Northeast Anaerobic Digestion Accelerator

CET

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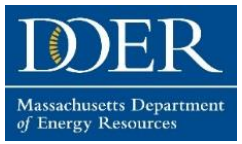
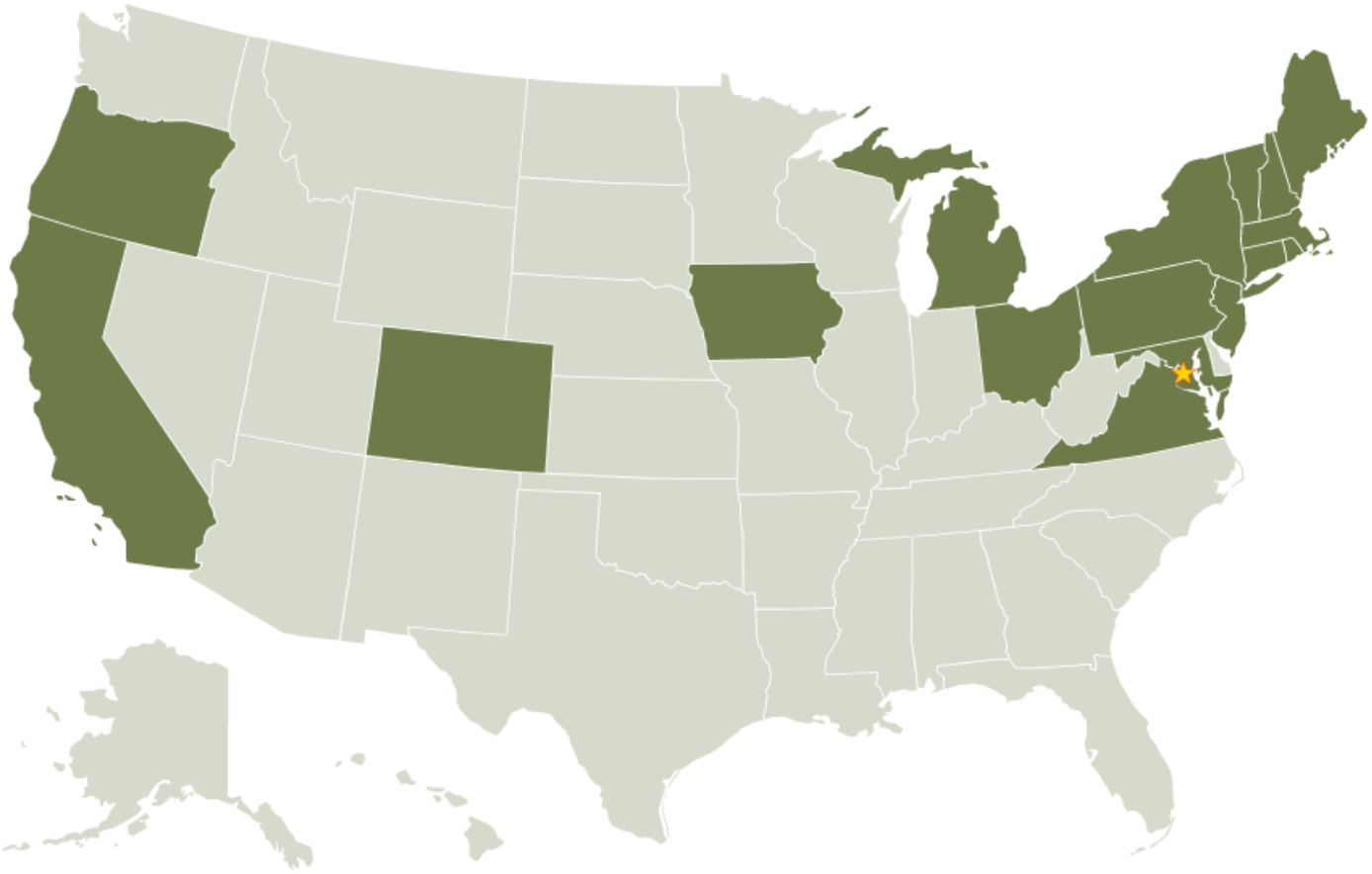
We help people and businesses save energy and reduce waste

Center for EcoTechnology Partners



Do You Need Assistance With Wasted Food?

We can help! Select your state below to begin.



- CALIFORNIA
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Technical Assistance

Content Development

Capacity Building

Meeting You Where You Are:

- Evaluate existing waste streams
- Identify opportunities to prevent, recover, and divert waste
- Create customized waste bin signage
- Conduct cost analysis

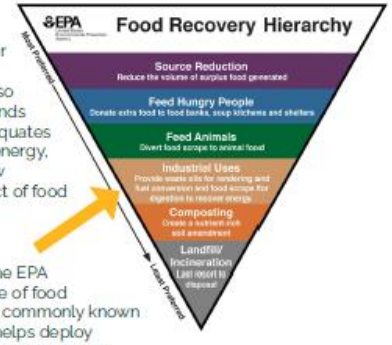
No-Cost Waste Assistance

Sustainability in Healthcare: Connecticut Valley Hospital

Anaerobic Digestion Fact Sheet

Wasted food is a problem.

According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, 30-40% of the food in America is wasted. In 2018 alone, over 100 million tons of food waste was generated and less than 4% of that waste was diverted from landfills and incinerators for composting. Wasted food also represents a significant misallocation of resources. When we waste food, we are also wasting agricultural resources. For instance, wasted food ends up consuming nearly a quarter of our water supply which equates to about $172 billion in wasted water. Add to this the time, energy, fossil fuels, chemicals, and other resources needed to grow and produce our food and the true scale of the large impact of food waste becomes clearer.



The EPA Food Recovery Hierarchy is a great tool to utilize when considering wasted food solutions. All solutions on the EPA Food Recovery Hierarchy are helpful in addressing the issue of food waste. Anaerobic Digestion (AD) is a technology that is less commonly known than some of the others, and is often misunderstood. CET helps deploy solutions at all levels of the hierarchy and presents this fact sheet to help people better understand the benefits of anaerobic digestion.

Did you know that the scraps left on your plate can become fuel?

Anaerobic Digestion is a process by which organic matter, such as animal waste or wasted food, is broken down by bacteria in the absence of oxygen. This is usually done in a very large, sealed container called a digester. The process both creates fertilizer from the waste inside the digester that can be used for farming, and generates biogas composed mostly of methane. This biogas can then be combusted to generate electricity and heat, or it can be processed into renewable natural gas and transportation fuels.

Quantum Biopower, an anaerobic digestion facility in Southington, Connecticut, shared this useful graphic demonstrating how these facilities work.

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Food Waste Separation for Anaerobic Digestion Processing

This food waste separation guidance document is part of a series aimed at helping commercial food service providers – e.g., restaurants, hotels, corporate cafeterias, and schools – reduce the volume of organic waste disposed by their operations.

There are several options for diverting food waste – including prevention, donation, animal feed, composting, and anaerobic digestion (AD). All of these strategies are more effective when generators have systems in place for separating out organic material from waste.

Prevention should always be the top priority but the most successful diversion programs employ strategies across the EPA Food Recovery Hierarchy. This document provides specific guidance for source separating food scraps for AD. See the other tip sheets in this series for guidance on preventing and donating surplus food.

Kitchen Separation

Recommended practices for source separation, including signage and bin placement

Hauler Collection Frequencies

Guidance for working with your hauler including contracting, container options, pickup frequencies

Outdoor Storage Practices

Guidelines for proper storage, from cleanliness to container maintenance

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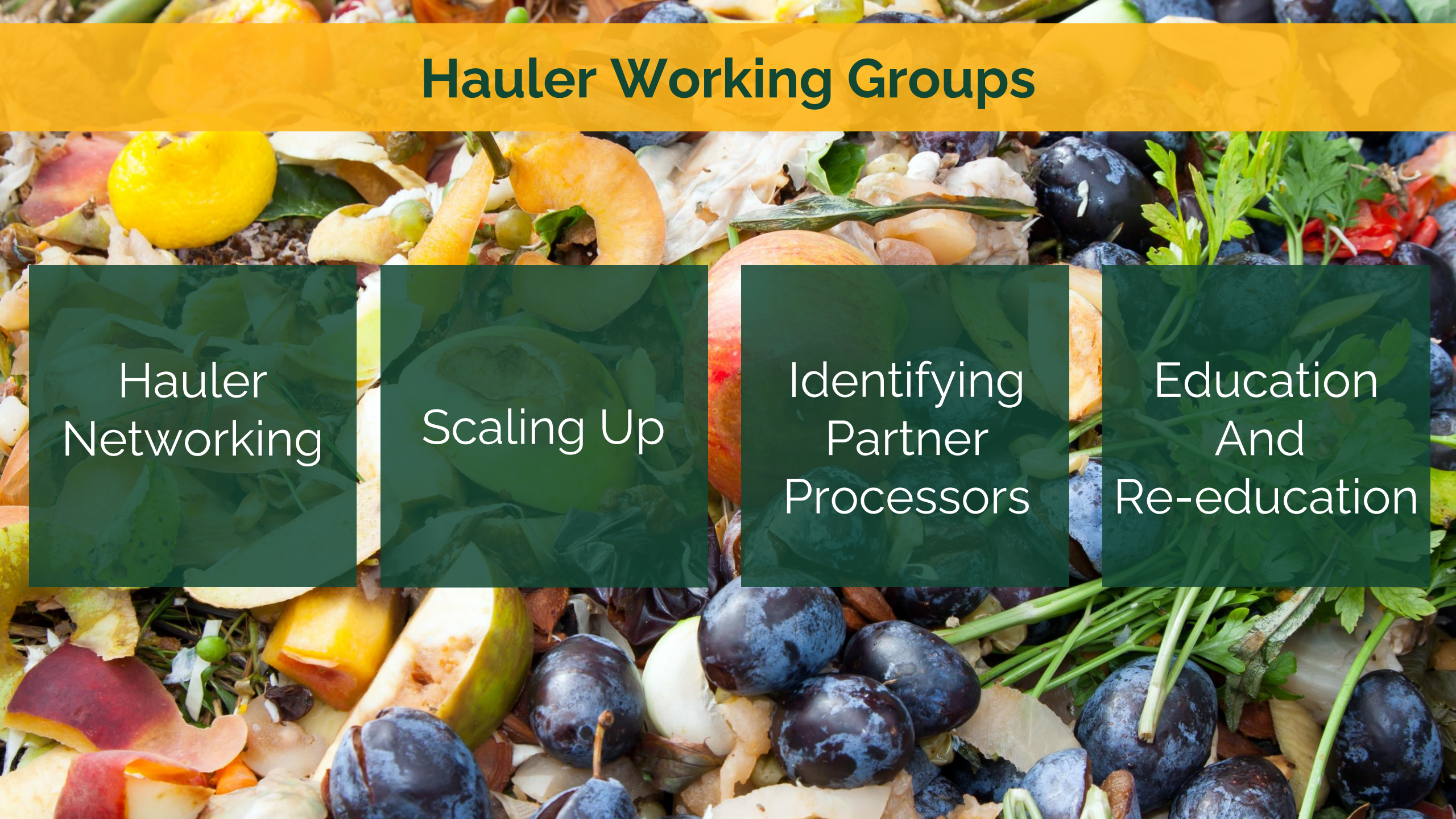
Northeast Anaerobic Digester Accelerator — Food Waste Digestion Insights

The Center for EcoTechnology's (CET) Northeast Anaerobic Digester Accelerator (NADA) is a two-year project supported by EPA's Funding to Support Anaerobic Digestion in Communities. The NADA project includes development of resources and training for source separation and diversion of commercial and institutional food waste to digesters in the Northeast states. Among the resources created were a guidance outlining source separation practices to implement when diverting food waste to anaerobic digestion (AD), and this overview, Food Waste Digestion Insights, which discusses AD fundamentals, and provides examples of service providers — haulers and food waste preprocessing and digester facilities in the Northeast.

wastedfood.cetonline.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/WFS-Insights-on-AD-Tech.pdf

Hauler Working Groups



- Hauler Networking
- Scaling Up
- Identifying Partner Processors
- Education And Re-education

Thank you!

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