

Food Waste Prevention & Management Study

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DNR Update



This Food Waste Prevention & Management Study was prepared on behalf of the Iowa Department of Natural Resources. The project was funded by a Solid Waste Infrastructure for Recycling (SWIFR) Grant through the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.



1

Identify opportunities to reduce food waste in the state of Iowa.

2

Review existing food donation and food waste processing infrastructure.

3

Consider options to increase food waste management for productive uses in Iowa.

Study Goals



Food Waste:

An overarching term to describe food that was not eaten and was instead thrown away and disposed of in a landfill.

Study Components – Current State



Quantity of food waste generated



Options for food waste management (for example, food rescue and donation, composting, anaerobic digestion at water resource recovery facilities)



End markets for organics products (like finished compost and biogas)

Study Components – Gap Analysis



Location of food waste processing infrastructure and population centers



Potential costs to upgrade existing organics facilities to begin accepting food waste

Study Components – Considerations



Identify strategies for reducing food waste at home and for food service providers/restaurants



Consider options for onsite management of food waste



Review how other states manage food waste, and policies that can be used to reduce food waste

Study Components – Identify Potential Targets and Actions to Reduce Food Waste Statewide



Key Findings

The Problem of Food Waste



- The average lowan disposes of **200 pounds** of food per year at home. About $\frac{1}{4}$ of that was thrown away in its original packaging.
- Nearly **40%** of food in the U.S. is never eaten.

The Problem of Food Waste



- The average American family spends **\$3,000 per year** on uneaten food.
- The Food Bank of Iowa estimates that **1 in 8 Iowans** and **1 in 6 Iowa children** (about 385,000 Iowa residents) face food insecurity.
- Food waste has **environmental, economic, and social impacts**.

FOOD WASTE IN IOWA

In Iowa, food waste is managed in a variety of ways.

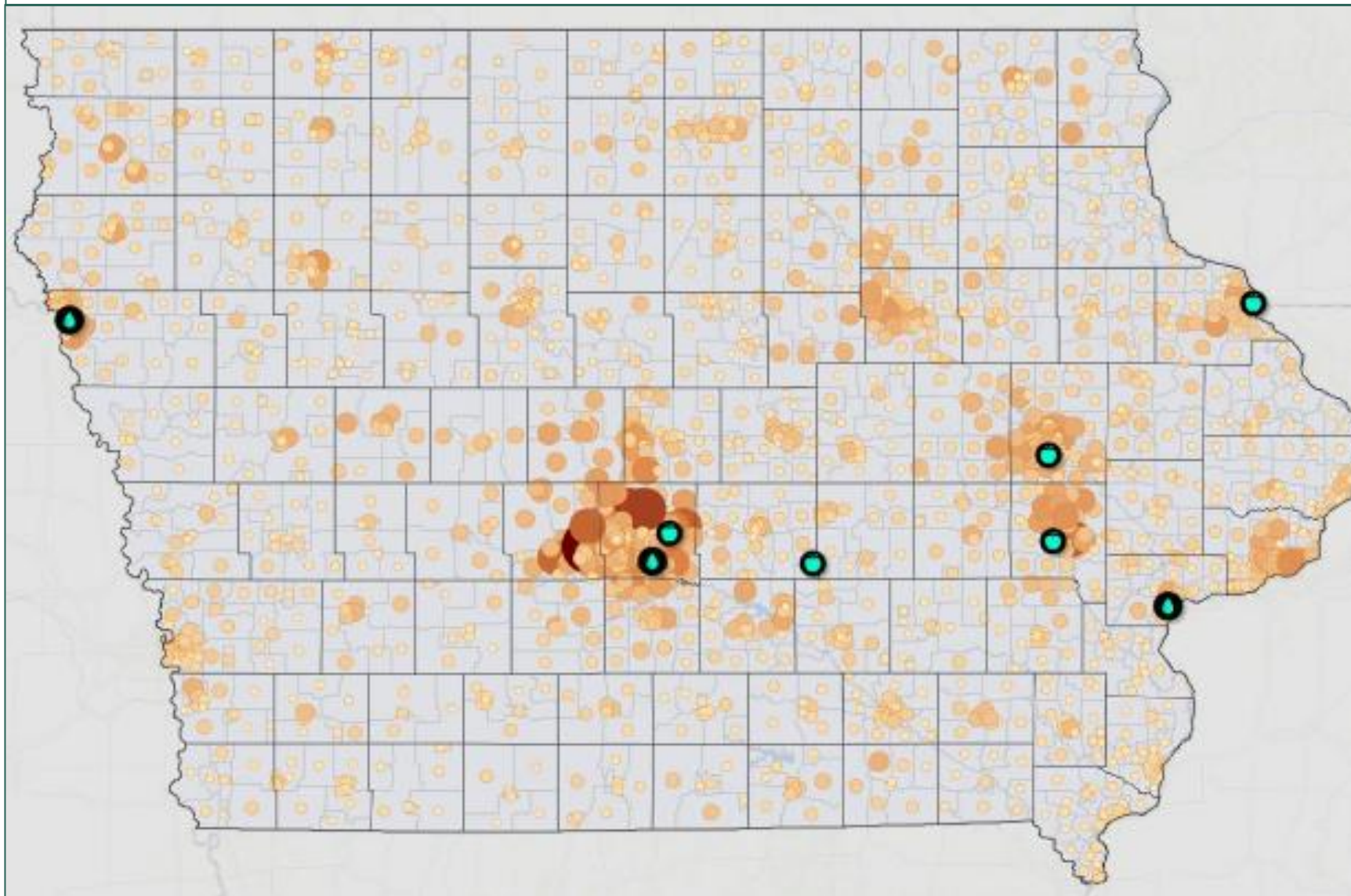


There are five composting facilities and three water resource recovery facilities in Iowa that accept food waste.

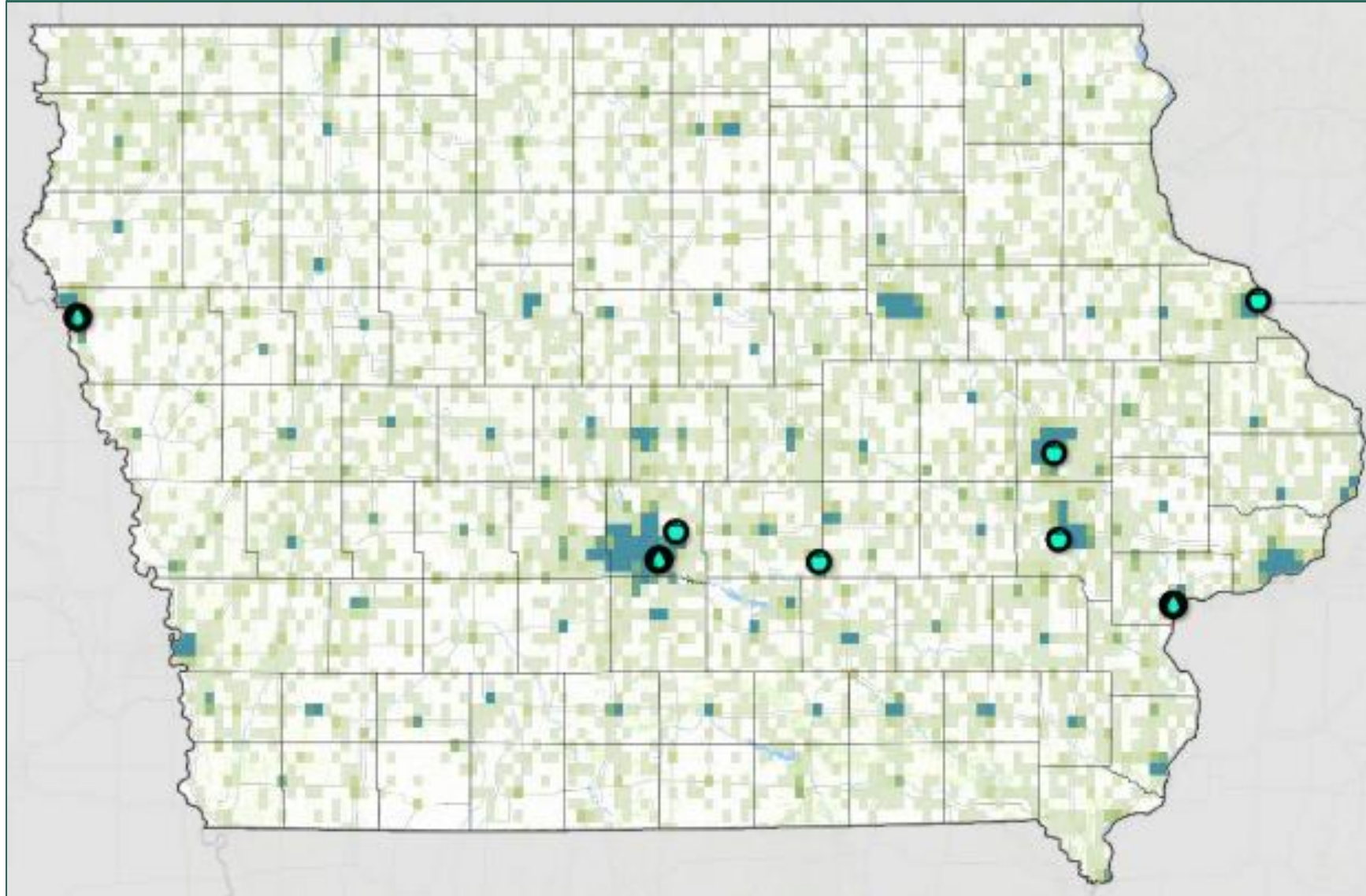
Most food waste in Iowa is currently disposed of in landfills.

Some food is donated via food banks, pantries, and other programs located throughout the state.

Residential Food Waste Disposal Density and Processing Facilities



Density of Businesses that May Produce Food Waste and Processing Facilities



Want to learn more?



Food Waste Prevention & Management Study

Iowa Department of Natural Resources

September 2025



The final Food Waste Prevention & Management Study will be posted on DNR's Sustainable Materials Management (SMM) site.

SAVE
the **DATE**
Preregistration

Oct. | 27th | 9_{am} – 12_{pm}

Organics Management | Stakeholder Meeting
(Online meeting)



Thank You

U.S. EPA

Cedar Rapids/Linn County Solid Waste Agency
(CRLCSWA) Compost Facility

Dubuque Metropolitan Area Solid Waste Agency
(DMASWA) Compost Facility

Iowa City Landfill and Recycling Center's Compost
Facility

Landfill of North Iowa (LNI) Compost Facility

Skunk River Compost

City of Davenport Composting Facility

J. Petticord

Red Barn Acres

Metro Park East Landfill

Black Hawk County Landfill

Food Bank of Iowa

Food Rescue Partnership

Table 2 Table

Feed Iowa First

Dubuque Food Pantry

Des Moines Wastewater Reclamation Authority

Muscatine Water and Resource Recovery Facility

Sioux City Wastewater Treatment Plant

Ames Waster Pollution Control Facility

Atlantic Wastewater Treatment Plant

Cedar Rapids Water Pollution Control Facility

Council Bluffs Wastewater Treatment Plant

Dubuque Water & Resource Recovery Center

Marshalltown Water Pollution Control Plant



Thank You

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