

Wasted!

Food Waste

Issue, Causes, Impact

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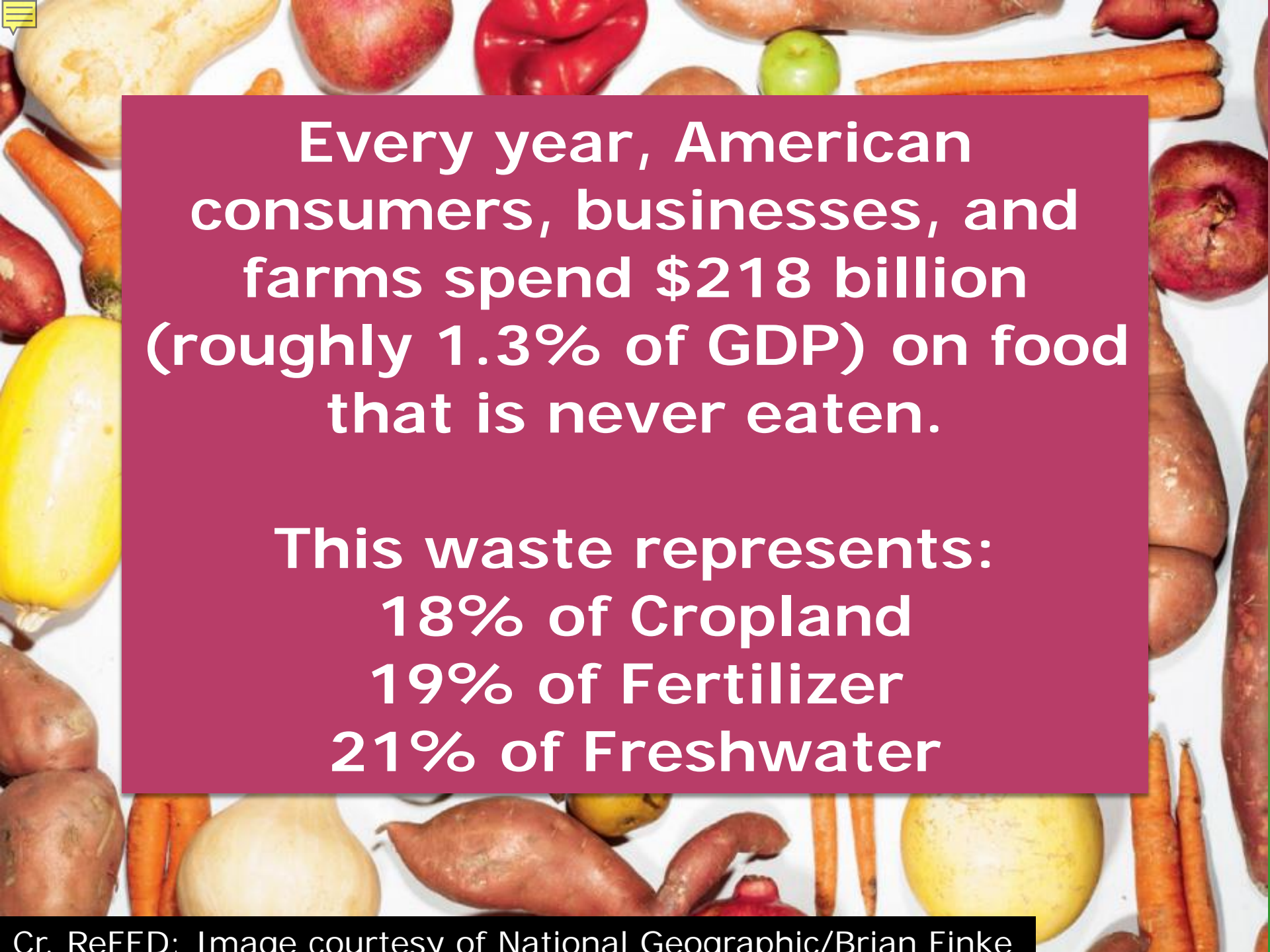
62.5 Million Tons of Food is Wasted in the United States

➤ *Around 40%* of all food grown & produced



Where Does It Go?

- 52 million tons of food is sent to landfills annually
- 10 million tons is discarded or left unharvested on farms



Every year, American consumers, businesses, and farms spend \$218 billion (roughly 1.3% of GDP) on food that is never eaten.


This waste represents:

- 18% of Cropland**
- 19% of Fertilizer**
- 21% of Freshwater**

Food Waste in Maryland

- Food waste & yard trimmings (organics) make up nearly one-third of the municipal solid waste stream in Maryland
- Only an estimated 9.6% of food waste is composted



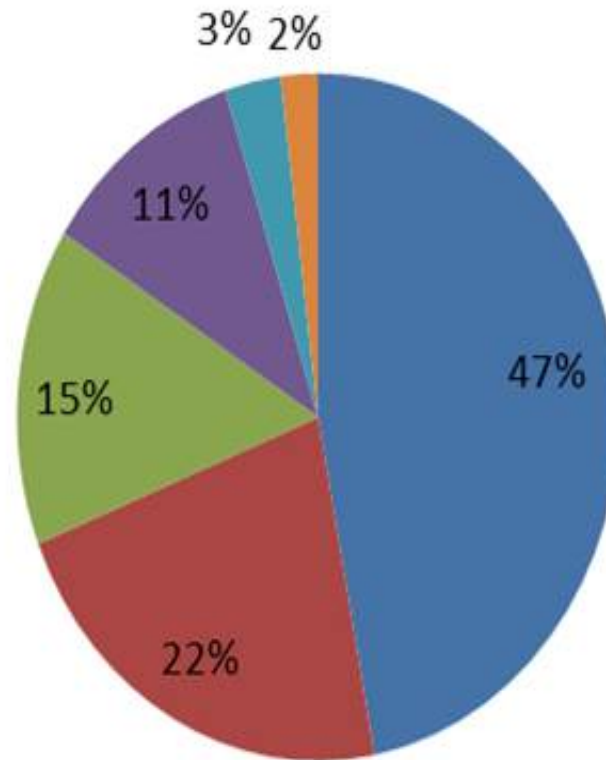



An estimated **13% of carbon pollution emissions** in the U.S. are related to the growing, manufacturing, transporting, & disposal of food

- Food is the single largest component in municipal landfills
 - Food waste generates methane
- Landfills are the third largest source of methane in the country

Wasted Food

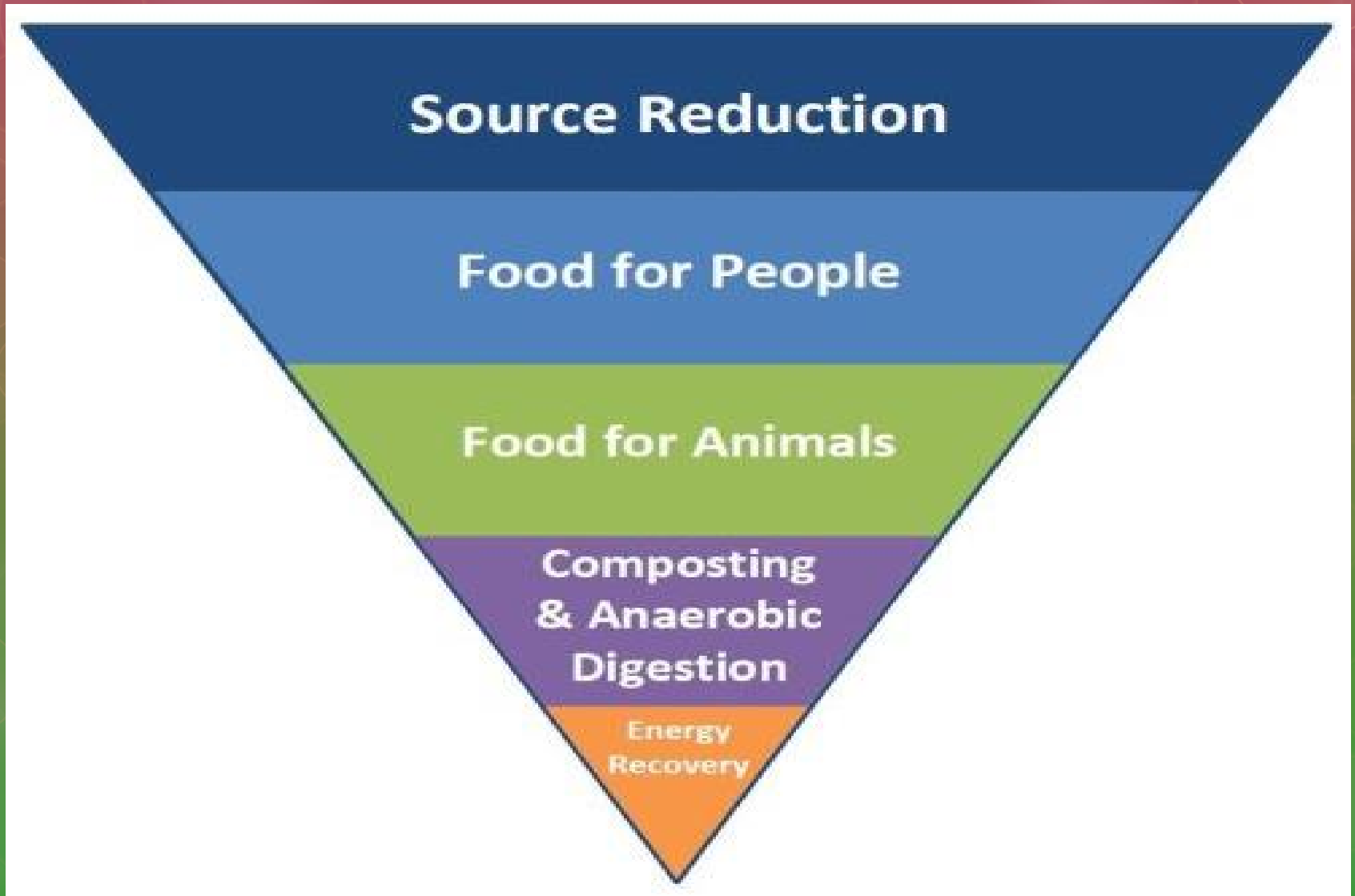
■ Residential - 47% ■ Full Service - 22% ■ Quick Service - 15%
■ Institutional - 11% ■ Manufacturers - 3% ■ Grocery stores - 2%



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- As much as 85% of this waste results “downstream” at consumer-facing businesses (e.g., restaurants) & homes
 - The average American family throws out around a quarter of food purchases
 - ✓ About \$1,600 each year

Meanwhile, more than
14% of Allegany County
residents grapple
with food insecurity

Food Recovery Hierarchy



- ✓ Decrease solid waste generation
- ✓ Mitigate environmental impacts & resource use
- ✓ Improve food security
- ✓ Create jobs
- ✓ Conserve water & water pollution
- ✓ Reduce greenhouse gas emissions



Food Waste Reduction *Tips*

- Improve food preparation procedures
- Adjust portion sizes
- Monitor food expiration dates closely
- Eat the food in your fridge before shopping for more
- Eat leftovers

Food Expiration Labels Quality Not Safety

Enjoy **Sell**
Expiration
by date **Best**
Freshest
Use



Know Your Food

- Handle food properly & keep frozen or refrigerated
- Rotate items & eat them prior to their labeled “best by date”
- If the “best buy date” has passed, check it. If mold is growing or it smells bad—toss it (or compost it!). *If not...eat it!*
 - ✓ The exception: deli meats, unpasteurized cheeses, and sausages

EAT ME FIRST!



RI Food
Policy Council

DEVELOPED IN COLLABORATION WITH THE US EPA



Consider “Ugly” Produce



Food Recovery

- Food Recovery
 - ✓ Share table
 - ✓ Food rescue pantries
- Food Gleaning
- Food to Animals



Feed Chickens/Livestock



Recycle = Composting

