



# EPA's Food Recovery Challenge

**“FOOD – THE FINAL FRONTIER”  
pathway to zero waste**

2014 VADEQ Environmental Excellence Workshop  
Luke Wolfgang, USEPA Sustainability Coordinator  
[Wolfgang.luke@epa.gov](mailto:Wolfgang.luke@epa.gov)



## Presentation Overview

- The Food Waste Problem
- Overview of the Food Recovery Challenge
- How a Food Diversion Program at Business/Institution can Lower Your Carbon Footprint and Save \$
- Donation and Composting Experts
- Q and A



**Americans waste  
enough  
food to fill  
the Rose  
Bowl every  
day.** (Bloom 2007)





# Food Waste Impacts the Economy

Financially, wasted food costs America **more than \$100 billion** annually. (Bloom, 2007)

- Disposal cost of municipal waste management
- Over purchasing costs
- Cost of lost energy





## It impacts Society

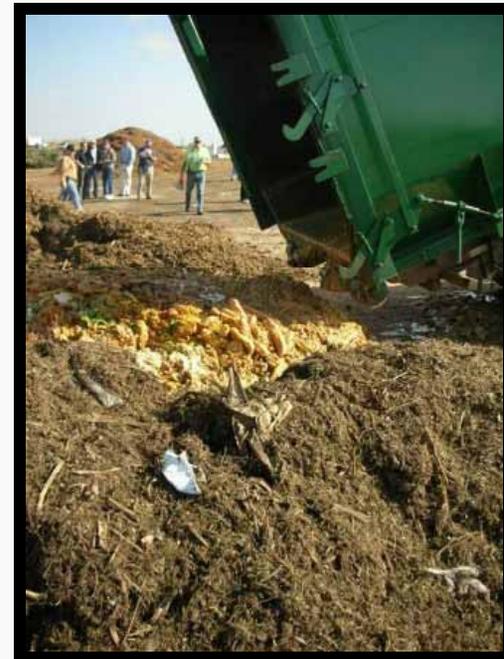
- **50 million Americans**, or 14% of American households, were food insecure in 2009. (USDA)
- Food insecurity can increase the likelihood for an individual to have **major health concerns.**





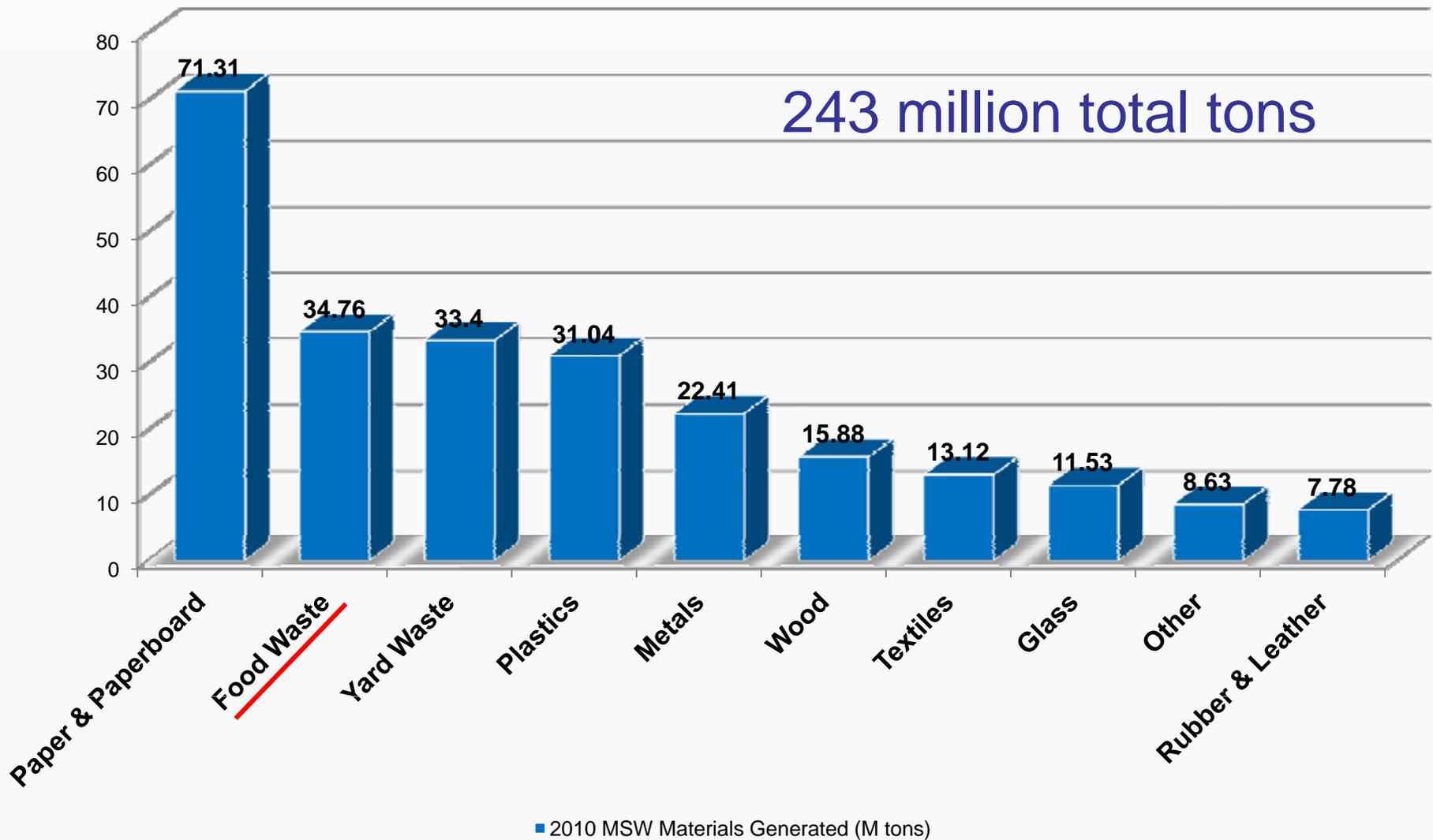
## It Impacts the Environment

Food that enters a landfill produces methane, a greenhouse gas with **21 times** the warming potential of  $\text{CO}_2$



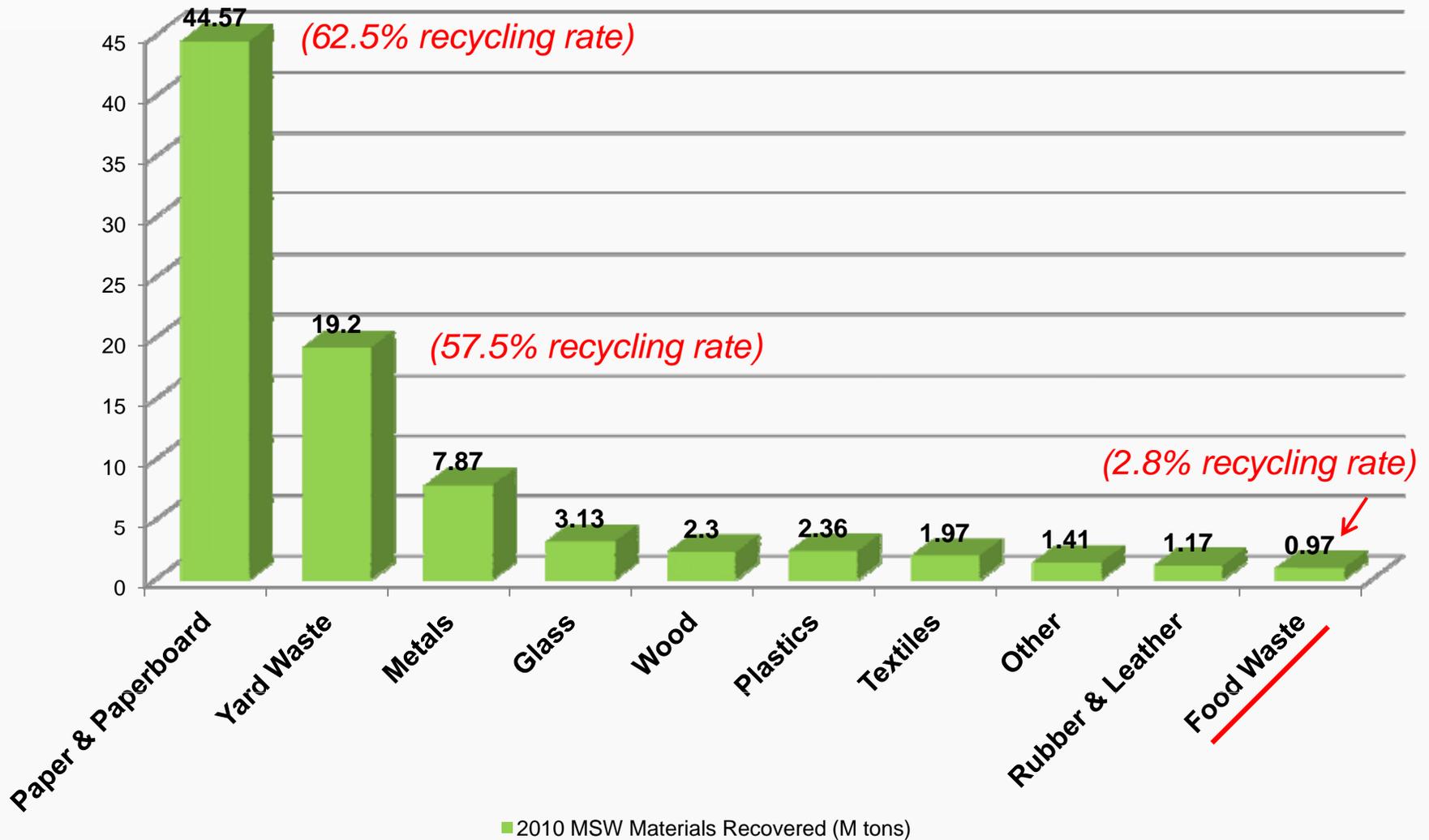


# Waste Materials Generated



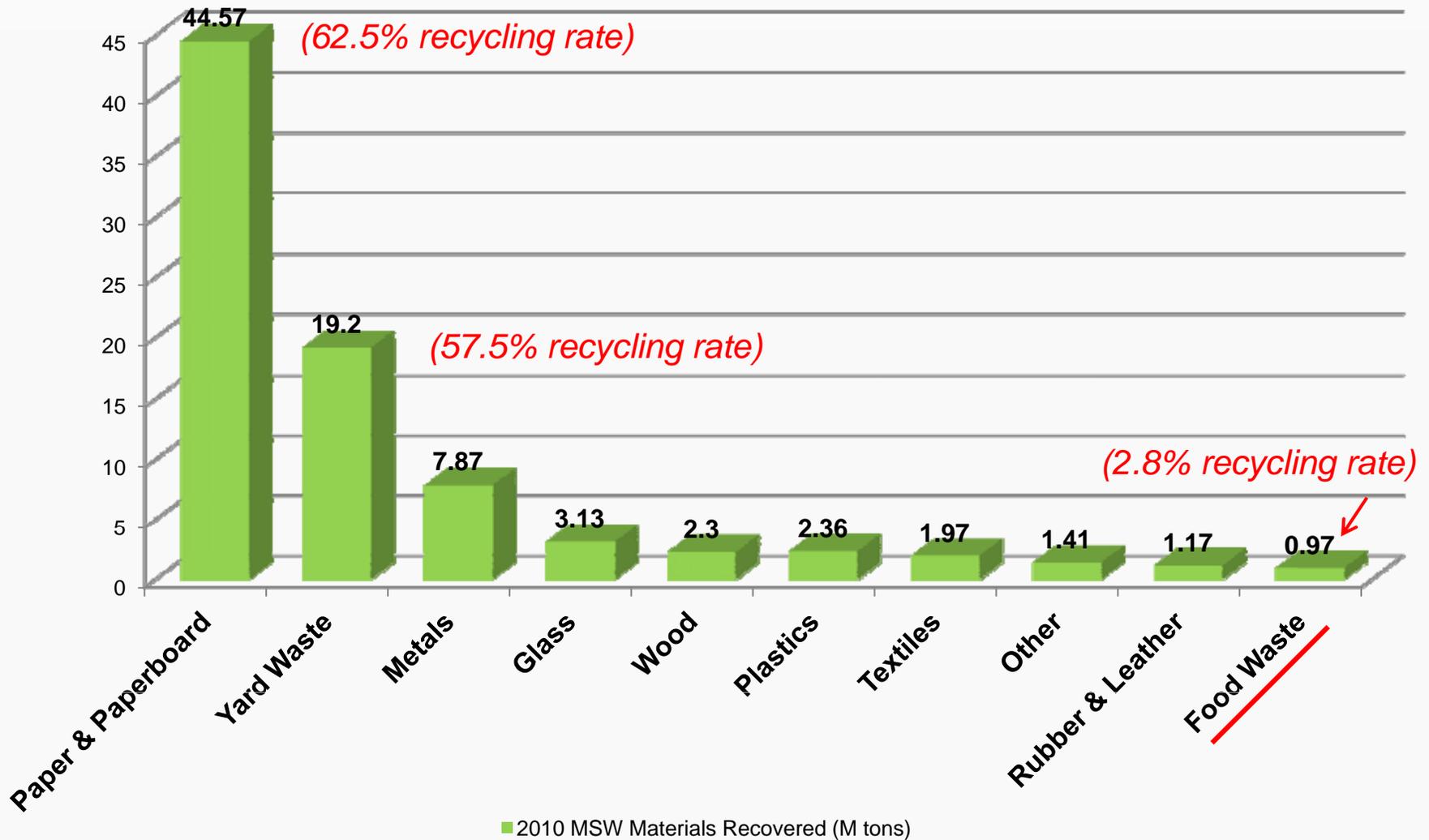


# Materials Recycled/Composted



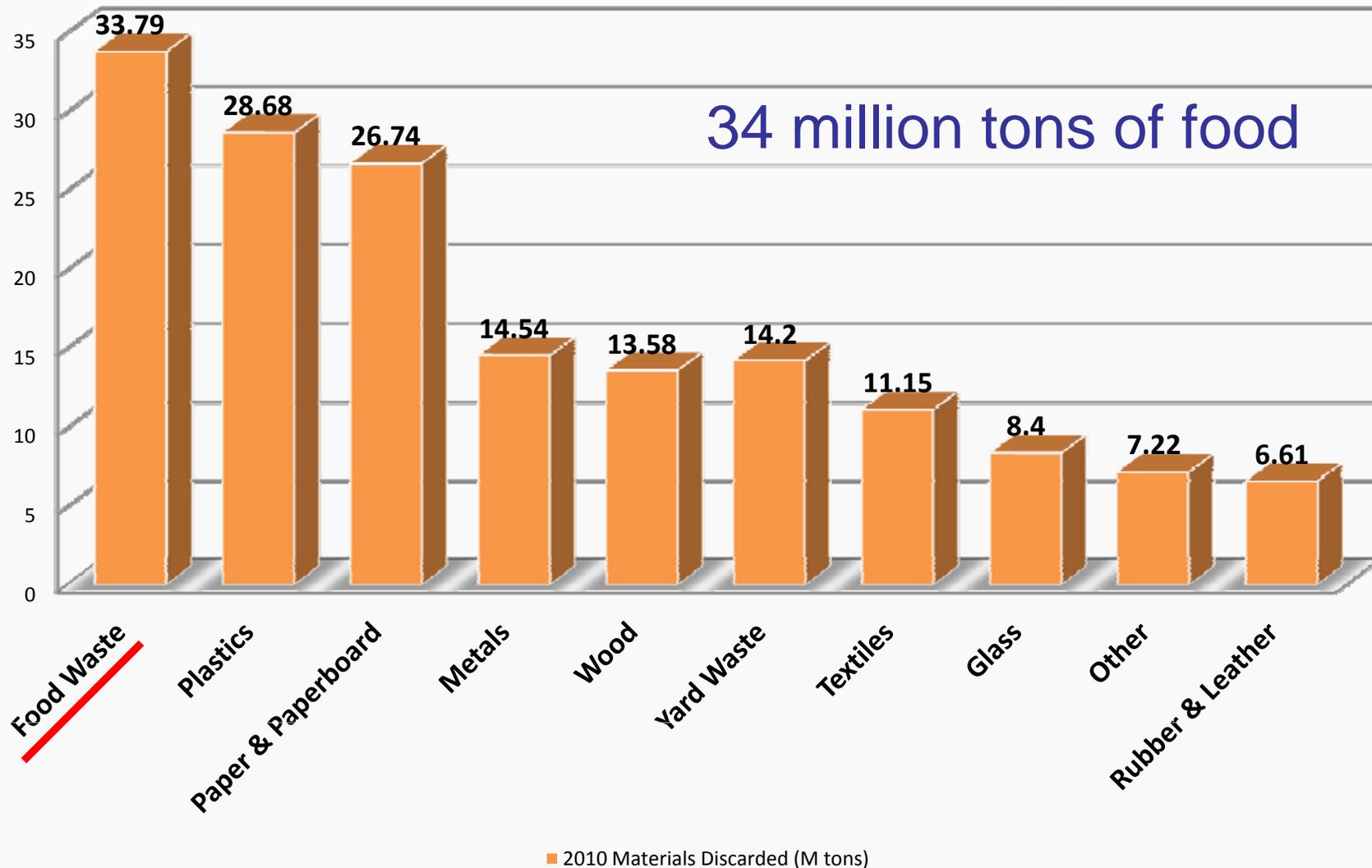


# Materials Recycled/Composted



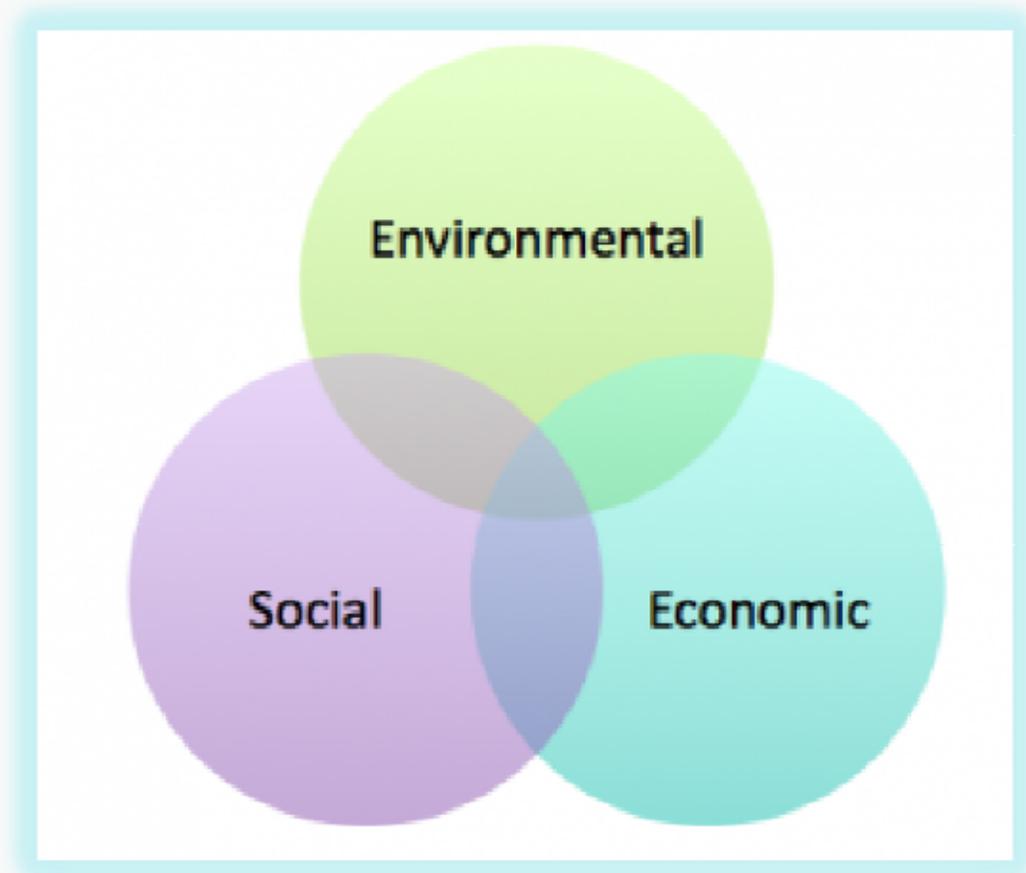


# Waste Material Reaching Landfills



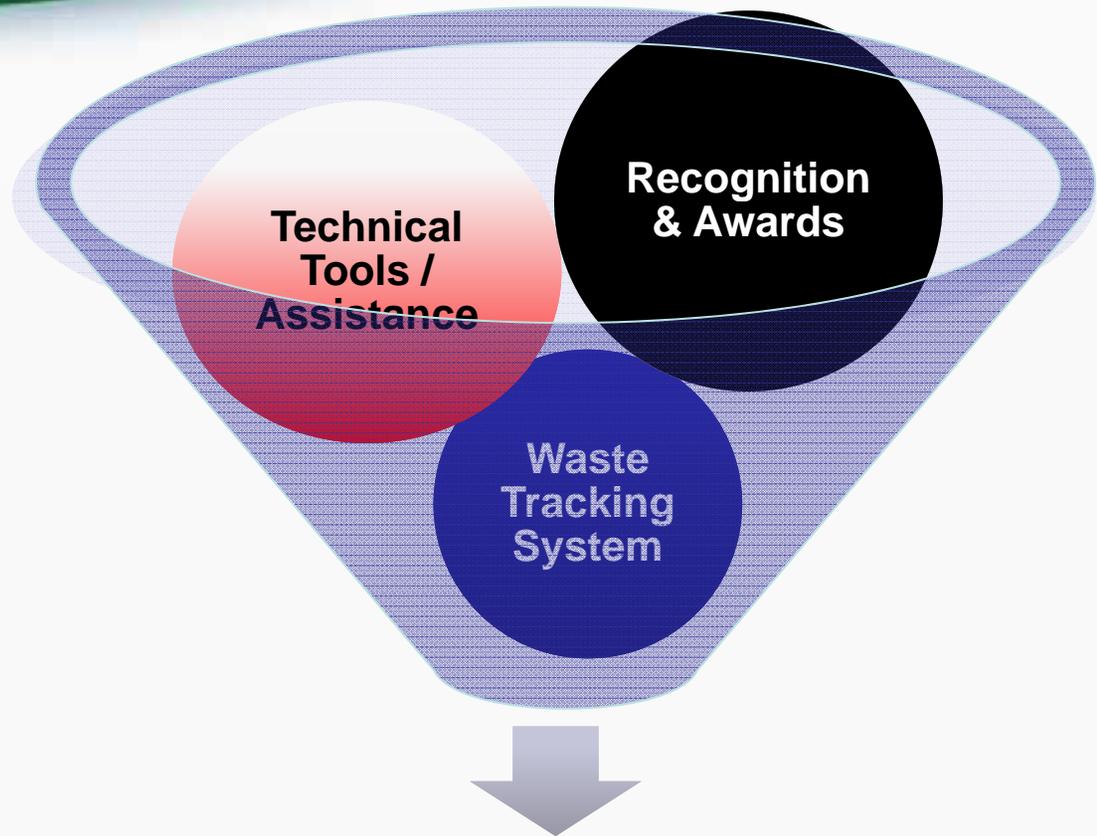


# Sustainable Food Management





# **EPA's Food Recovery Challenge: A Tool to Reduce Food Waste**



**Cost Savings, Brand Recognition,  
Community Involvement, and  
Reduce Environmental Impact**



# Food Recovery Challenge Participant Benefits

- ✓ **Data Management System**
  - Tracks food waste diversion activities
  - Web-based and secure
  - Converts to GHG and other metrics
- ✓ **EPA Awards** and Recognition
- ✓ **Technical assistance** from EPA
- ✓ **Regular webinars** on food waste related issues
- ✓ **Website** with case studies, tools, templates, and other outreach materials



## **Food Recovery Challenge Program Requirements are as Easy as...**

1. Baseline and Goal Setting
2. Implement a Food Diversion Program
  - Donation, Composting, Prevention
3. Report at the End of the Year



# EPA's Food Recovery Hierarchy





# Source Reduction = Cost Savings





# Food to Feed People





# Food to Feed Animals





# Food to Feed the Soil





Take the

# ***Food Recovery Challenge***

and

together – ***let's take a bite out of food waste!***



**For More Information or to Join....**

**[www.epa.gov/foodrecoverychallenge](http://www.epa.gov/foodrecoverychallenge)**

**Luke Wolfgang (215) 814-2913**  
**[wolfgang.luke@epa.gov](mailto:wolfgang.luke@epa.gov)**