

HB 163
Food Waste and Solid Waste Reduction-
Grants, Fund, and Surcharge

Over one-third of the food produced in the United States is never eaten. This negligence wastes the calories and production resources equivalent to feeding more than 150 million people each year.¹ Further, the wasted food comprises one-fourth of landfill content and produces greenhouse gases during the decomposition process in a landfill. Reducing fifty percent of the food waste going to US landfills would be the equivalent of eliminating the greenhouse gas emissions from 21 coal-fired power plants or 15 million homes' energy use for a year.²

The MGA has taken steps to reduce food waste in the state based on the important priorities of first preserving and rescuing edible food for people who can eat it, then redirecting food residuals as according to the EPA's Food Recovery Hierarchy. For example, in 2020, Maryland set a goal of diverting 60% of food scraps by 2035. Our current food residuals recycling rate is 22.6%.³

This bill supports the expansion of Maryland's food residuals recycling in order to meet our required climate and environmental goals, creates mechanisms to discourage gratuitous use of landfills, and establishes a new program to encourage greater upcycling and remanufacturing of materials that would otherwise be disposed of.

This bill:

- ✓ Establishes an On-Farm Organic Diversion and Composting Grant in order to support on-farm composting, educate the public about composting, preserve and rescue food for consumption by individuals, and create more cold storage across the state.
- ✓ Requires the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) to use funds from the Reduce, Recycle, Remanufacture Fund to support school-based food waste diversion of edible food and composting efforts for food residuals
- ✓ Authorizes MDE to establish a statewide solid waste disposal surcharge. The initial surcharge would be \$2 per ton of solid waste to fund the Reduce, Recycle, and Remanufacture Fund.
- ✓ Authorizes counties to submit requests to MDE to establish local solid waste disposal surcharge programs
- ✓ Makes the Reduce, Recycle, Remanufacture Fund permanent
- ✓ Establishes the Food Waste Reduction and Diversion Grant Program and the Circular Economy Incentive Program

For more information please contact:
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¹ Executive Summary of EPA's Part 1 From Farm to Kitchen: The Environmental Impacts of U.S. Food Waste. Available at: <https://www.epa.gov/land-research/farm-kitchen-environmental-impacts-us-food-waste>

² Page 11 of EPA's Food Waste Management: Quantifying Methane Emissions from Landfilled Food Waste. Available at: <https://www.epa.gov/land-research/quantifying-methane-emissions-landfilled-food-waste>

³ Page 33 of Maryland Department of the Environment's Maryland Solid Waste Management and Diversion Report- 2022