



Comments on CalRecycle Organics Grant Program

By NRDC's Food and Agriculture Program

1. Food waste reduction projects should go beyond food rescue to also consider source reduction projects that clearly document tonnage and GHG reduction. Not including source reduction is akin to building renewable energy without encouraging energy efficiency. An [analysis conducted by Eureka Recycles](#) – the organization that provides curbside recycling to the city of Minneapolis – concludes that 1,260 lbs CO₂e are saved per ton of food waste prevented, and that including prevention alongside collection of source separated organics can reduce the per-ton program costs by more than \$100/ton. Quantification of tons prevented is possible for some projects, such as with LeanPath software, which can track savings of specific food types.
2. NRDC supports source reduction and food rescue efforts as a stand-alone category. We recognize that this is not a priority for this year, but encourage that there be a placeholder for this category in future funding rounds. The best way to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from food waste is to reduce the quantity of waste in the first place.
3. Consider raising the 5% limit for salaries and outreach for food rescue and/or source reduction components of projects. Reduction projects typically require significant outreach in order to encourage food donations and consistent, reliable staffing to collect food. Infrastructure alone for food reduction projects will only be effective if these other pieces are in place.
4. Consider broadening the definition of infrastructure beyond waste processing facilities. Information technology as well as equipment such as scales, cameras, and temperature recording technology all have proven results in either documenting tonnage reductions, enabling source reduction, or enabling food rescue.