

NJ New Food Waste Law:

What It Means & How Your EC Can Help

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50%

Reduction
Required

2035

Compliance
Deadline

1.5M

Tons/Year
Landfilled

About the NJ Composting Council

*Your partner in organics recovery,
composting & advocacy since 2018*

contact@njcomposting.com
www.njcomposting.com



Consult & Support

MSW food waste diversion program design, training, and consulting for municipalities and counties, including County Solid Waste Plan development.



Educate & Research

Programs with NJ Dept. of Agriculture, Universities, and NJ schools. Web apps, hands-on training, and research in food waste diversion composting and anaerobic digestion.



Advocate

Testify in Trenton, comment on legislation, and partner with statewide stakeholders. Currently co-developing NJDEP food waste guidance tool kit with Rutgers.

NJ Food Waste: The Scale of the Problem

1.5M

tons/year

landfilled or
incinerated in NJ

1.5M+

tons CO₂e

greenhouse gases
generated annually

350K

cars

equivalent annual
emissions



Landfill Crisis

NJ will lose 40% of its remaining landfill capacity in the next 10 years. Tipping fees have climbed to \$85–\$130/ton — and rising.



Infrastructure Lag

Towns want to compost and divert organics, but permitting is expensive and slow. Local capacity cannot grow fast enough without state support.

S2426/A2090: The New Food Waste Law

Signed into law — heres what you need to know

01 50% Reduction by 2035

Every NJ county must cut food waste landfilling/incineration by 50%, measured against a 2022 baseline.

02 County Solid Waste Plans

Food waste diversion must be incorporated into updated County Solid Waste Management Plans.

03 Eligible Pathways

Compliance counts toward food rescue/donation, composting, and anaerobic digestion. RNG pipeline injection or Class 1 renewable energy production are also credited.

04 Tiered Permitting

NJDEP must create a simplified tiered permitting structure to reduce barriers for small and mid-scale composting and AD facilities.

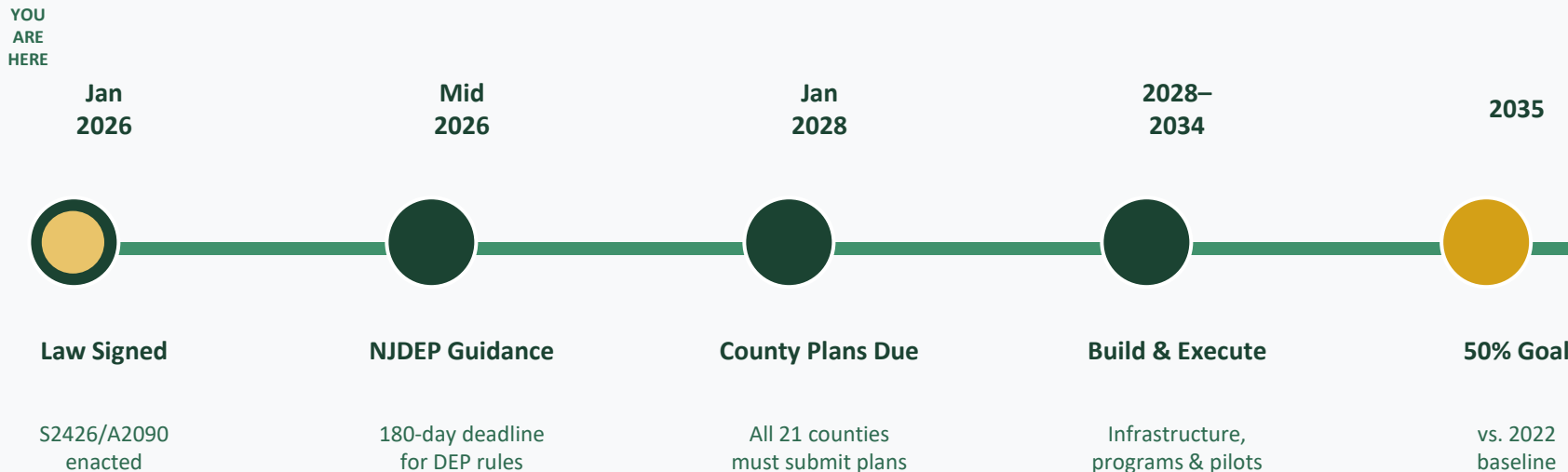
05 Timing

Counties must have reduction plans in place by Jan of 2028. NJDEP guidance required within 180 days of the mid-January 2026 signing.

06 NJDEP Guidance Coming

NJDEP is actively updating its website. NJCC and Rutgers are co-developing a county-level implementation guidance document.

Road to 2035: Key Milestones



💡 Your **Environmental Commission** plays a critical role in the 2026–2027 window - this is when municipal action can shape how your county's plan gets built.

Who Are the Largest Food Waste Generators?



Food Service & Hospitality

Hotels, restaurants,
catering



Healthcare & Institutions

Hospitals, nursing homes,
universities



Schools & Government

K-12, municipal
buildings, colleges



Retail & Supermarkets

Grocery stores, big
box retailers



Food Manufacturing

Processors, distributors,
packaging facilities



Residential

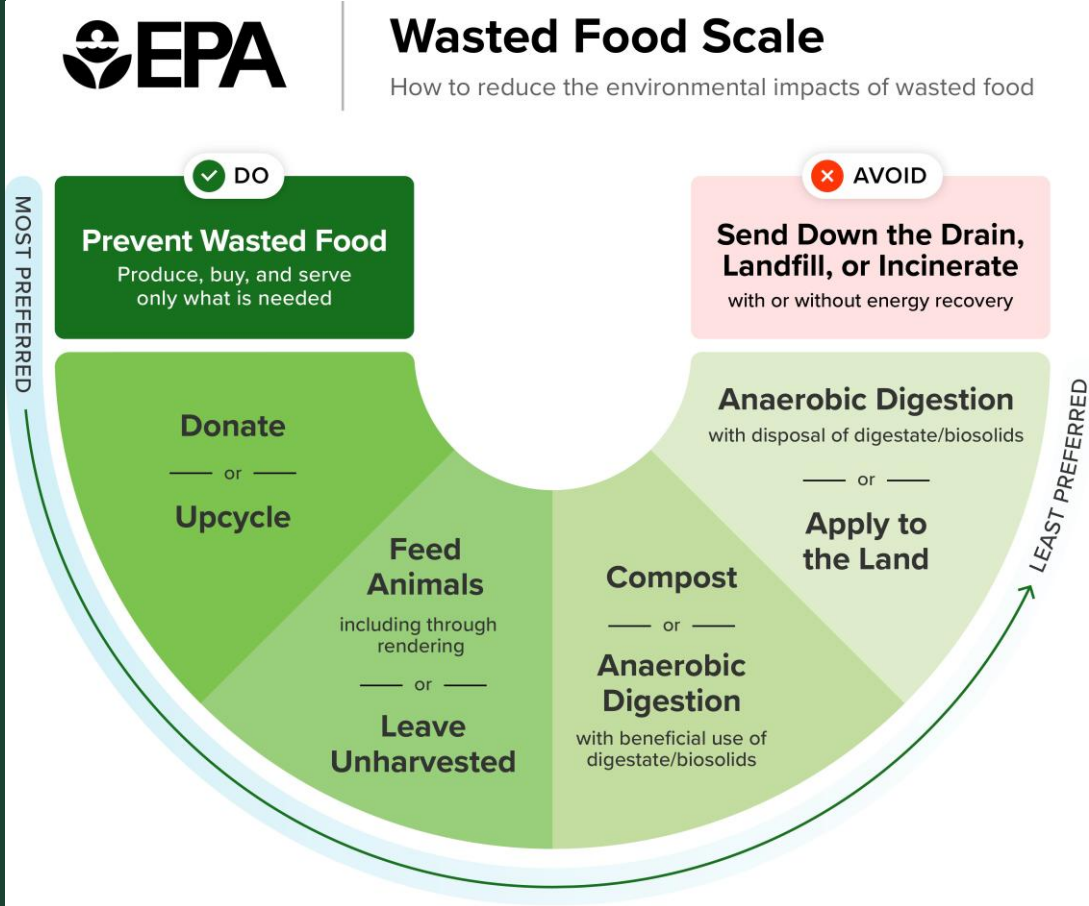
Households contribute
the largest single share

★ **Moat / All of these are in your municipality.**

The Food Recovery Hierarchy

S2426 counts ALL of these green pathways toward the 50% goal — not just composting. The preferred options reduce waste first; disposal is last resort.

Source: EPA Wasted Food Scale



Where Environmental Commissions Fit In

How S2426 Implementation Works

NJDEP

Sets rules, issues guidance, approves permits

Counties

Write Solid Waste Plans, report to DEP, coordinate infrastructure

Municipalities

Implement programs, enforce locally, set up drop-offs

Your EC

Advise, advocate, educate, monitor, champion

Your EC Unique Position



Voice of the environment in municipal government decisions



Assess local food waste generators and existing programs



Recommend municipal actions and policies to governing body



Connect residents and businesses to food rescue & composting resources



Hold the governing body and county accountable to Jan 2028 plan deadline

What Your EC Can Do Right Now

Practical actions for the 2026–2027 window

1 Map Your Local Generators

Use NJDEPs food waste generation map to identify top generators in your municipality. Share findings with your governing body.

2 Engage Your County SWAC

Get involved with your County Solid Waste Advisory Council. Ask how the municipality will be represented in the county's 2027 and 2028 plan.

3 Champion Food Rescue First

Connect local food businesses and institutions to food rescue organizations (Meal Recovery Coalition, Table to Table, Share My Meals). Highest impact, lowest cost.

4 Push for Composting Pilots

Advocate for a school, municipal building, or drop-off composting pilot. Use NJDEPs RD&D permit pathway to get started quickly.

5 Adopt an EC Resolution

Pass a resolution in support of the municipality meeting S2426 goals and requesting inclusion in county planning. This puts it on the record.

6 Educate & Engage Residents

Work with Sustainable Jersey's food waste action program. Host a backyard composting workshop and promote the NJDEP Food Waste Toolkit.

What Works: Lessons from Massachusetts

13.2%

Landfill reduction

The ONLY state of 5 studied to show significant impact

(Science, 2024)

*Five states studied:
CA, CT, MA, RI, VT*

Why Massachusetts Succeeded



Education Before Enforcement

Outreach and technical assistance came before penalties. Businesses were supported, not surprised.



3x More Inspections

MA conducted 3x more inspections per generator per year than any other state — visibility drives compliance.



RecyclingWorks Program

Free, state-funded on-site technical assistance for businesses. Removes the 'I do not know how' barrier.



Where Others Failed

CA, CT, RI, and VT passed similar laws but showed no measurable change — insufficient inspection capacity and infrastructure.

NJ Takeaway: Education, inspection capacity, and local infrastructure must come first.

Key Resources for Your EC



NJDEP Food Waste Toolkit

dep.nj.gov/sustainability/outreach-and-education/food-waste-toolkit/

Official DEP resources, fact sheets, and outreach materials



NJDEP 2023 Food Waste Reduction Plan

nj.gov/dep/dshw/food-waste/food_waste_reduction_plan.pdf

The states roadmap — foundational for EC advocacy



ReFED — Food Waste Insights Engine

insights.refed.org/

Data and solutions for food waste reduction by sector



NJ Composting Council

njcomposting.com

Technical assistance, training, and advocacy — contact@njcomposting.com



NJDEP Food Waste Generation Map

experience.arcgis.com/experience/ac8ce8bb55524201bc272121e5672fde

Interactive map of food waste generators by municipality



Sustainable Jersey — Food Waste Actions

sustainablejersey.com/actions/

Certification actions your municipality can take for points and recognition



Meal Recovery Coalition

mealrecoverycoalition.org/

Connect food businesses to food rescue organizations across NJ



ANJEC

anjec.org

Your primary resource for EC support, trainings, and advocacy guidance

Let's Turn This Law Into Action



Your Environmental Commission is exactly the kind of local champion
this law needs to succeed in NJ.

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 *NJ Composting Council | ANJEC 2026*

