

Program Development & Priorities

For the purposes of its Food Rescue and Composting Program, DEQ is using ReFED's Insights Engine¹ tool as a means of determining which food waste interventions would have the greatest methane reduction potential in Virginia. ReFED's tool allows users to sort a catalog of potential food waste solutions, evaluating solutions broadly, or focusing on specific impact metrics. Of the top ten solutions with the highest methane reduction potential, six solutions were identified as solutions that were relevant to the work of colleges, universities, and state agencies; the chart below identifies the solutions that will receive priority from DEQ under the Food Rescue and Composting Program:

Food Waste Interventions Ranked by Methane Emission Reduction Potential

Rank	Solution Name	Emission Reduction in Virginia (100 Year)	Cost per ton diverted	MTCH ₄ per ton of surplus food
1	Centralized Composting	7.83k Metric Tons CH ₄	\$203	0.029
2	Portion Size	4.77k Metric Tons CH ₄	\$18.5	0.060
3	Consumer Behavior Change Campaign	2.75k Metric Tons CH ₄	\$62.9	0.060
6	Waste Tracking (Foodservice)	1.96k Metric Tons CH ₄	\$1,130	0.062
8	Markdown Alert Applications	1.14k Metric Tons CH ₄	\$984	0.046
9	Community Composting	1.14k Metric Tons CH ₄	\$267	0.034

There are other solutions that are not part of the project: centralized anaerobic digestion, co-digestion at wastewater treatment plants, manufacturing line optimization, and meal kits.

Food Rescue & Composting Subaward Program

The Food Rescue and Composting Subaward Program aims to inspire initiatives across the Commonwealth to reduce food waste, establishing replicable and scalable policies and designs that can be adopted by others.

The program focuses on the following goals:

- Support statewide education on food waste reduction
- Provide opportunities for increased food rescue
- Reduce emissions associated with landfilled organic waste

Over the course of the five-year Climate Pollution Reduction grant period, DEQ will design and launch the Food Rescue and Composting Subaward Program. The program will award

¹ <https://insights-engine.refed.org/solution-database?dataView=total&indicator=total-100-year-mtch4-avoided&state=VA>

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approximately \$8.8 million to support an estimated 15-20 projects at colleges, universities, and state agencies in Virginia. Projects will be implemented over the course of a three-year subaward period. Awardees will be required to track and report on the outcomes of their projects. DEQ will evaluate projects based on their efficacy in preventing methane emissions and using food for its intended purpose.

Projects will be selected through a competitive award process that will evaluate projects for their cost effectiveness, feasibility, and holistic approach to preventing and diverting food waste. All funded projects will need to demonstrate their focus on food waste prevention, food rescue, and food waste composting. In addition to estimated expected methane reductions, projects will also be evaluated on their ability to support local food systems, making intentional efforts to integrate their projects into the surrounding community.