

An illustration featuring three food scraps. At the top center is a piece of red meat with a small brown arrow pointing down to it. Below the meat, on the left, is a large yellow banana peel with a brown outline. On the right is a green leaf with a dark green outline. The background is white with a light blue horizontal band across the middle.

Food Scraps & Zero Waste

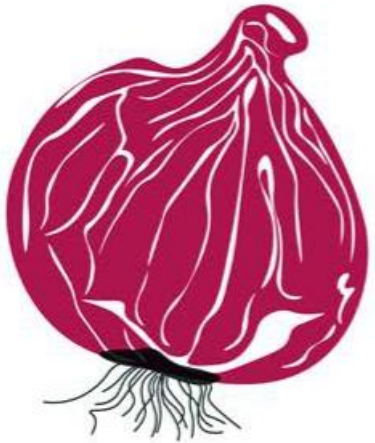
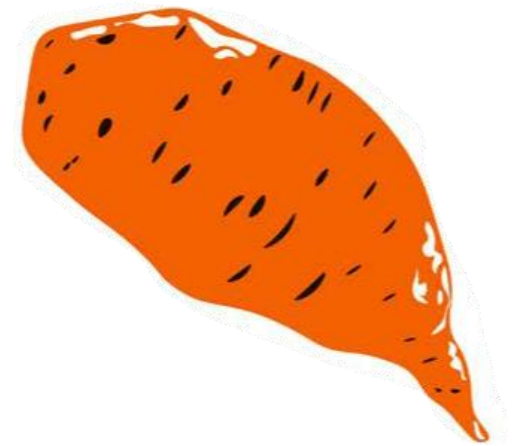


WISCONSIN

Food Waste Evaluation



Approximately 4,500,700 tons of in-state waste were disposed of in Wisconsin's landfills based on DNR data in 2024, and of that total, an estimated 652,000 tons of wasted food (previously edible) and 270,000 tons of food scraps (peels, bones, shells, etc.) were disposed of. The estimated total of more than 900,000 tons of food waste represents 20% of all waste in Wisconsin landfills.



FOOD WASTE GENERATION:

ReFED estimates the percentage of food waste sent to landfills by sector. In Wisconsin, 88 percent of the food waste going to landfills is from residential and food service sources, with residential contributing the largest share at 47 percent.

Using the 20% of all landfill waste is food estimate...

In 2025, Streets collected **44,423.61 tons** from the tan trash carts.

Minimum **8,884.72 tons of food** landfilled by the City of Madison in 2025.



We've been working at food scraps since 2011...



- Contamination concerns
 - Plastics
 - Stickers, rubber bands, twist ties, etc.
 - Styrofoam
 - Fabrics
 - Confusing & misunderstood labels
 - A whole deer head & a dead turkey vulture
- Lack of available processors for post-consumer food scraps

Food Scraps 2022 to Today

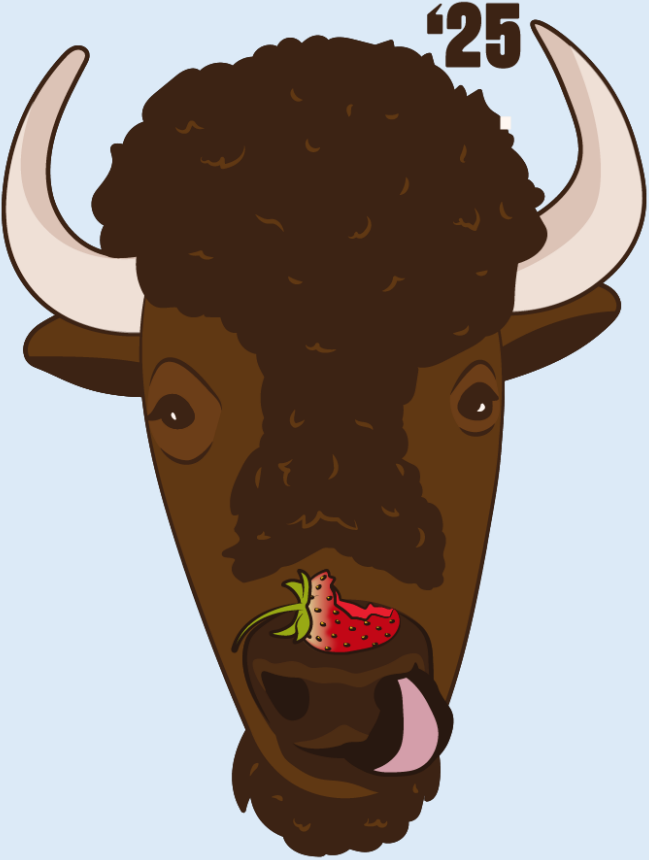
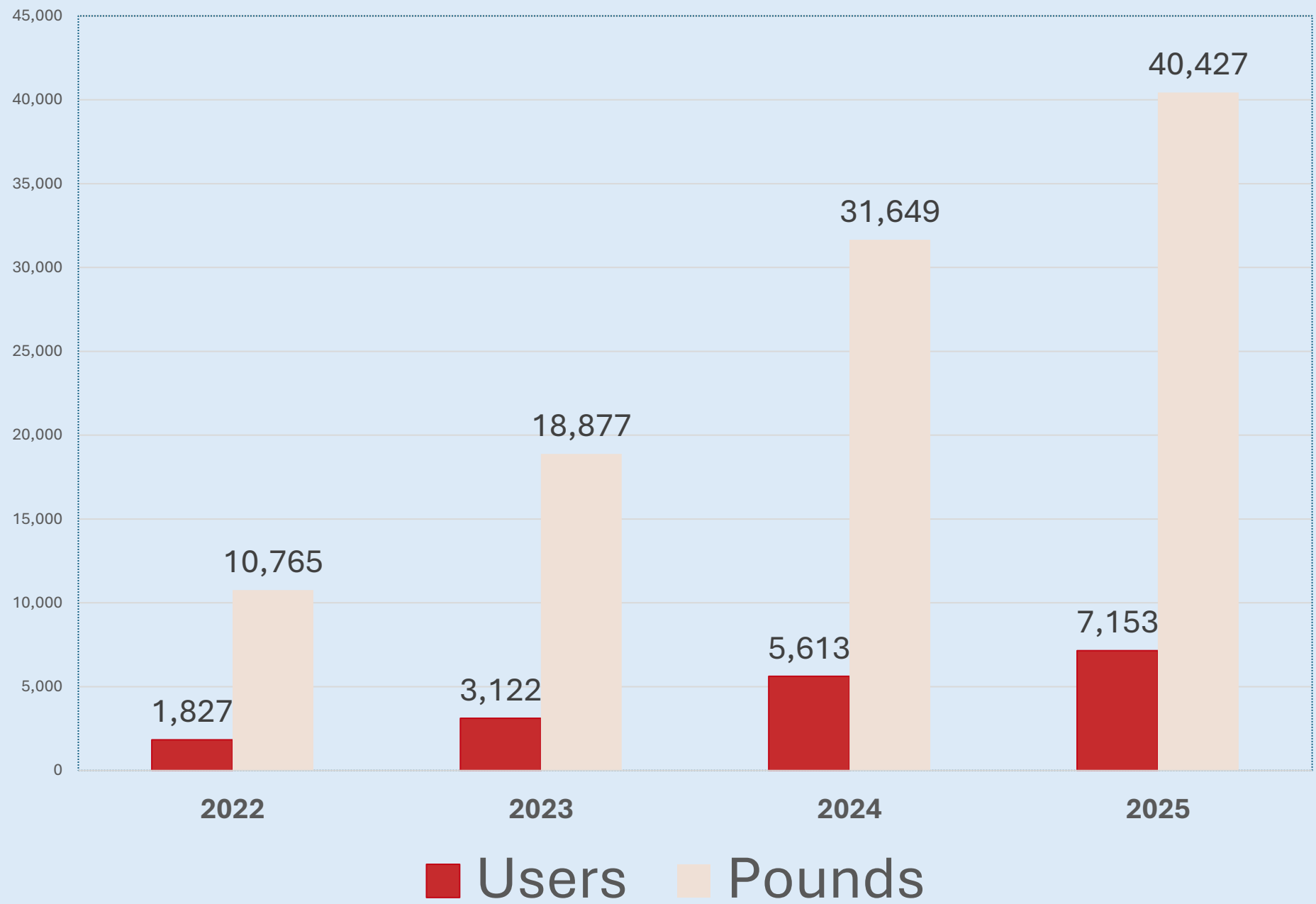


Farmers' Market Food Scraps Drop-off

- Drop off at selected neighborhood farmer's markets (4 markets in 2026)
- Sites are staffed to monitor for contamination, provide information, increase program visibility, etc
- Material accepted at the sites are controlled
- Scraps go to local farm for composting



Food Scraps Drop-off Progress



40,000 pounds (20 tons) is the weight of roughly 20 bison, which is a small herd

2026 Market Goal: Twenty-Four Giraffes (48,000 Pounds)



- YTD Totals* so far:
 - Nine market collection days so far
 - Westside Community Market (4/11)
 - Eastside Farmers' Market (4/28)
 - 614 users
 - 2,970.3 pounds collected
 - Averaging 4.84 pounds of scraps per user
- South Madison Market Opens 5/19
- Capitol View Market Opens 5/27

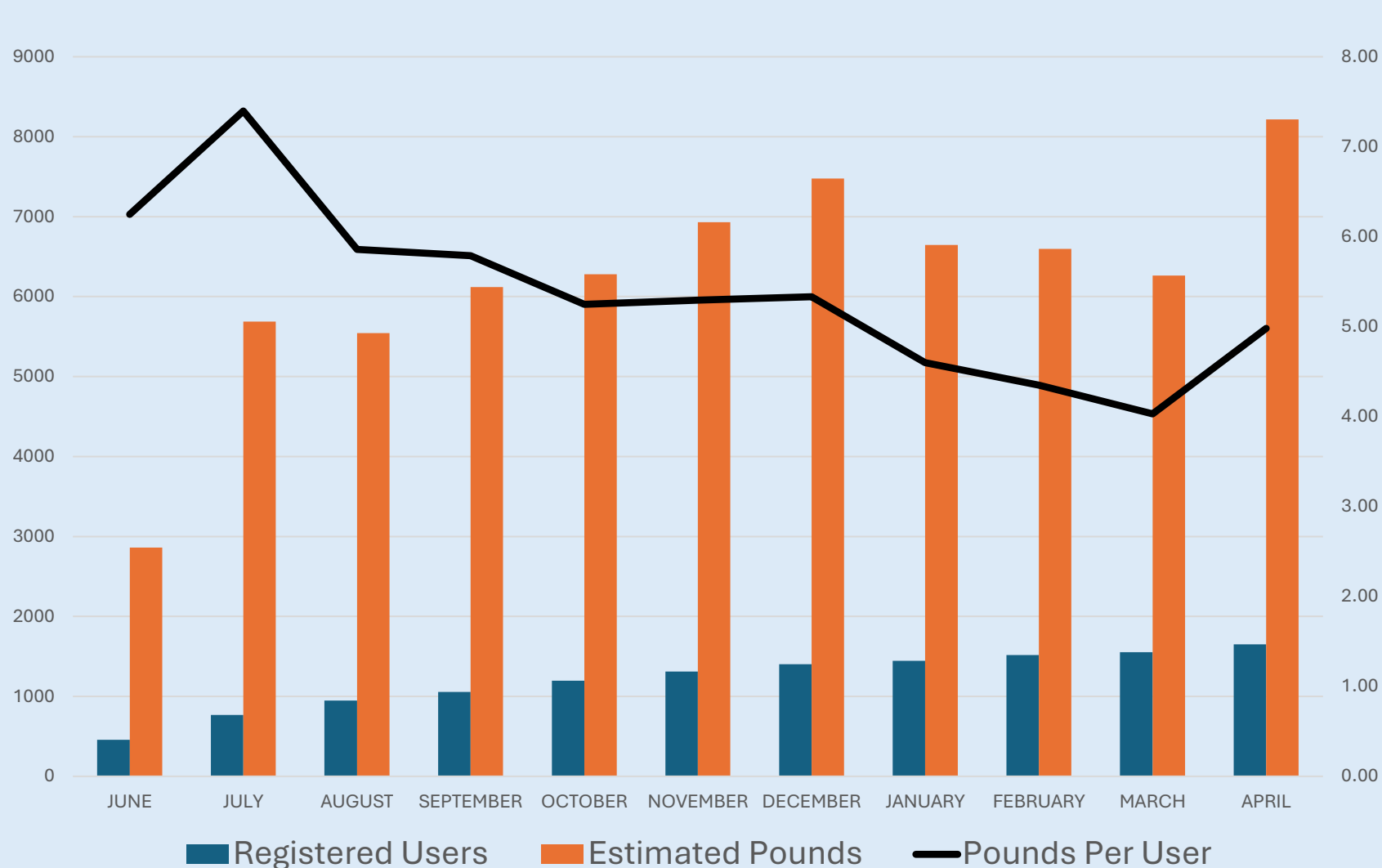
**includes numbers from 5/16; 5/16 totals not included on website goal tracker as of 5/18/26.*

Dane County Scraps Stops

- Locations in Madison & throughout Dane County
- Not staffed.
- Need to pre-register to get a code for padlocks.
- Scraps taken to Purple Cow to compost the food scraps



Vilas & Warner Scrap Stop Usage



Data (6/2025 thru 4/2026)

- 1,650 total registered users
- **Total Estimated Pounds: 68,616***
- **Overall Average Pounds Per Registrant: 5.37 pounds**

Contamination issues?

- Stickers, rubber bands, twist ties, bags are present; amounts are small.
- County contract with Purple Cow allows for some grace with contamination

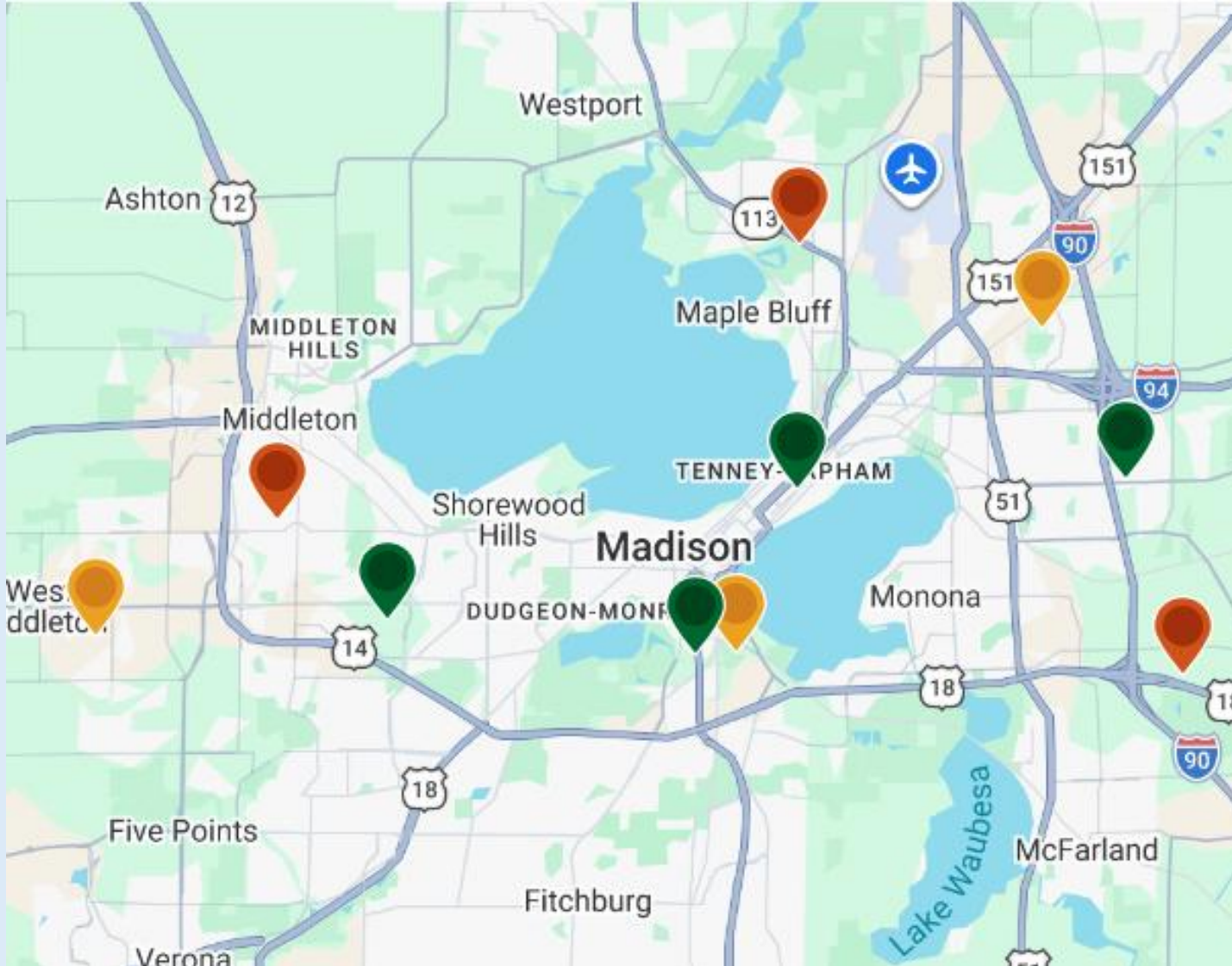
**corrects number previously reported at council meeting earlier this year; discovered an error in my spreadsheet.*

Food Scraps in 2026



- **Farmer's Market Drop-offs at four Locations**
- **Dane County scrap stop Grant Ends 5/31**
 - Warner Park continues; Streets Division will collect
 - Vilas Park stop will close; logistics a challenge
 - N. Westfield stop made public
- **Streets Division Drop-Off sites adding food scraps on 6/1/2026**
 - 1504 Quann-Olin
 - 4602 Sycamore Ave
 - 402 South Point Rd.

Ten Food Scraps Locations in Madison (as of June 1)

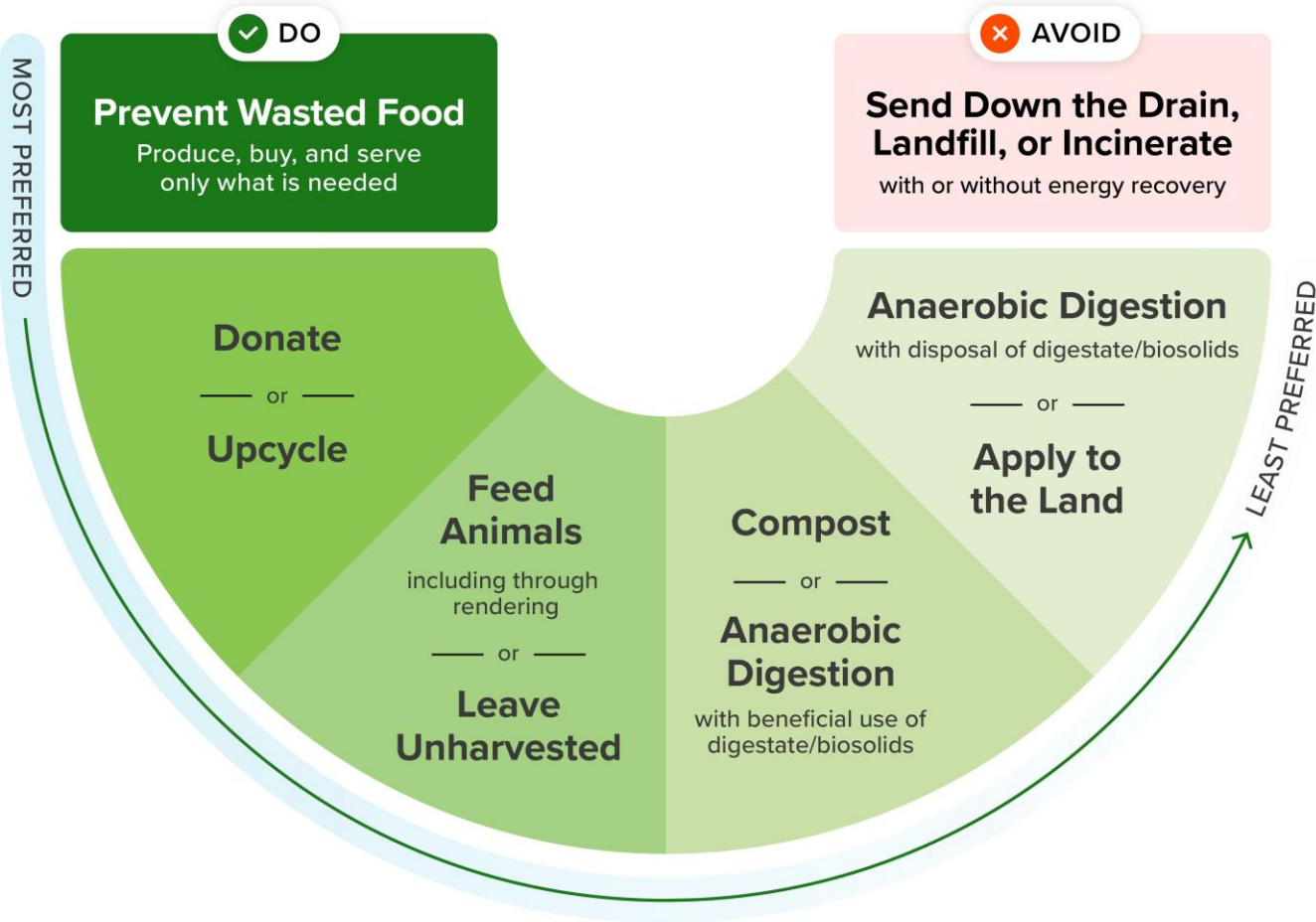


- Red/orange are Dane County Scrap Stops
- Green are seasonal farmers' markets
- Yellow are Streets Division drop-off sites
- Coverage isn't perfect; but hard to be mad at 10 locations
- How do we keep expanding?
 - Kiosks, or kiosk-like structures, have a cost
 - Labor, materials, fuel, etc.
 - Logistics
 - Contamination
 - Adding kiosks means accumulating more stickers, rubber bands, etc – what's the tipping point?
 - Curbside collection?
 - Costs for trucks & people
 - Need to inspect every cart each time we dump



Wasted Food Scale

How to reduce the environmental impacts of wasted food



December 2025

Composting isn't the first step

Links to resources on City of Madison's Food Scraps website to help prevent scraps & donate what you can.

[CityofMadison.com/FoodScraps](https://www.cityofmadison.com/FoodScraps)



Zero Waste / Recycling Feedback We Hear

- More of existing services
 - Weekly recycling pickup; more yard waste pickup; more drop-off site hours, etc.
- Textiles & shoes
- Plastic bags
 - And other plastic things in general
- Batteries & electronics
- *Furniture & mattresses*
- *Construction debris*
- Disposal questions:
 - Dog waste
 - Litter containers

ITEMS	COUNT
Sofa/Couch/Chair	2654
Wood furniture	1908
Mattress	1882
Box Spring	814
Cabinet - Wood	630
Carpet/Area rug	573
Other Wood Items	564
Other Plastic Items	472
Metal Bed Frame / Hide-a-bed frame	455
Wood/Lumber	448
Other Metal Items (filing cabinets, etc.)	392
Construction/Remodel debris	337
Microwave oven	313
Composite boards/lumber	309
Plastic Furniture (Patio chairs, etc.)	309
Door (wood)	250
Metal Furniture (patio chairs, etc.)	244
Plastic Storage Container	215
Pallet	202
Exercise equipment (Treadmill, etc.)	199
Glass Table Top / Mirror	184
Cabinet - Metal	172
Dehumidifier	166
Gas Grill	163
Toilet	139

Large Item Information

Total Work Orders Submitted
(YTD): 9,007



Recycling Survey



Please take the recycling survey available on our website if you haven't already.

cityofmadison.com/Recycling

Contact Information



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Recycling Coordinator / Public
Information Officer

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