



Megan Holler
Director of Food Recovery and Compost

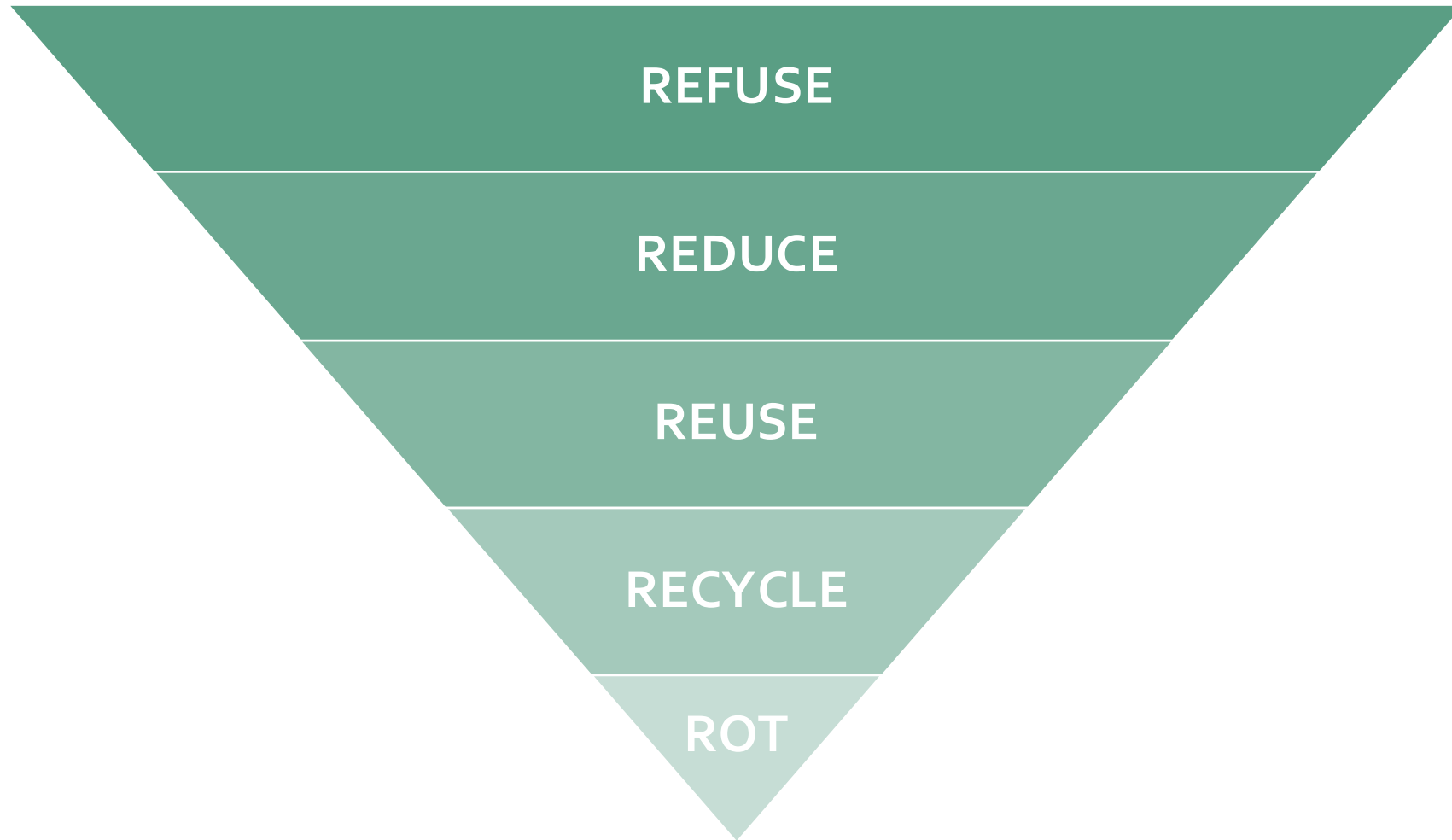




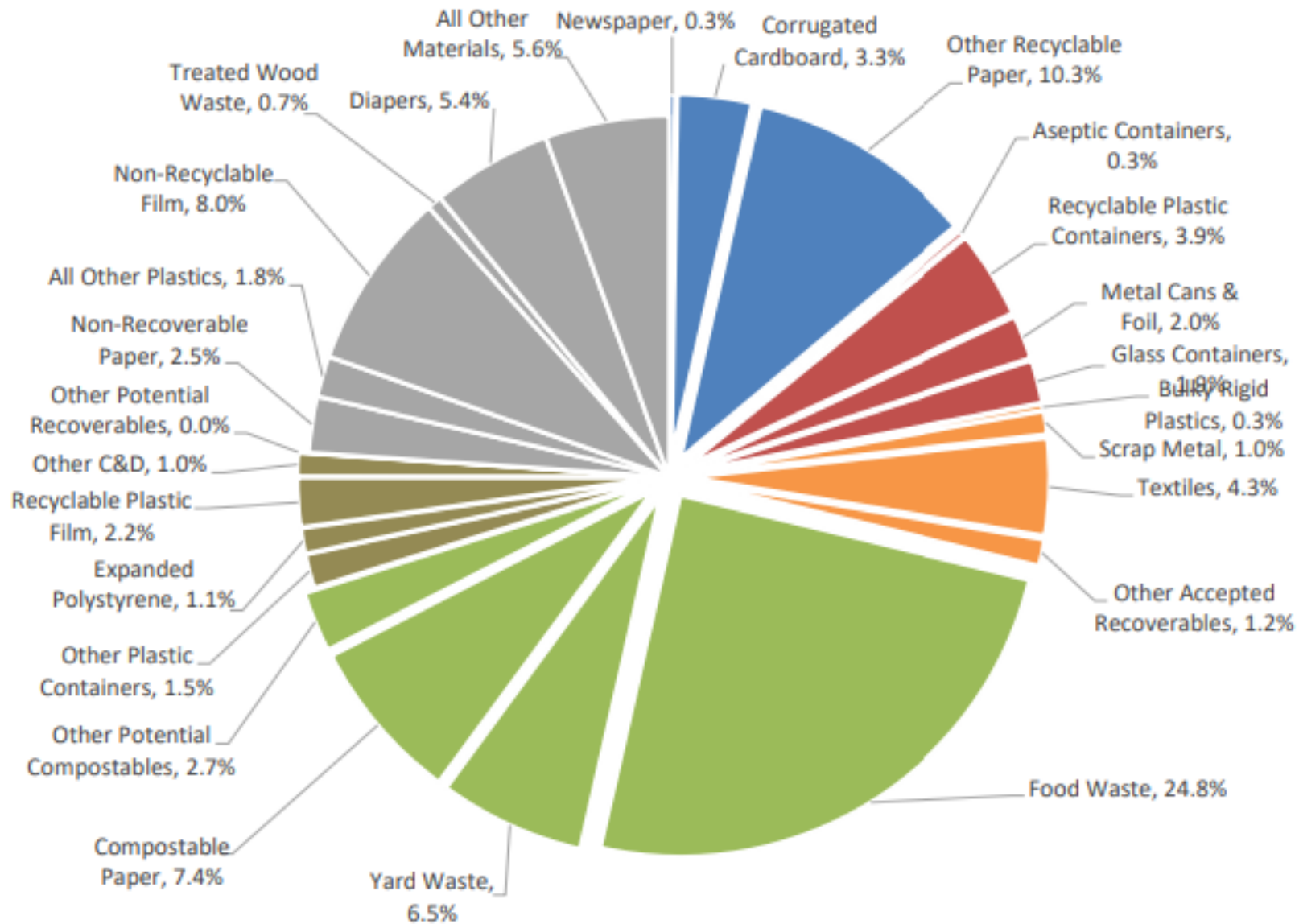
“Promote waste conscious living through inspiration, education and action”

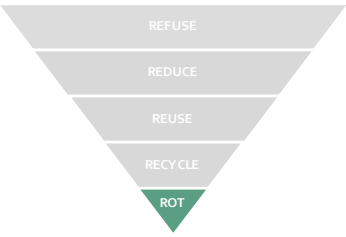


The 5 R's of Zero Waste



2019 Wake County Waste Characterization Study





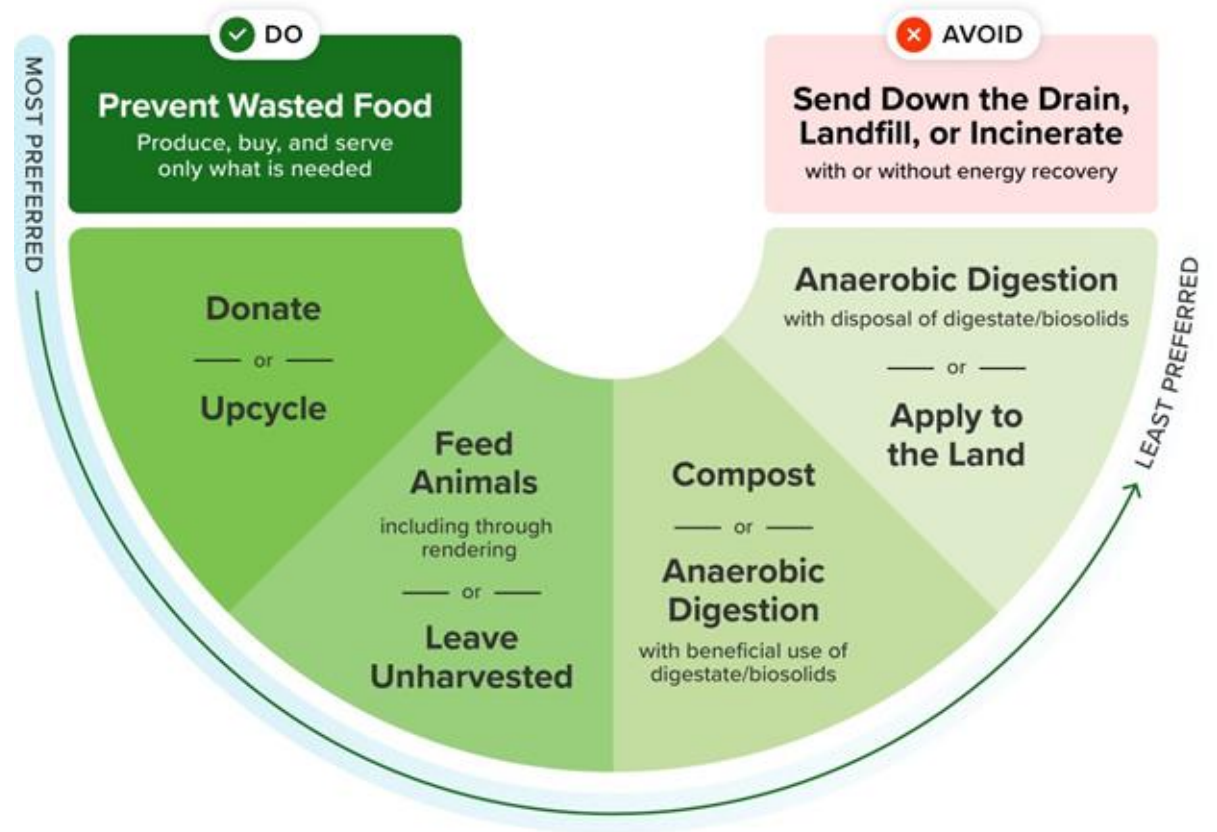
ROT (Compost)

1/3 of the world's food is never eaten - Project Drawdown



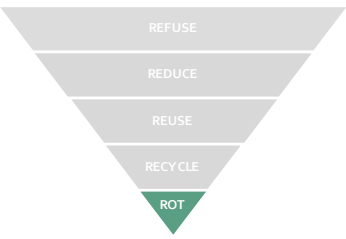
Wasted Food Scale

How to reduce the environmental impacts of wasted food



December 2025

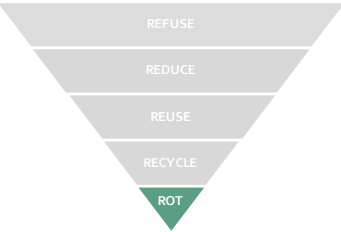




ROT (Compost)

- Turning food waste into nutrient dense soil
 - ◆ Assisting a natural process
 - ◆ Using decomposers and heat
 - ◆ "If it grows (or grew) it goes."
- Composting has such incredible impacts on our environment that we should ALL be composting ALL of our food waste.
- Wake County Waste Characterization Study (2019) - **24.8%** of waste was food.
- Composting is taking a wasted resource and turning it into a precious commodity!





ROT





Our best successes involve **collaboration** with **local** municipalities, businesses, and other non-profits





Total Lbs of Food Waste
Collected to Date:

579,309.6



Total Estimated Earned Lbs of
Compost Created to Date:

57,903



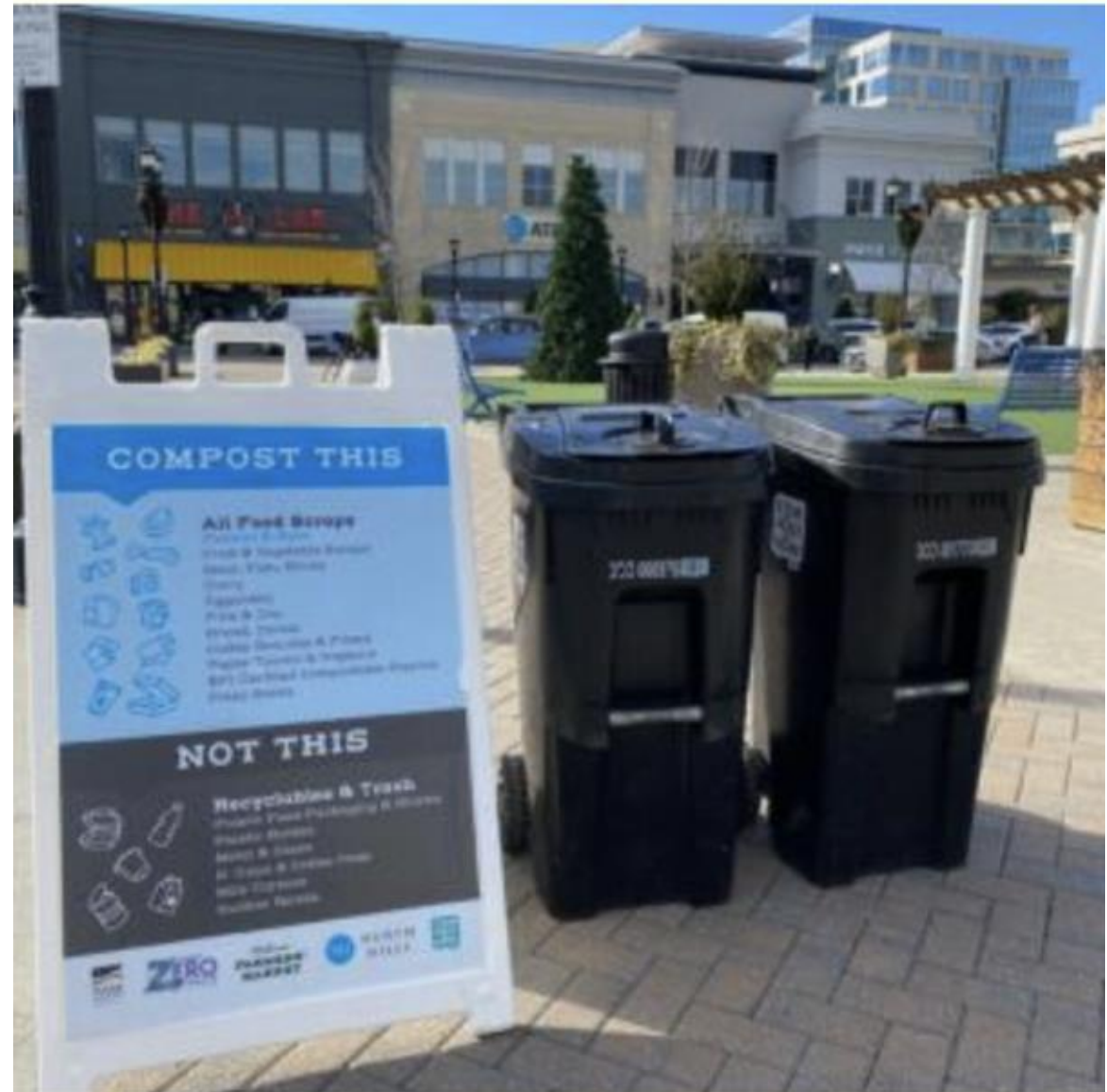
Cary
expanded
compost
drop off
with **Mills
Park**
collection
site in **early
2024**

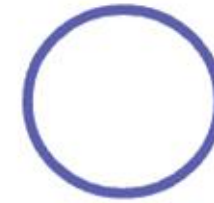
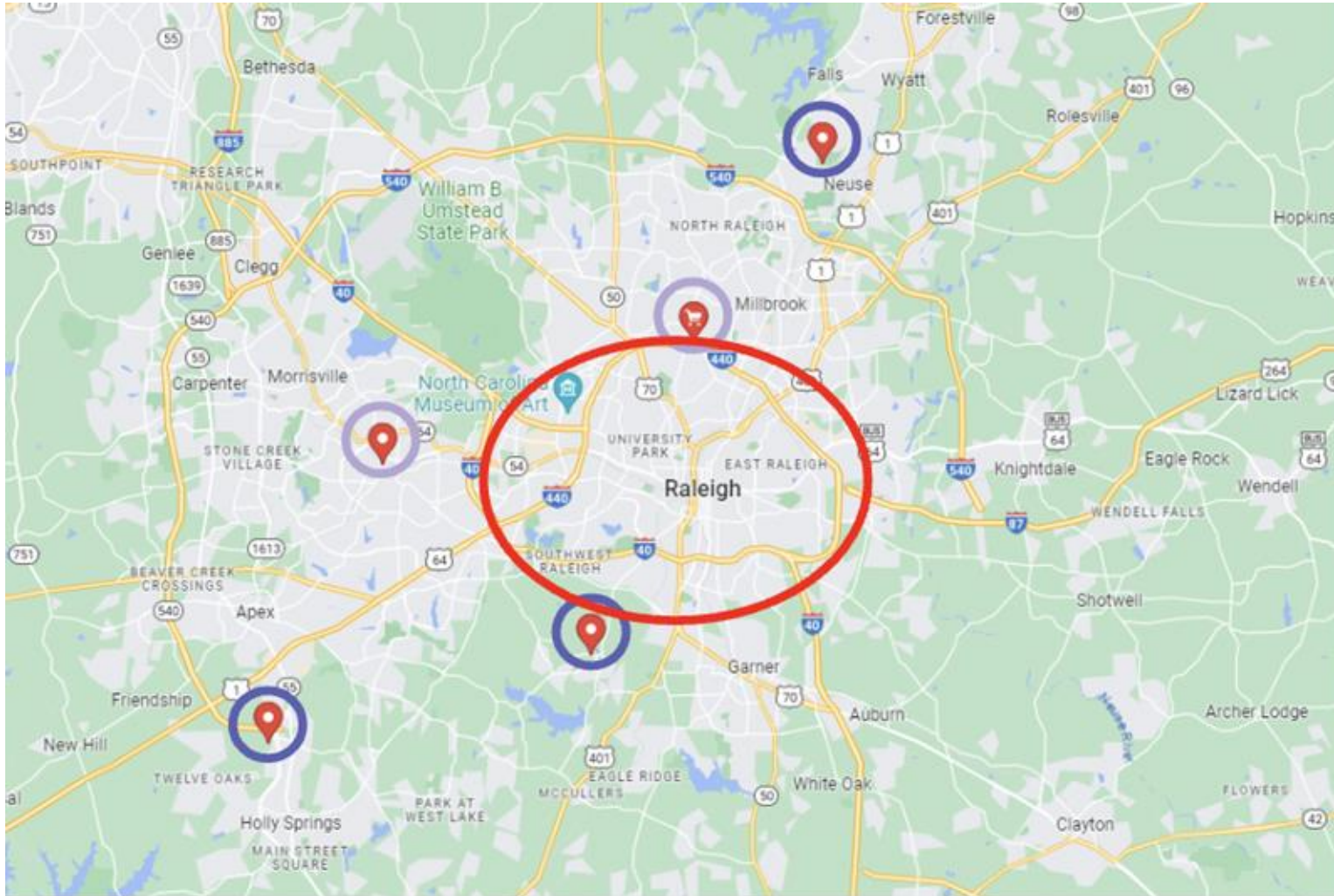


-Midtown- **FARMERS' MARKET**



Our mission is to create a vibrant, thriving farmers market in the heart of Midtown Raleigh, where the community can buy local, family-farmed foods, grown in a manner that sustains the land and our health.

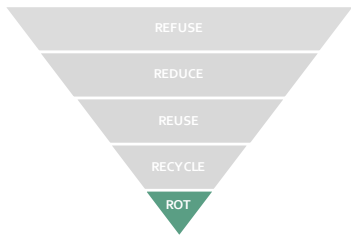




Wake County
Convenience



TZW Compost
Sites



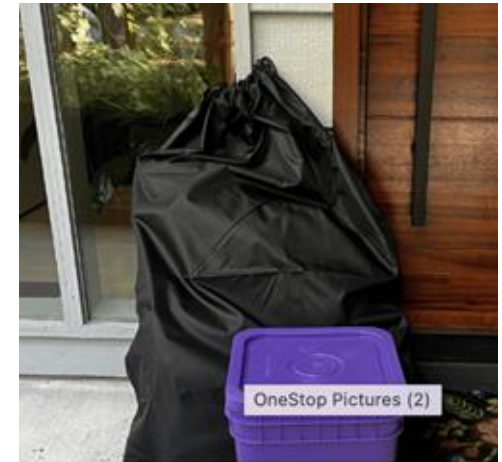
ROT



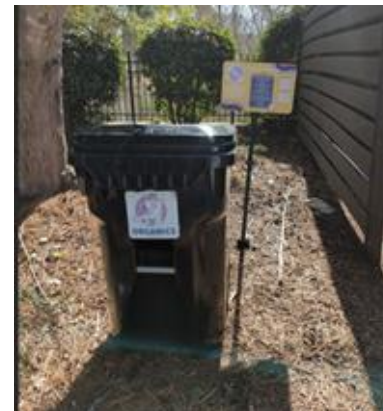
OneStop



ORGANICS



Community Compost



TowardZeroWaste.org



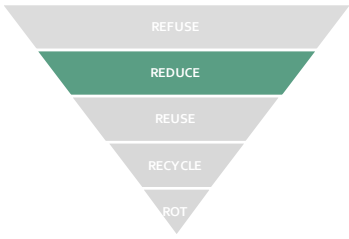


Participating Schools

1. Abbotts Creek Elementary
2. Conn Elementary
3. Davis Drive Elementary
4. Fred Olds Elementary
5. Kingswood Elementary

6. North Ridge Elementary
7. Oberlin Middle School
8. Poe Elementary
9. Wiley Elementary

Toward Zero Waste has partnered with PTAs from nine Wake County Public Schools to purchase compostable fiber lunch trays, in lieu of the polystyrene lunch trays currently provided by the school system.



REDUCE

Food waste

- Public schools generate significant amounts of unopened, single-serving packages of food, and fruits with non-edible peels (e.g. bananas)
- Few schools were actively attempting to recover these foods - a practice that would reduce food waste and improve food security. **WHY?**
- TZW set out to discover how food items could be safely and effectively recovered in our public schools.





A food recovery program by Toward Zero Waste with Wake County Public School System to capture wholesome leftovers from Child Nutrition Services and feed students, rather than landfills.

[What is the SHARE Program?](#)



FOOD YOU CAN SHARE

PACKAGED FOOD

- Crackers
- Cookies
- Granola bars
- Cereal
- Chips
- Muffins



WHOLE FRUIT WITH PEEL

- Bananas
- Oranges (uncut)



COLD FOOD

- Juice cartons
- Bagged fruits and vegetables
- Hummus cups
- Sealed fruit cups
- Applesauce cups
- Uncrustables



CONDIMENT PACKETS AND UTENSILS

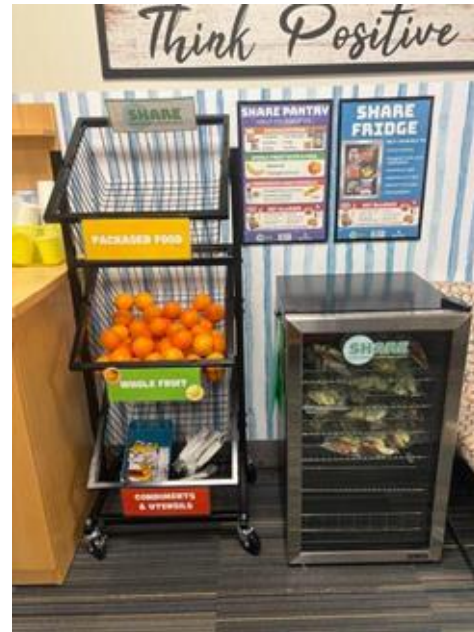




- Initial funding from the Lonnie & Carol Poole Family Foundation, City of Raleigh, Town of Cary, and other generous community donors
- First 8 pilot elementary schools launched in March 2025
- Early data suggests 41 food items are recovered daily, per school = **>7,300 items per school year**
- SHARE is now in 37 Wake County schools, and Phase 5 has just begun for 10 new schools
- **40+ schools in Wake County remain on our “waiting list”**

SHARE Phase 1 Schools:

- Davis Drive Elementary
- Dillard Drive Elementary
- Kingswood Elementary
- Lincoln Heights Elementary
- Millbrook Elementary
- Poe Elementary
- Wake Forest Elementary
- Wiley Elementary



SHARE Phase 2 Schools:

- Apex Elementary
- Briarcliff Elementary
- Cary Elementary
- Douglas Elementary
- Lufkin Road Middle
- Moore Square Middle
- North Garner Middle
- Partnership Elementary
- Underwood Elementary
- Wake Forest Middle

SHARE Phase 3 Schools:

- Abbotts Creek Elementary
- Brier Creek Elementary
- Carnage Middle
- Combs Elementary
- Neuse River Middle
- Reedy Creek Elementary
- River Bend Middle
- Root Elementary
- Vandora Springs Elementary



- Alston Ridge Middle
- Apex Friendship Elementary
- Bowling Road Elementary
- Green Magnet Elementary
- Olive Chapel Elem
- Parkside Elementary
- Penny Road Elem
- Washing Magnet Elementary
- West Lake Elementary
- West Lake Middle

SHARE Phase 4 Schools:

Current TZW Work:

- Pursue funding for implementation (supplies & program management) at additional Wake Co schools
- Continue planning for Phases 5 and 6 for 2026-27
- Collaborate with other school districts (e.g. Durham, Orange)
- Advocate at the State level for expanding and supporting school food recovery programs

**FOOD LIKE THIS GOES IN
THE TRASH AT SCHOOLS
EVERY DAY IN NC.**



**WE WANT TO
CHANGE THIS!**

Every day, hundreds of thousands of unpeeled, unopened food items including milk, cheese, and yogurt are tossed in NC's school cafeterias. Meanwhile, 1 in 5 children in NC face food insecurity. That's not just wasteful, it's heartbreaking.

**SIGN THE
PETITION:**



Thank you!

Megan Holler

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Consider making a donation
to support our mission and
programs!

