station**

4004 Foxen Canyon Road  
Los Olivos  
(805) 686-5080



**North County Public Works Building**  
620 West Foster Road  
Orcutt  
(805) 739-8750

To learn more visit: [LessIsMore.org/compost](http://LessIsMore.org/compost)

Or call our Composting Specialist:  
(805) 882-3600



Visit [LessIsMore.org](http://LessIsMore.org) for more information.





## Business Food Recovery

If your business creates a lot of edible food waste, **you can donate it!** There's no need to waste perfectly edible food. Our staff can help your restaurant or food service facility **connect with local non-profits.**

**We are happy to answer questions on food safety and tax benefits.**



### Before donating try these quick tips:

- **Get creative with your inventory.** Plan how every food item will be used.
- Craft unique menu items that **use unserved foods** or edible food scraps.
- **Work with local farmers** so your produce has the best chance for a long shelf-life.
- Make sure your whole staff is aware of proper food storage. **Freeze as much as you can!**



**Remember that the tips outlined on Page 2 can also be applied to your business!**

### APPLICABLE REGULATIONS

California's SB 1383 establishes a statewide mandate to achieve a 50% reduction in the disposal of organic waste by 2020 and a 75% reduction by 2025. It establishes an additional requirement that 20% of currently disposed edible food be recovered for human consumption. SB 1383 also requires composting of organics that can't be consumed.

**HELP US KEEP ORGANIC MATERIALS OUT OF THE TRASH!**



Visit [LessIsMore.org](http://LessIsMore.org) for more information.

## Donating Prepared Foods

Unlike households, food service businesses have the opportunity to donate prepared foods. Prepared foods typically include leftovers from events and surplus foods from restaurants, hotels and grocery stores.

### Here are some quick donation tips for businesses:

- **Large batch foods are some of the best to donate.** These include; soups, baked goods, salsas, rice, beans, pastas, or unused produce.
- **Food safety is our number one concern.** All items should be stored and transported in food grade containers, and in a safe temperature range.



### Guidelines to follow when handling leftover food:



**Cold foods** must be maintained at **41 degrees Fahrenheit or below.** This is the safe temperature zone.

Example: Milk



**Hot foods** must be kept at **135 degrees Fahrenheit or higher.** This is the safe temperature zone.

Example: Lasagna

**Frozen food must be kept below 0 degrees Fahrenheit.**

**Food items must stay within their correct temperature zone.** If foods leave this temperature zone, they must be composted or thrown away. Additionally, prepared foods should only be donated and eaten within the same day they are made.



**WE WANT TO HELP!**  
If you're a business owner and want to reduce your food waste, we can help you get started.

Call (805) 882-3600

Visit [LessIsMore.org](http://LessIsMore.org) for more information.



# Business Food Scraps Collection

## Can't donate it? COMPOST IT!

**Business Food Scraps Collection** is much different than backyard composting. Commercial food scraps are taken to industrial composting facilities that get extremely hot and are closely observed. These high temperatures and careful monitoring kill any pathogens and can even break down paper products. Even though the process is a little different, the end result is the same—nutritious and delicious compost!

**YES!**

- **Most food scraps**
- **Most food that has gone bad**

**NO!**

- ✗ **NO metals, glass, plastics or any other materials that are not readily biodegradable.**
- ✗ **Nothing from the bathroom, thank you very much!**

*PLEASE NOTE! Materials like meats, grease, oils, and biodegradable or compostable utensils and bags are accepted in certain regions only. Call your waste hauler to see if you can compost these materials. Recycling and composting regulations change often, so always ask if you're unsure about a certain material.*



Visit [LessIsMore.org](http://LessIsMore.org) for more information.

# You Can Make a Difference

There are so many ways to **keep organic material out of the trash**. From replanting veggie cuttings to donating leftover boxes of macaroni and cheese, it all makes a difference. Some of these solutions are easier than others, but we hope you can try some out, and learn something new!



## REMEMBER...

Food waste impacts every part of our community, from our farms to our waste facilities. We can create a resilient food system.

By reducing the amount of food that you waste, you can:

1. **Save money.**
2. **Provide food** to local people and animals.
3. **Create a nutrient-rich soil amendment.**
4. **Reduce the use of resources** such as water, energy and land.

## CONTACTS & RESOURCES

Visit Santa Barbara County Resource Recovery & Waste Management Division:  
[www.LessIsMore.org](http://www.LessIsMore.org)

Call Santa Barbara County Resource Recovery & Waste Management Division:  
**(805) 882-3600**

Visit U.S. Environmental Protection Agency:  
[www.epa.gov/waste/conserve/foodwaste](http://www.epa.gov/waste/conserve/foodwaste)

Visit Natural Resources Defense Council:  
[www.nrdc.org/food/food-waste.asp](http://www.nrdc.org/food/food-waste.asp)

**Visit the links or call the numbers provided in this booklet.**



Visit [LessIsMore.org](http://LessIsMore.org) for more information.