

1 point

FS Credit 6.1

**Food Waste Reduction, Donation & Composting****Intent**

Support food security programs, soil restoration, and waste reduction through food waste reduction, donation and composting programs.

**Health Issues**

According to the U.S. EPA, roughly 20% of food produced in the U.S. is disposed of prior to consumption.<sup>1</sup> A 1998 Memorandum of Understanding between the U.S. EPA and the American Hospital Association targeted a reduction in total waste volume. Food and food waste products are the second largest constituent of the health care waste stream, comprising close to 20% of the solid waste volume in medical facilities with food service operations. Food donations both reduce facility solid waste disposal costs and reduce the need to produce and purchase duplicate food items for non-profits and charities such as homeless shelters and food kitchens. Beneficial reuse of organic matter diverts waste constituents from disposal while also contributing to ecosystem health. Composting organic matter and applying it to the soil increases soil micronutrients, and reduces reliance on chemical fertilizers and their associated industrial, ecologic and health burdens.

**Credit Goals**

- Develop and implement a food waste reduction and donation program for usable food, as deemed by state health code and other regional regulators.
- Develop and implement a food waste composting program consistent with Department of Health and solid waste regulations, for collection from all food use areas including but not limited to: catering, patient rooms (where possible by regional regulation), cafeteria and food preparation areas.
- Develop and implement food waste reduction, donation and food waste composting written management plans and include in the overall Waste Management Plan outlined in GGHC WM Prerequisite 1.
- Estimate and track pounds of composted and donated food and include under the recycling section of the Waste Management Waste Profile outlined in GGHC WM Prerequisite 2.
- Provide controlled areas to facilitate removal of food waste, consistent with an Integrated Pest Management (IPM) plan as outlined in GGHC ES Credit 3: Integrated Pest Management.

<sup>1</sup> U.S. Environmental Protection Agency EPA, <http://www.epa.gov/wastewise/pubs/wwupda7.pdf>

## FS Credit 6.1 continued

### Food Waste Reduction, Donation & Composting

#### Suggested Documentation

- ❑ Compile and annually review documentation demonstrating food waste reduction by tracking waste data (by weight) through the Waste Generation and Profile outlined in GGHC WM Prerequisite 2 Waste Generation Profile and Measurement.
- ❑ Compile and annually review reduction, donation and compost plan and include updates in the Waste Management Plan: GGHC WM Prerequisite 1.
- ❑ Prepare and annually update a space program and plan showing the area(s) dedicated to food waste collection and storage (and composting if applicable).
- ❑ Compile and annually review copies of contract(s) with food waste hauler, composter, food donation contractor (or others) demonstrating compliance with credit goals.

#### Reference Standards

There is no reference standard for this credit.

#### Potential Technologies & Strategies

- **Credit Synergies:** *Coordinate implementation of this credit with GGHC IO Prerequisite 1: Integrated Operations & Maintenance Process; GGHC SSM Credit 1: Site Management; GGHC SSM Credit 2: Reduced Site Disturbance; GGHC SSM Credit 5: Connection to the Natural World; GGHC WM Prerequisite 1: Waste Management Plan; GGHC WM Prerequisite 2: Waste Generation Profile and Measurement; GGHC ES Credit 1.1-1.2: Environmentally Preferable Cleaning: Policy Development; GGHC ES Credit 3: Indoor Integrated Pest Management; GGHC FS Credit 1: Sustainable Food Policy and Plan; GGHC FS Credit 2: Sustainable Food Education and Promotion; GGHC FS Credit 3: Local, Sustainably Produced Food Purchasing; GGHC FS Credit 4: Reusable & Non-Reusable Products; GGHC FS Credit 5: Hospital Supported Agriculture: Food and Farm Linkages; GGHC FS Credit 6.2: Food Services Recycling; GGHC FS Credit 7: Food Vendors; GGHC FS Credit 8: Chemical Management for Food Services.*
- Implement food service programs to reduce volume of unconsumed prepared food. Strategies include such programmatic innovations as “room service”, “meals on demand,” “just in time” food preparation, control of excessive late trays (duplicate patient trays), mitigate sometimes wasteful catering and physician feeding procedures, maximize yields from fresh produce and meat, and limit spoilage through improved handling procedures, or other programs that have been demonstrated to reduce the quantity of unconsumed food.
- Store food waste destined for composting in secure locations outside of patient areas to protect the building occupants from coming in contact with it.
- Work with state environmental regulator and/or policy makers to pull entities together to find outlets and support composting in a health care environment.
- A hospital’s food preparation area generates the largest amount of food waste, by weight, and is a good place to start implementation of the food donation and waste reduction program.
- Site material and waste handling areas as close to the food services department as possible to facilitate baling and/or storage of recyclables and waste for preparation and storage prior to removal.

## FS Credit 6.1 continued

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- Implement on-site composting programs for food wastes and compostable non-reusable food service items, or contract with private or municipal compost ventures or small-scale farmers for handling of food waste.
- Include the requirements associated with the food waste collection system in the space program, including storage spaces. Determine size of spaces based upon volume of projected waste and length of time anticipated for storage. Consider Integrated Pest Management issues outlined in GGHC ES Credit 4: Integrated Pest Management in design.
- Donate Emergency Preparedness food to a food bank one month prior to the food's expiration date.
- Adjust inventory levels on perishables to reduce waste due to spoilage or dehydration.
- Request that suppliers take back shipping boxes for reuse or recycling.
- Distribute condiments from behind the counter instead of offering self-service.
- Educate cafeteria users through signage and brochures.
- Review state Department of Health Code for guidance on food composting in a health care facility.

### Resources

Food Donation Page from Minnesota Technical Assistance Program  
<http://www.mntap.umn.edu/source/13-4/Sr998-g7.htm>

Jamie Harvie, Michelle Gottlieb, Roberta Anderson and Marie Kulick, *Green Guide for Health Care Food* Technical Brief, <http://www.gghc.org>

Health Care Without Harm's Environmentally Preferable Purchasing Food Service Ware Fact Sheet,  
<http://www.noharm.org/details.cfm?ID=1456&type=document>

Health Care Without Harm's Biobased food service ware and fact sheet,  
<http://www.noharm.org/details.cfm?ID=1659&type=document>

Practice Greenhealth, 10-Step Guide to Composting in Healthcare Facilities,  
<http://www.practicegreenhealth.org>

Practice Greenhealth, Composting Page, <http://www.practicegreenhealth.org>

Practice Greenhealth, Donation and Surplus Programs, <http://www.practicegreenhealth.org>

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) food waste reduction fact sheet,  
<http://www.epa.gov/epaoswer/non-hw/reduce/food/food.htm>

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) food donation fact sheet,  
<http://www.epa.gov/wastewise/pubs/wwupda7.pdf>

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) WasteWise program, <http://www.epa.gov/epaoswer/non-hw/reduce/wstewise/index.htm>