

ABOUT FOOD WASTE

Food waste is an important issue, and tackling it has many social, environmental and economic benefits, including:



Saving businesses money on food and waste management costs



Ensuring more food is available for consumption by people



Making better use of the resources that grow our food



Diverting food waste from landfill, reducing greenhouse gas emissions

The scale of food waste, both globally and in Australia, is significant.



One-third of all food produced globally is lost or wasted



Australia wastes \$8 billion worth of food a year

Food waste is particularly important for the food retail and hospitality sectors in Australia.



37% of waste by the food retail sector is food



24% of food retail waste is consumer plate waste



20% of food bought by consumers is wasted

The above figures only include 'avoidable' food waste (ie. not the scraps, peels, bones and other inedible parts of food).

AVOIDABLE WASTE (EDIBLE FOOD)



Food that could have been eaten by humans, except that it spoiled, was damaged or was surplus to requirements.

UNAVOIDABLE WASTE (INEDIBLE SCRAPS)



The parts of food that are generally considered to be inedible, such as fruit and veggie peels, meat and fish bones, egg shells, etc.

Food waste has substantial environmental impacts.

Wasted food goes to landfill, and rots, causing:

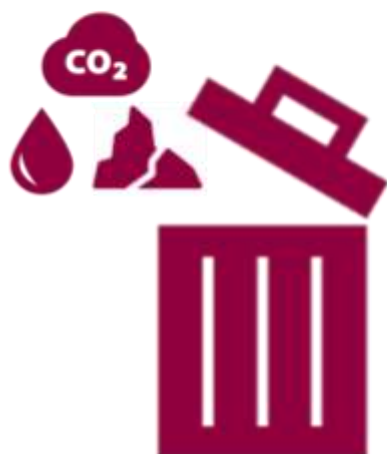


Methane 21x worse than CO₂
(if food waste was a country it would be 3rd largest emitter)

Leachate contaminating land and waterways

Even food that is composted or used for bio-energy still wastes most of the resources used to produce that food for human consumption.

Wasting food wastes resources used to grow it:



Land 30% of agricultural land is used to grow wasted food

Water 25% of fresh water consumption used on wasted food

Energy eg. 2.7% of all energy used in US to grow wasted food

Resources eg. 50% of phosphorous is wasted by wasted food

The best way to manage food waste is to stop it happening in the first place.

Managing avoidable food waste (food waste hierarchy)



References: NSW Environment Protection Authority [Love Food Hate Waste Facts](#); Australian Department of Environment [National Waste Report 2013 Food Waste Fact Sheet](#); UN FAO [Food Wastage Footprint](#); Food Wise [Food waste fast facts](#).
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