

Food: Environmental Impacts and Actions (Including Actions You Can Take)

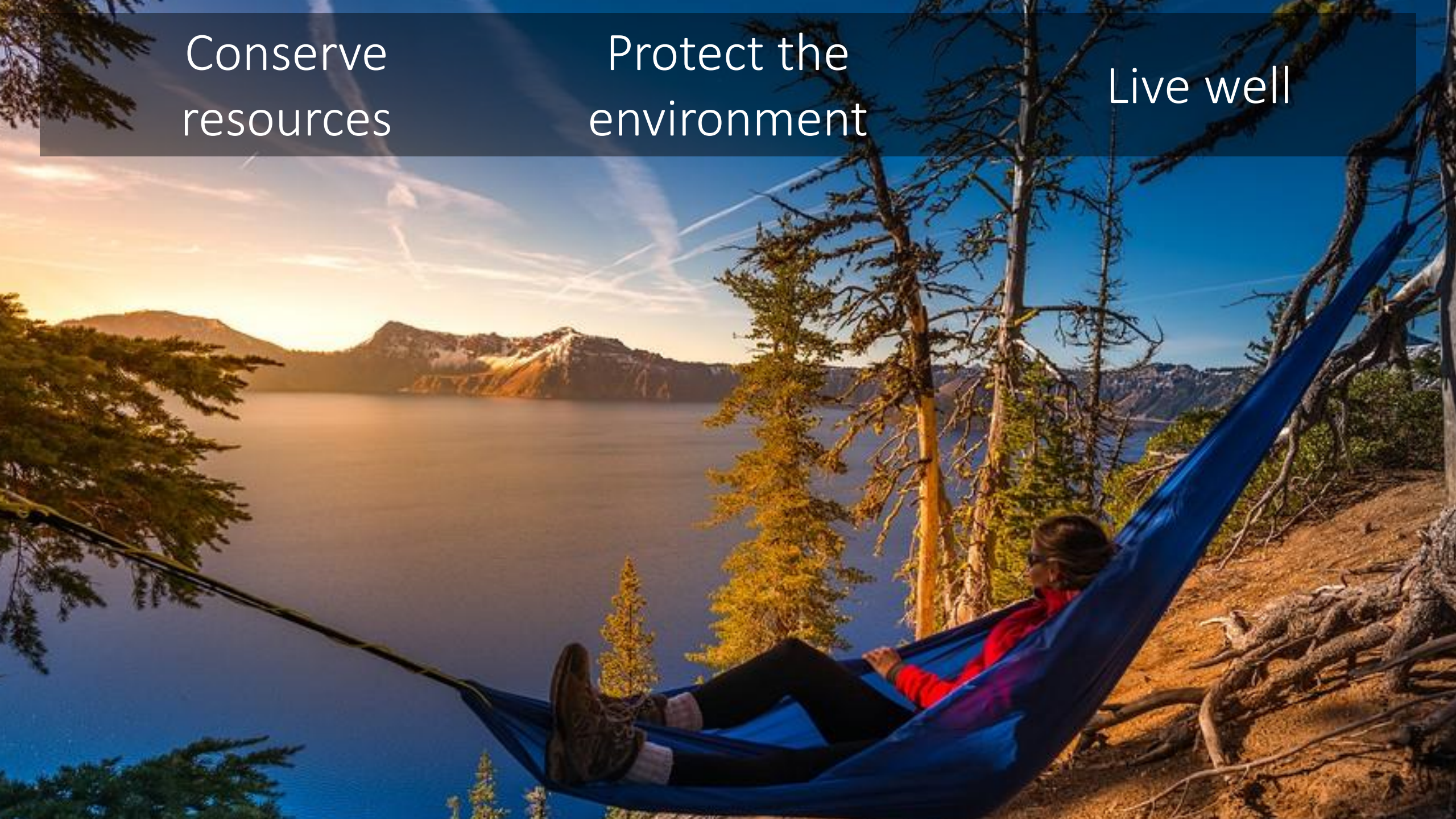
Association of Gleaning Organizations
December 12, 2024



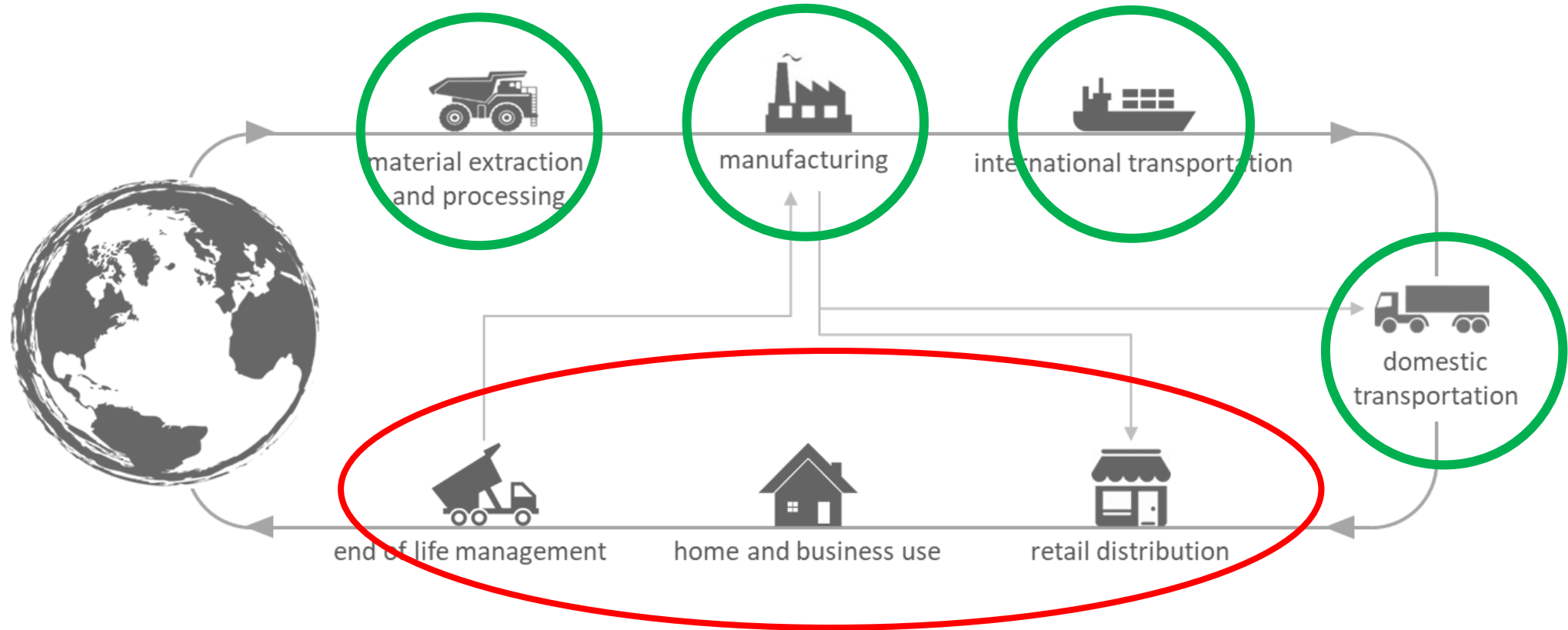
Conserve
resources

Protect the
environment

Live well



the “life cycle” of materials



Why Food?

35%

of the food we grow and
import for human
consumption
is wasted



Annual resources used to grow wasted food

Land: Over 140 million acres of agricultural land, an area the size of California and New York state combined



Energy: 664 terawatt-hours of energy, enough to power over 50 million U.S. homes for a year



Water: 5.9 trillion gallons of fresh water, equivalent to the water use of well over a third of all U.S. households

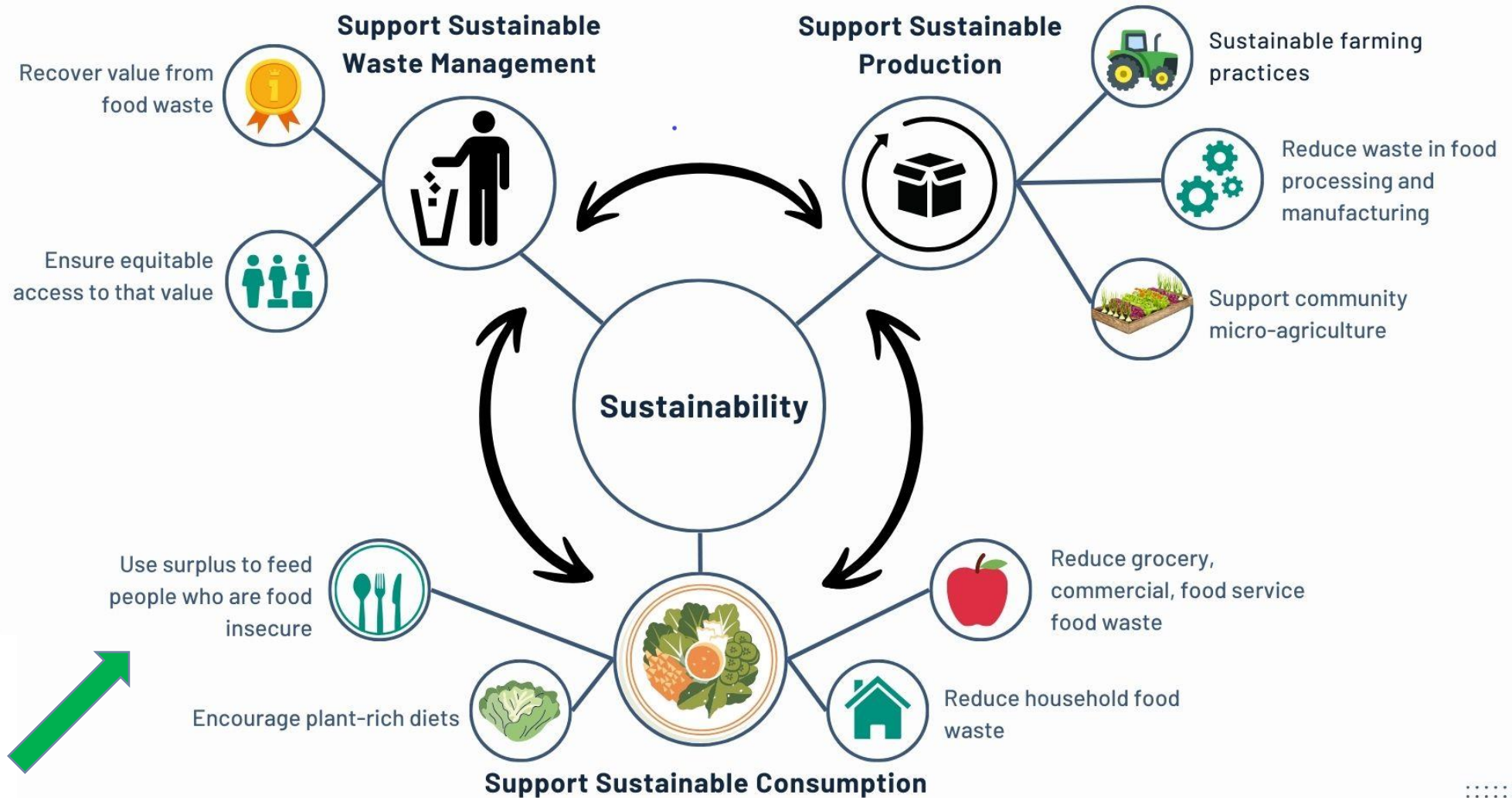


Fertilizer: 14 billion pounds of fertilizers, which the Environmental Protection Agency estimates is enough to grow all of the fruits, vegetables and grains grown and consumed in America each year

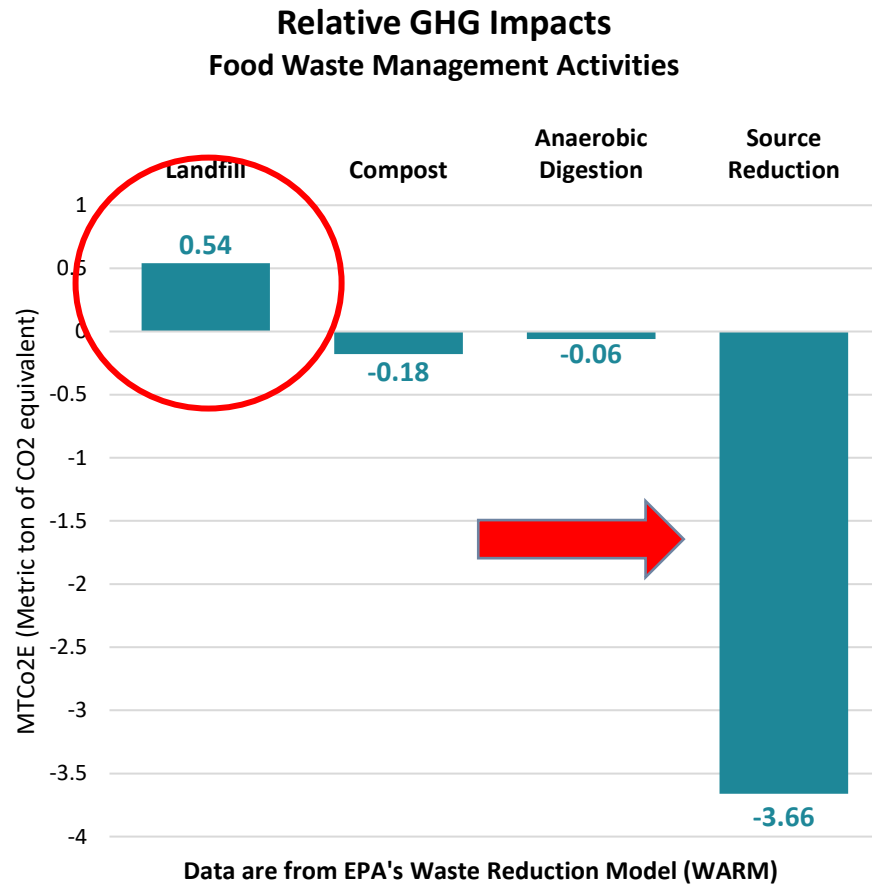


Food systems

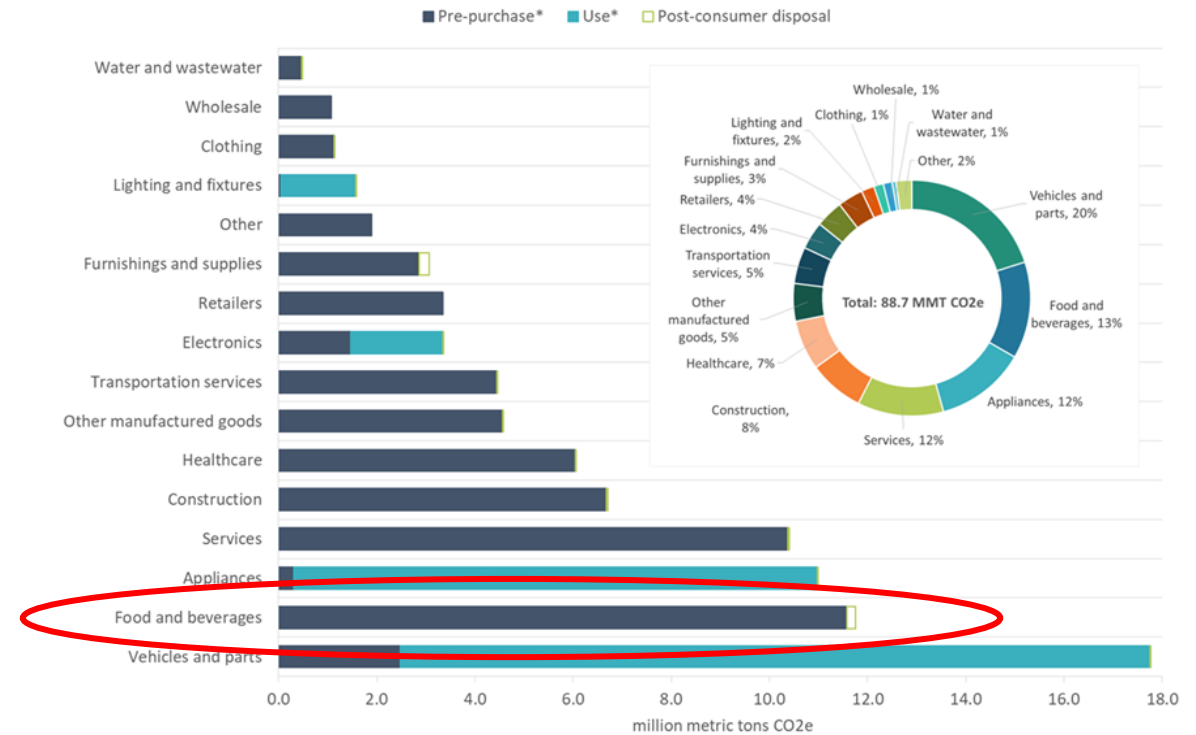
REDUCE IMPACTS OF FOOD SYSTEMS



Food and greenhouse gas emissions



EPA GHG Data

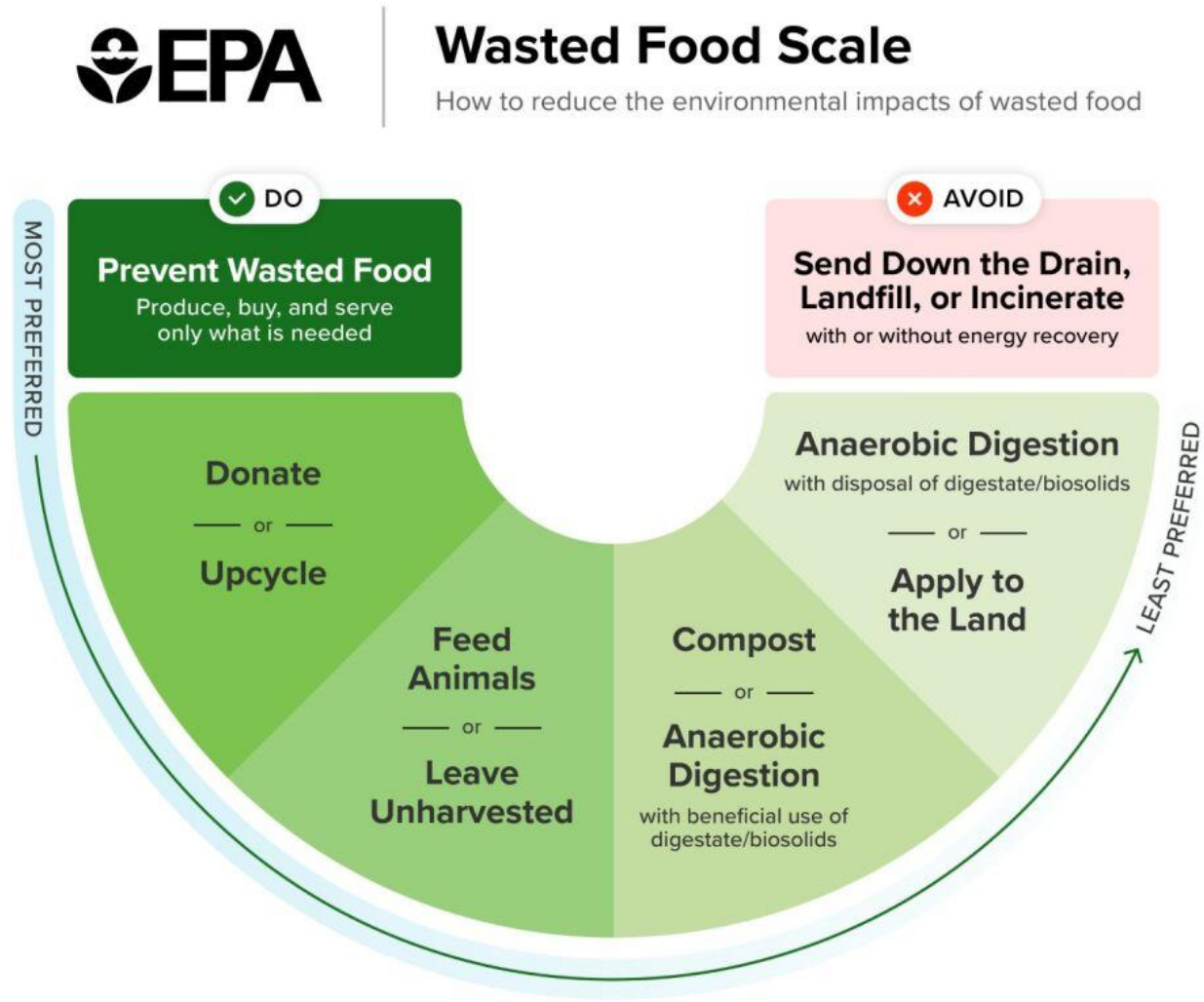


* "Pre-purchase" are all emissions that occur prior to final purchase, including production, supply chain, transport, retail and wholesale. "Use" refers to emissions resulting from the use of vehicles, appliances, electronics and lighting. Other categories (e.g., food and clothing) have use phase emissions that are accounted for elsewhere. For example, emissions from cooking and laundering are both assigned to the category of "appliances", which include ranges and clothes dryers.

2015 Oregon GHGs emissions by category + lifecycle stage

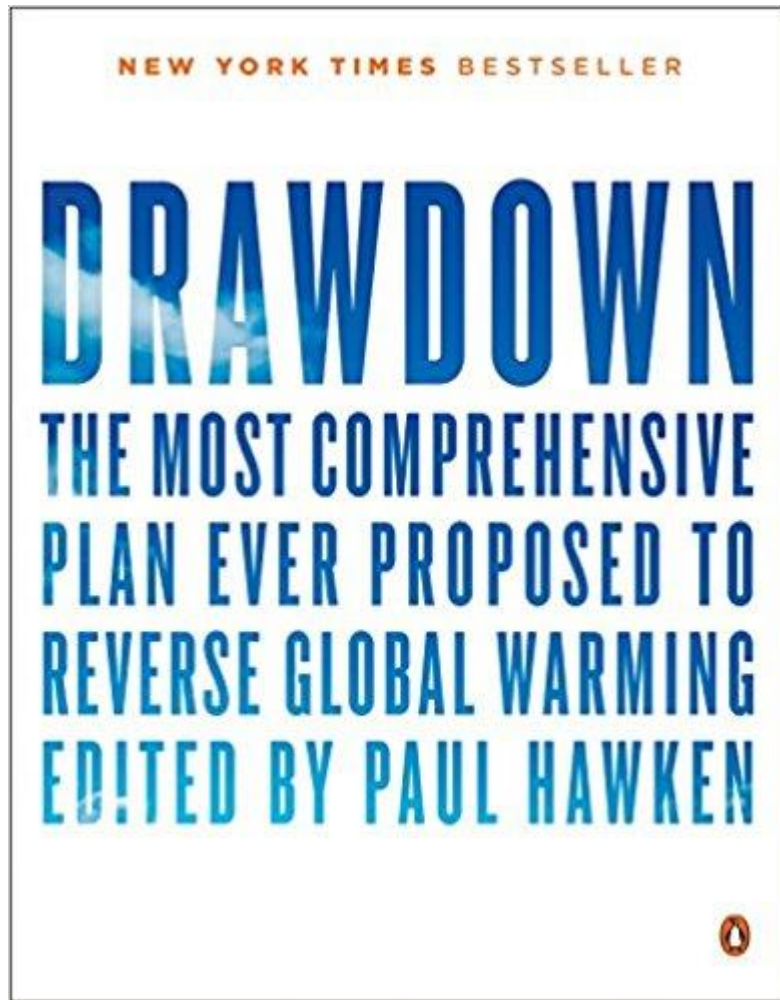


EPA food waste scale



October 2023

We need to prevent food waste



#1

FOOD
REDUCED FOOD WASTE

#2

FOOD
PLANT-RICH DIET

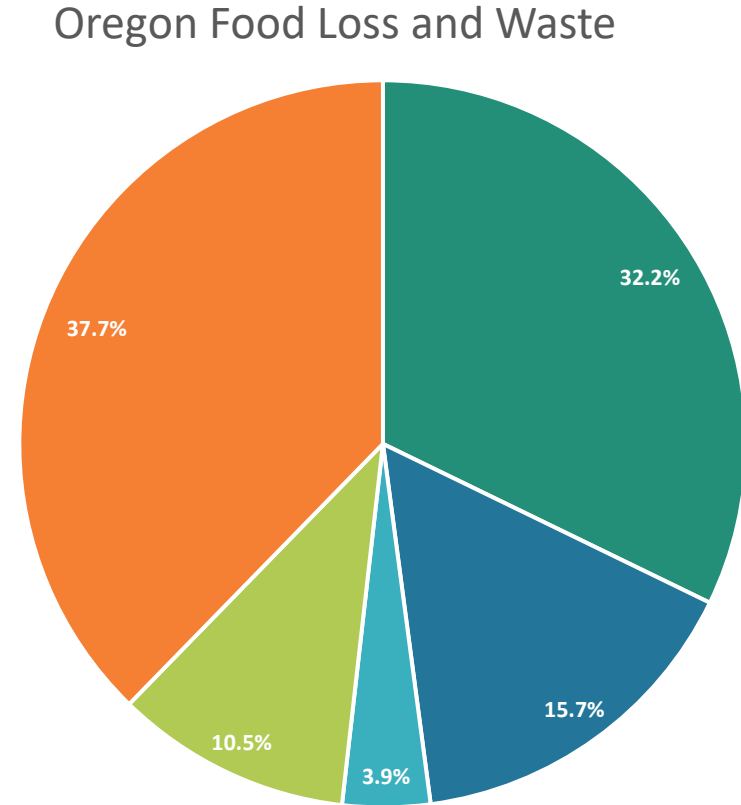
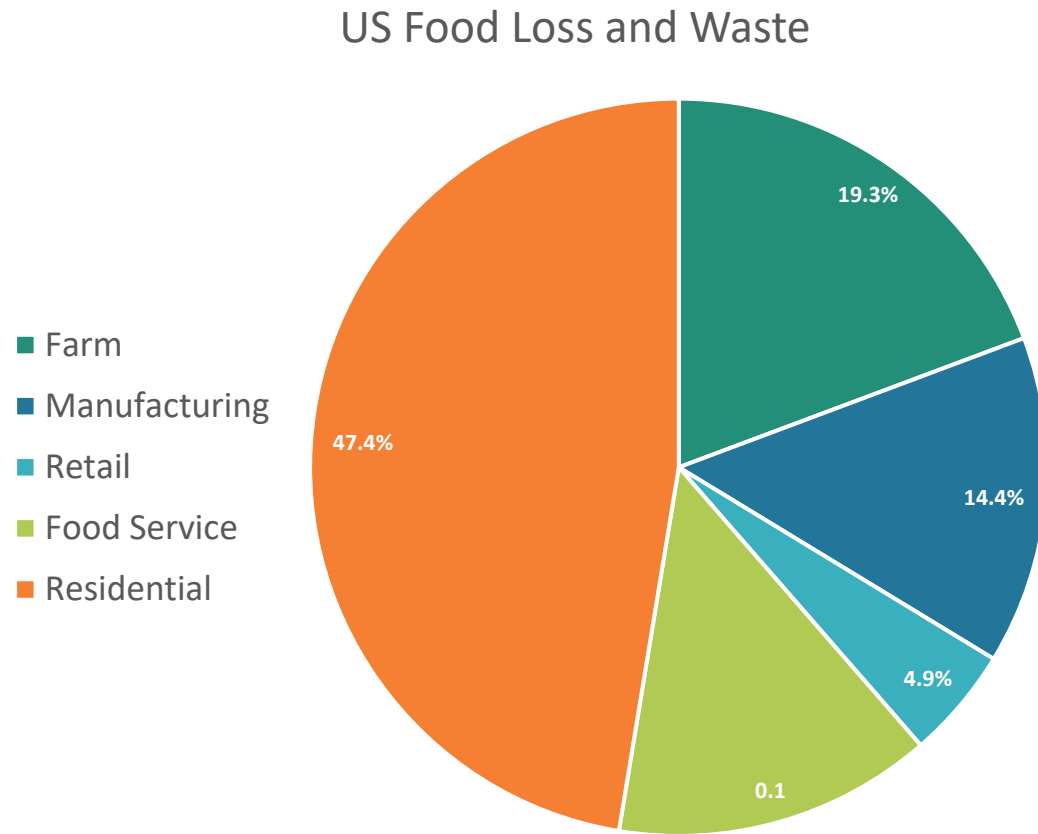
#43

FOOD
METHANE DIGESTERS

#90

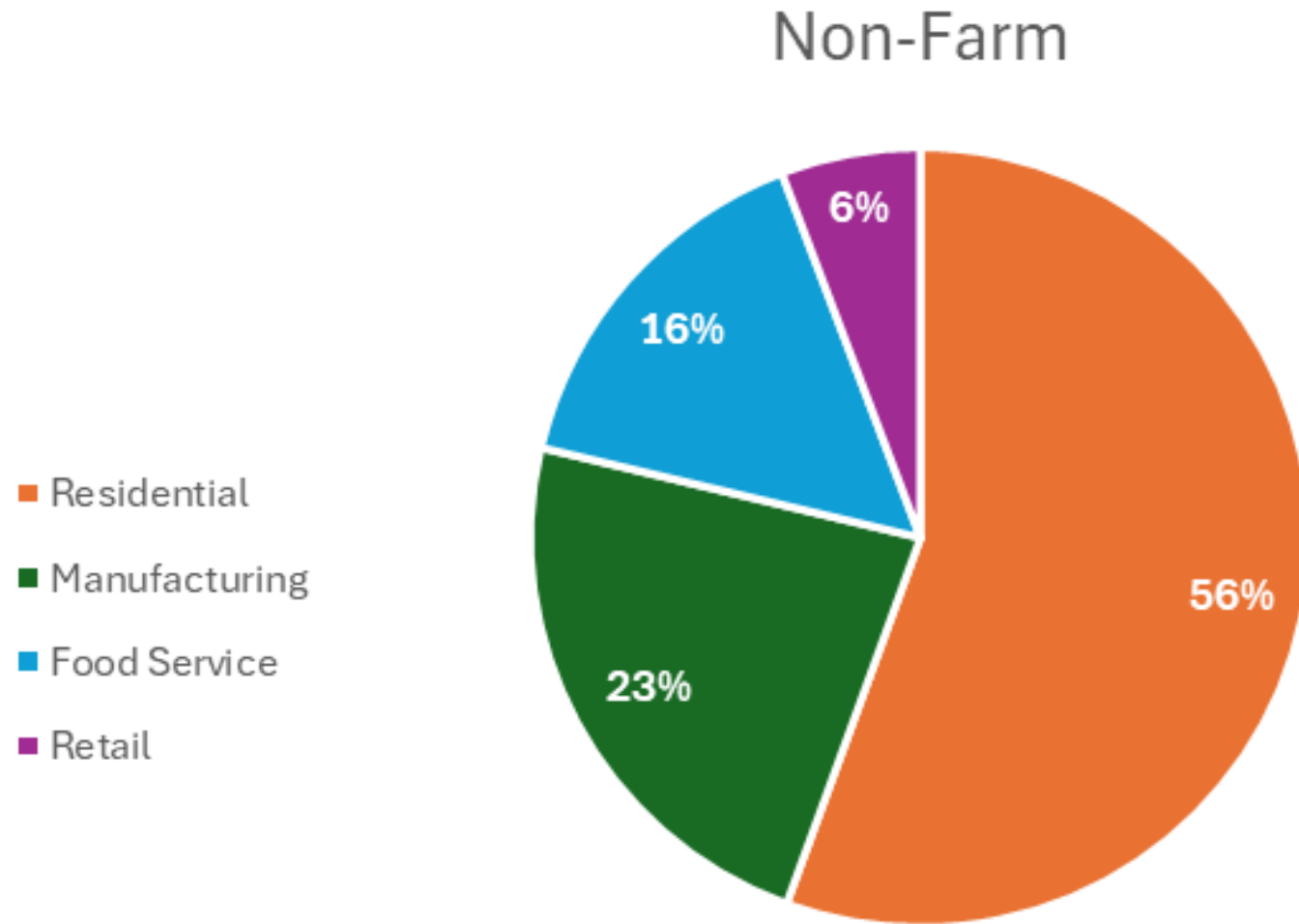
FOOD
COMPOSTING

Food loss and waste – all sectors



From ReFED, 2023

Food loss and waste -- Oregon



From ReFED, 2023

Food waste in Oregon – facts and figures



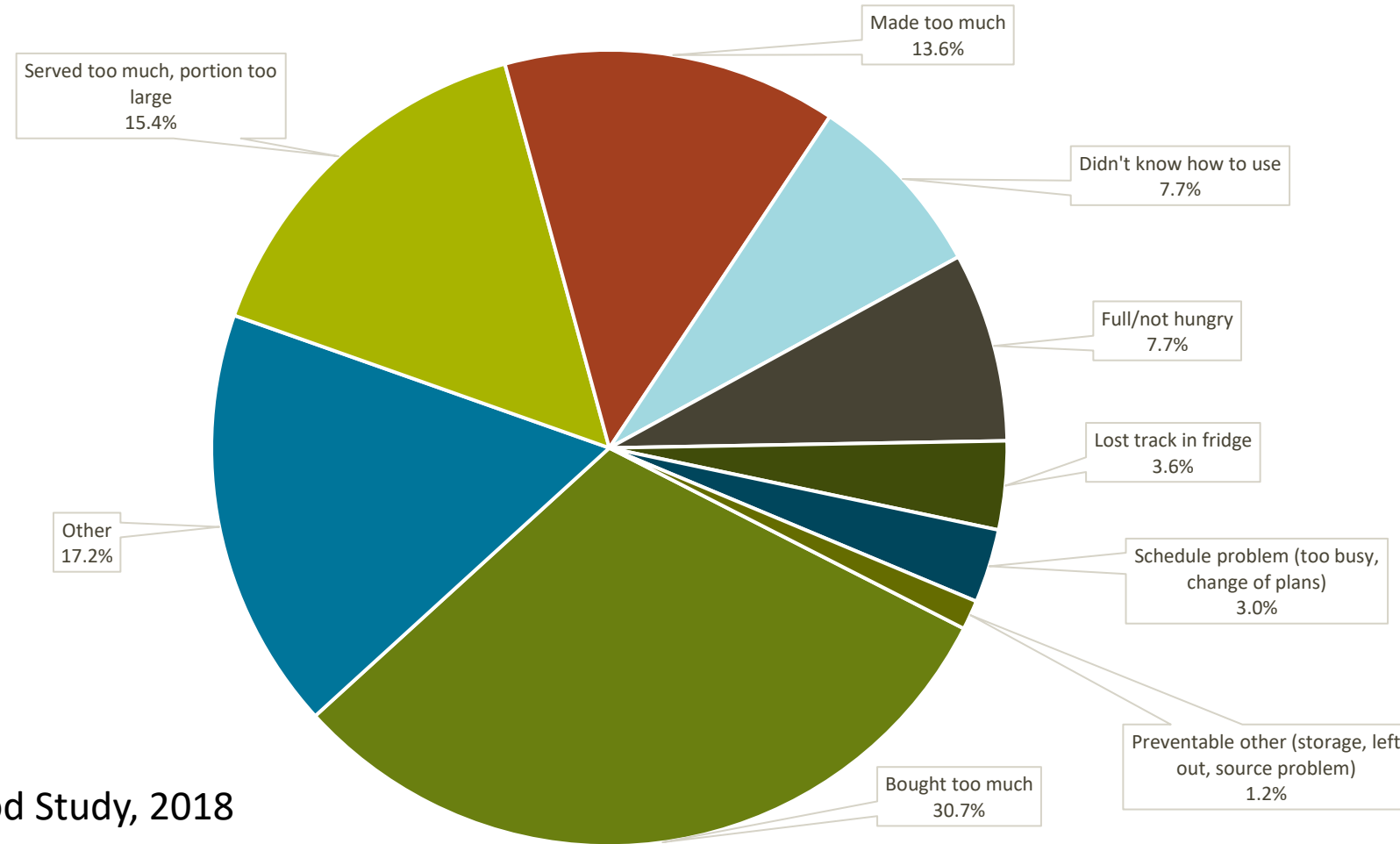
- Oregon households throw away an average of 6.3 pounds of food per week (or 2.3 pounds per capita).
- That adds up to an annual per household loss of \$1800.
- Most commonly discarded foods – fruits and vegetables.
- Everyone wastes food – no significant differences among household size or type, urban or rural, or income level.

Opportunity for prevention

Of the food waste we throw away ...



Household study – food loss reasons

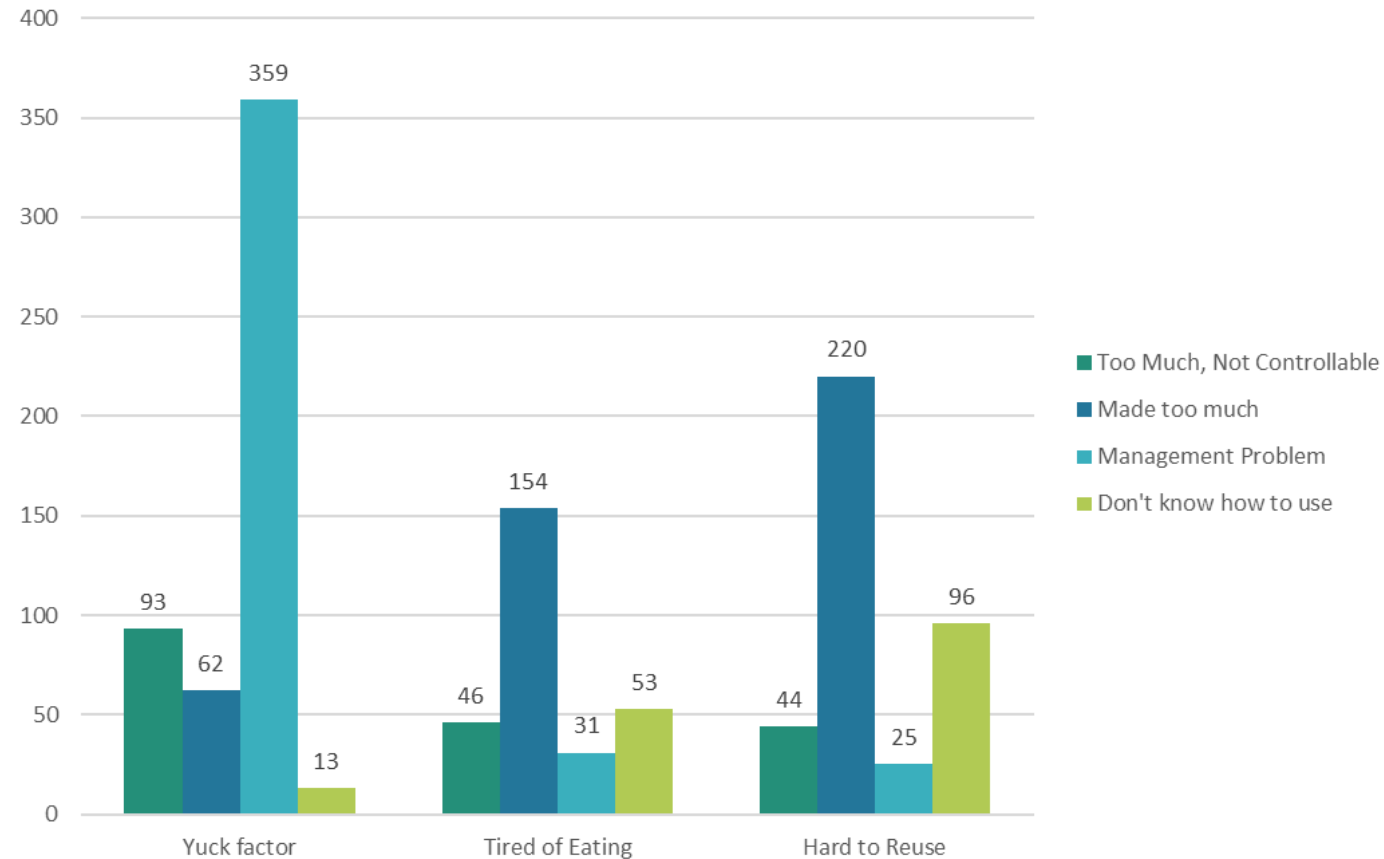


DEQ Wasted Food Study, 2018



Household study – food loss reasons

Relationship of immediate and root loss reasons to each other



DEQ Wasted Food Study, 2018



It's simple



Take Simple Steps

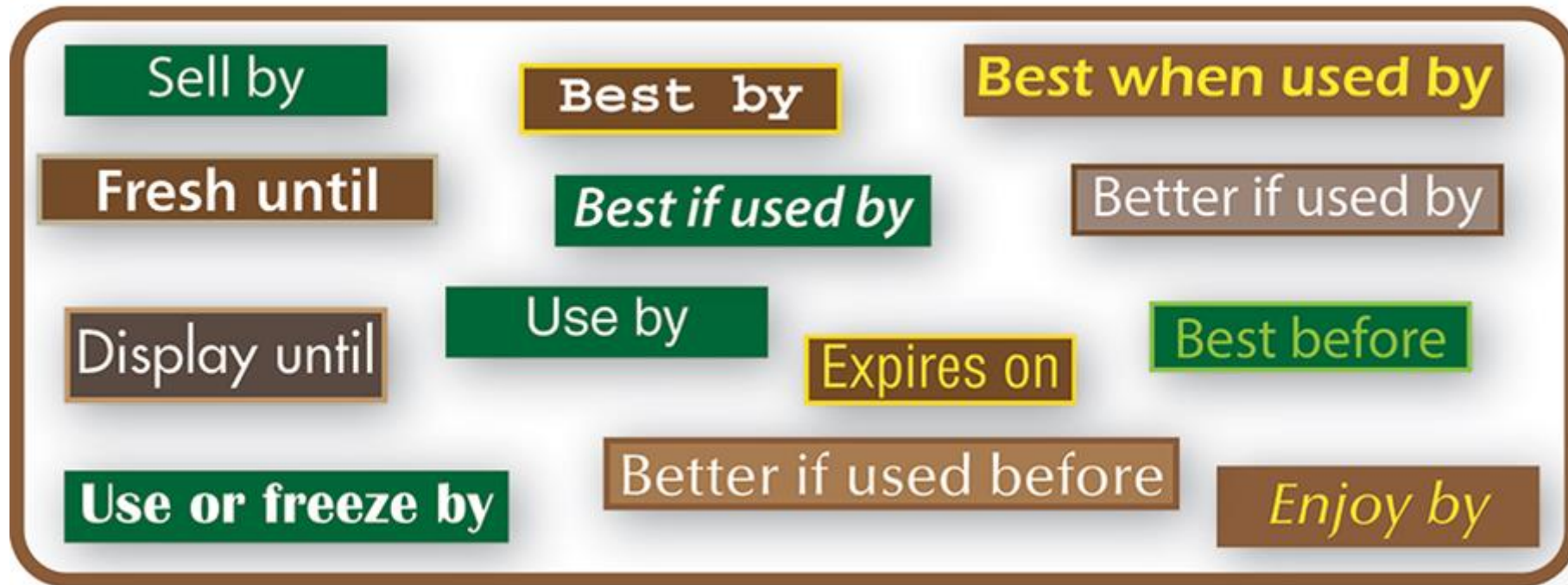
All around the state people are taking simple steps to cut down on wasted food & wasted money

Reduce Spoilage

- Store food that will go bad soonest in visible part of fridge or pantry
- Keep track of what you have at home or what you need to use up before it goes bad
- Create meals from what you have on hand
- Finish all your leftovers
- Freeze for later use
- Monitor temperature in fridge to make sure it's at best setting to preserve your food
- Check fridge and pantry before you shop

Trust your senses

- Confusing date labels may contribute to 20% of food waste in the home (FDA)



www.eatortoss.com

Food Waste Prevention Week – April 7-13, 2025

- Social media campaign to raise awareness and drive action; associated online and live events – webinars, art contests, food drives, community service projects, including gleaning.
- Oregon specific activity:
 - ✓ Schools programming - classroom curriculum & cafeteria waste reduction
 - ✓ K-12 video contest
 - ✓ Local events - e.g. “Bread to Tap,” farmer’s markets, week-long food waste prevention “fairs.”

Become a partner at:

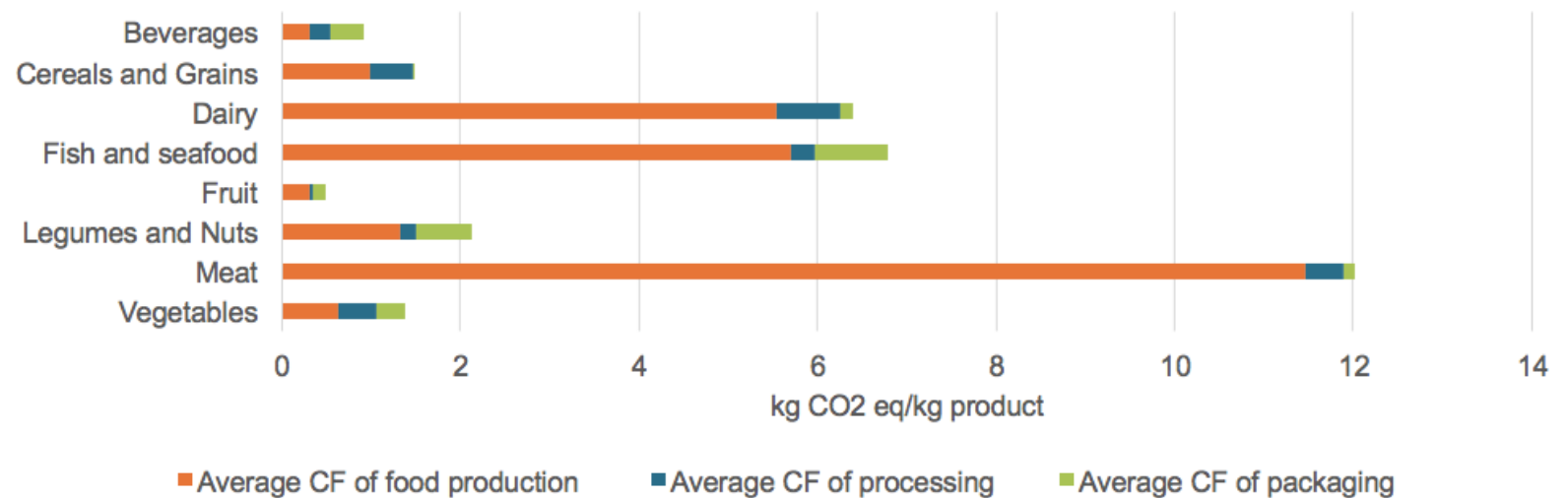
www.foodwastepreventionweek.com



Packaging



Average carbon footprint of food product production, processing and packaging



Transportation



Distribution of energy used in US food system

Thanks!

Elaine Blatt

elaine.blatt@deq.oregon.gov



Oregon's 2050 Vision for Materials Management:

Oregonians in 2050 produce and use materials responsibly – conserving resources – protecting the environment – living well

