Food Waste Generation in Iowa

Dan Nickey, Interim Director
• Purpose: To gather data presentative of waste disposal in Iowa landfills, including:
  • Material type
  • Quantity
  • Source/sector
• Generator Sectors
  • Residential
  • Industrial/Commercial/Institutional
  • Municipal
2011 Iowa Statewide MSW Characterization

- 16.7% Plastic
- 13.5% C&D
- 13.4% Food
- 12.1% Organic
- 25.2% Paper
- 10.1% Other Waste
- 5% Metal
- 1.5% Glass
- 2.3% Durable
- 0.2% HHMS
2017 Iowa Waste Characterization Studies

- Bottle Bill, 1.7%
- Non-Marketable, 28.8%
- Reusable, 7.2%
- Recyclable, 39.4%
- Compostable, 23.0%
- Food Waste - Loose, 13.3%
- Food Waste - Packaged, 6.8%
- Yard Waste, 2.9%
More than 20% of all methane produced in the United States comes from landfills.

Source: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Food waste costs the United States economy $165 billion per year.

Source: Natural Resources Defense Council
One in eight people in the United States is food insecure.

Source: Feeding America
Where is Food Waste?

- Damaged or unmarketable produce
- Overstock or “expired” food
- Food preparation trimmings and residuals
- Surplus prepared foods
- Unconsumed refrigerated leftovers
- Plate scrapings
Food Recovery Hierarchy

1. Source Reduction
2. Feed Hungry People
3. Feed Animals
4. Industrial Uses
5. Composting
6. Incineration or Landfill
Factors Impacting Iowa Food Waste Reduction

- Economics
- Education
- Policy
Food Waste Composting Operations at Iowa Municipal Solid Waste Landfills
What is the biggest challenge you or your organization currently faces in reducing/diverting food waste in Iowa landfills?
What Can We Do?

- Measurement
- Implement reduction strategies
- Support establishments that donate excess food
- Support policies that reduce food waste
Questions?

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