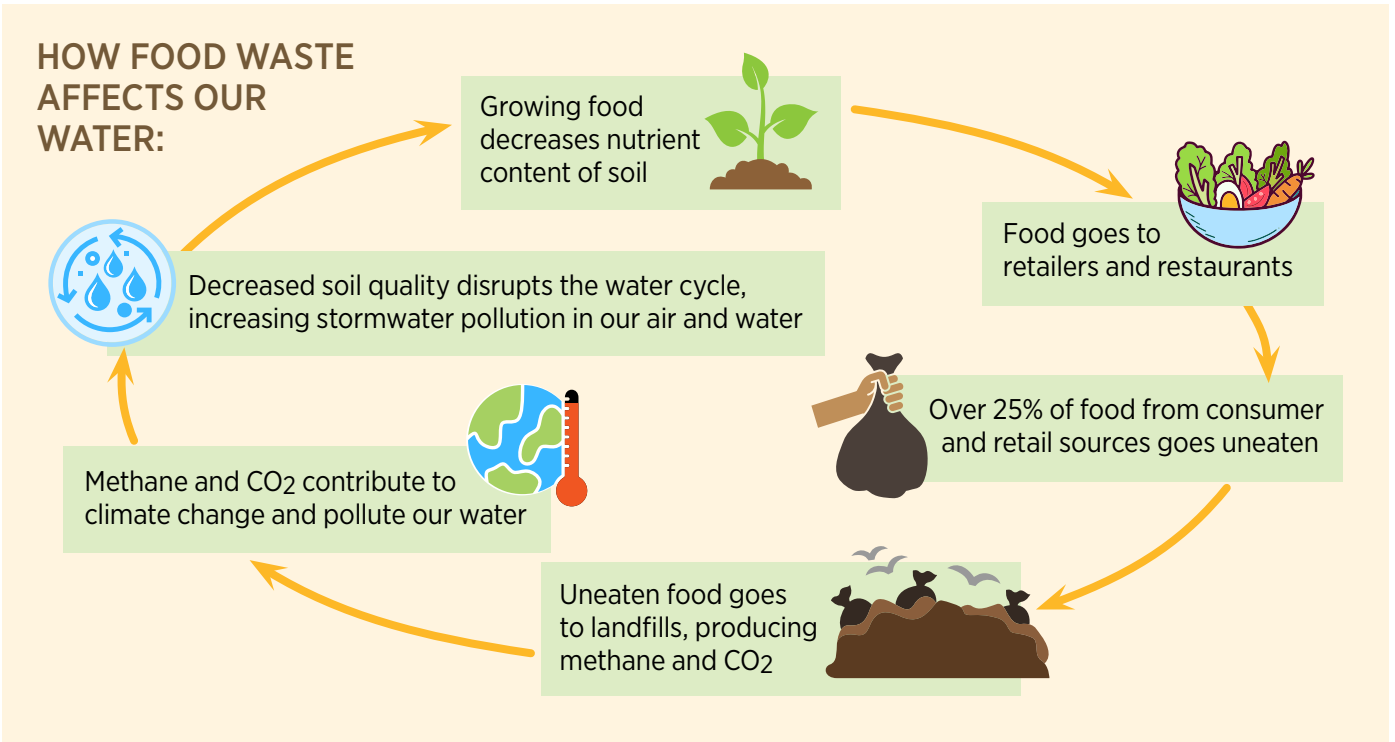


## The Problem of Food Waste

**Food waste is a persistent problem**, with over 25% of the overall food supply at the retail and consumer level going uneaten and wasted. Disposing of our organic material in landfills and incinerators contributes to climate change. Whether landfilled or burned, the waste generates methane and carbon dioxide. Methane is a potent greenhouse gas that is 86 times more potent in causing the climate to warm than carbon dioxide, and landfills contribute 17% of Maryland's methane emissions.



## What is Compost?

Composting is a natural process of recycling organic matter, like food scraps and yard waste, into a nutrient-rich soil amendment. This process is driven by fungi, bacteria, and other microorganisms.



## Why Compost?

Compost improves soil health by adding important nutrients plants need and improves water retention. It also reduces erosion and diverts food and yard waste from landfills, reducing their greenhouse gas emission. Instead of rotting in a landfill where food waste creates methane gas, the composting process turns them into a carbon-rich soil.



## How Can You Compost?

Composting starts in the kitchen and yard. This solid waste is added to a compost heap or bin where, with a little time, heat, and moisture, is converted into compost. This can be added to gardens and agriculture fields, reducing the need for synthetic fertilizers.

If you have outdoor space, you can create a compost pile yourself. Otherwise, you can partner with a local business to send your food scraps to larger compost piles.



## Where Can I Find More Information?

Check out:

- <https://cleanwater.org/tags/compost>
- [www.ILSR.org/composting](http://www.ILSR.org/composting)
- [www.compostingcouncil.org/page/UseCompost](http://www.compostingcouncil.org/page/UseCompost)

Many cities also offer resources, including guides and free or low-cost compost bins.

---

### FOR MORE INFO:

Gabrielle Sanchez, Program Organizer, [gsanchez@cleanwater.org](mailto:gsanchez@cleanwater.org)  
145 W Ostend Street, Unit 600, Baltimore, MD 21230  
Email: [baltimore@cleanwater.org](mailto:baltimore@cleanwater.org) • [cleanwater.org/maryland](http://cleanwater.org/maryland)  
[X@CleanWater\\_MD](https://twitter.com/CleanWater_MD) [f@CleanWaterActionMD](https://facebook.com/CleanWaterActionMD) [i@cleanwatermd](https://instagram.com/cleanwatermd)

