



## FACT SHEET

### Food Waste

**Issue Summary:** *Food loss and waste in the United States accounts for approximately 31 percent—or 133 billion pounds—of the overall food supply available to retailers and consumers and has far-reaching impacts on food security, resource conservation and climate change. NFU recognizes the hard work and diligence of America’s family farmers and supports organizations including USDA and EPA who work to reduce food waste.*

- Approximately one-third of the food produced in the world for human consumption every year — approximately 1.3 billion tons — is lost or wasted. At the same time, nearly 800 million people - one in nine people worldwide - are suffering from hunger. (Global Food Banking Network)
- The estimated total value of food loss at the retail and consumer levels in the United States was \$161.6 billion in 2010. (USDA)
- The average American family of four tosses over 1,160 pounds of food a year -- from scraps, to spills and spoilage. That is 1.2 million calories - enough to provide one person more than 3,200 calories of food per day for a year. (Fox News, November 2014)
- The carbon footprint of food waste is estimated at 3.3 billion tons of CO2 equivalent of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions released into the atmosphere per year. (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations)
- Food loss and waste is the single largest component of disposed U.S. municipal solid waste, and it accounts for a significant portion of U.S. methane emissions. Landfills are the third largest source of methane in the United States. (USDA)
- In 2013, USDA and EPA launched the [U.S. Food Waste Challenge](#), creating a platform for leaders and organizations across the food chain to share best practices on ways to reduce, recover and recycle food loss and waste. By the end of 2014, the U.S. Food Waste Challenge had more than 4,000 active participants. (USDA)
- A 20 percent reduction in food waste would be enough to feed 25 million Americans. (USDA)
- USDA and the U.S. EPA have set food waste goals: calling for a 50 percent reduction in food waste by 2030. Check out this [NFU blog](#) on Food Waste Reduction Goals for farmers. (USDA).