

County of Buncombe

Proclamation

Food Waste Reduction Month

WHEREAS, North Carolina residents and businesses waste approximately 2.5 million tons of food each year; and

WHEREAS, food loss and waste could be reduced to improve our environment, health and food access through strategic prevention, rescue, and recycling actions; and

WHEREAS, there is an opportunity to redirect edible food to nourish our state's residents with inadequate access to food from the 6% of national food supply that is sent to landfills; and

WHEREAS, it is estimated that at least 57,500 tons of food waste are generated in Buncombe County each year; and

WHEREAS, according to 2020 records, there were more than 35,600 food insecure individuals including nearly 8,000 children in Buncombe County alone; and

WHEREAS, April is Earth Month, and food waste reduction is a key strategy to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, with food waste comprising nearly a quarter of municipal solid waste landfilled; and

WHEREAS, the United States spends \$218 billion or 1.3% of our national gross domestic product to grow, process, and dispose of food that is never eaten, reducing food waste can reduce economic loss; and

WHEREAS, reducing food waste would help preserve our natural resources as food waste uses 21% of the country's freshwater, 19% of our fertilizer, 18% of our cropland and 24% of our landfill volume; and

WHEREAS, activities to reduce food waste can provide economic opportunities for entrepreneurs and farmers to sell otherwise unsellable products, and for the private composting industry to grow; and

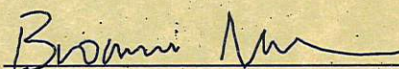
WHEREAS, reducing food waste has been prioritized by North Carolina State government in its "Use the Food NC" campaign, which recognizes Asheville and Buncombe County as model community-based initiatives supporting NC's goal to reduce emissions by 40% by 2025, as directed by Executive Order No. 80; and

WHEREAS, Food Waste Solutions WNC, alongside participating organizations, businesses, and individuals, has successfully conducted food waste reduction education, resource, and outreach campaigns focused on household and restaurant food waste strategies, including coordinating the third Food Waste Solutions Summit in November 2023, hosted at AB Tech; and

WHEREAS, the City of Asheville and Buncombe County have launched a food scrap drop-off program and successfully supported residents in diverting more than 750,000 pounds of organic matter from the landfill, the equivalent of 2,346 cars removed from the road; and

WHEREAS, Buncombe County has adopted a target goal of reducing greenhouse gas emissions, as outlined in the Environmental & Energy Stewardship focus area of the Buncombe County Strategic Plan 2025 and demonstrated by the Board's resolution to reduce carbon emissions by 2% annually.

NOW, THEREFORE, be it resolved, that on this 2nd day of April, the Buncombe County Board of Commissioners does hereby recognize April 2024 as "Food Waste Reduction Month," highlighting these resolutions and moving the County forward to engage in food waste prevention and recovery efforts, develop and share food waste prevention and recovery best practices, and ground the community in the traditions of food saving and composting.



Brownie Newman

Chairman, Buncombe County Board of Commissioners