R.12 Reduce food waste by at least 15% through a combination of measures

Measurable reductions in food waste make the community more resource-efficient while potentially lowering operating expenses. To earn these points:

- *Achieve at least a 15% reduction in food waste through better menu planning, purchasing reductions, composting, excess food donations, and other strategies. You may set the community's baseline up to three years in the past and demonstrate this reduction. For example, if you begin working on certification in May 2019, you may set the baseline in May 2016 or later.*
- *Submit documentation that shows at least a 15% reduction in food waste. Menu planning or purchasing software may provide this documentation, or you can derive your own metrics. You may demonstrate the reduction through a number of metrics: food purchasing, food waste diversion rate, total food waste, or another appropriate measurement. Just be consistent and ensure that the reduction does not have another explanation, such as a reduction in the number of meals served due to a lower occupancy rate.*

The U.S. EPA has a number of resources and tools on preventing and diverting food waste, including:

- *Reducing Wasted Food & Packaging: A Guide for Food Services and Restaurants*
- *Spreadsheet Food Waste Audit Tool (this tool can help you establish food waste metrics)*
- *Food Waste Log (for staff to record instances of food waste as they occur)*
- *ENERGY STAR® Portfolio Manager® (includes ability to track wet waste)*

1. Enter the community's baseline date, your approach to food waste measurement, such as food purchasing, food waste diversion rate, total food waste, or another appropriate metric, and food waste rate.

Baseline Date	Food Waste Measurement	Rate

2. Enter the new date and food waste rate for comparison.

New Date	New Rate

3. Describe the strategies you employed to achieve the reduction.

Alternative Documentation

Instead of this form, you may submit at least one of the following to IREM®:

- Report(s) or screenshot(s) from menu planning or purchasing software
- Paragraph summarizing food waste reduction with metrics