WHEN FOOD is wasted, not only do we lose the nutrition of that food, we lose the water, gasoline, and fertilizer used to grow, process, and distribute that food.

Food is wasted at every step of the food system: left-behind food rots on farm fields, irregularly-shaped produce is discarded by distributors and retailers, and consumers needlessly throw away food after the misleading “best by” dates printed on its labels.

1/3 of food produced = wasted

ROUGHLY one third of the food produced in the world for human consumption every year—approximately 1.3 billion tons—gets lost or wasted.

Every year, consumers in rich countries waste as much food (222 million tons) as the entire net food production of sub-Saharan Africa (230 million tons).

NON-PROFIT networks of food banks, pantries, and shelters in every state may redistribute donated food under the Good Samaritan Act of 1996.

IF WE reduced food waste by just 15%, we could feed more than 25 million Americans per year.

Food waste in the U.S. is up 50% since the 1970s.

LANDFILLS are the largest source of methane emissions. The vast amount of food going to landfills makes a significant contribution to global warming.

FOOD WASTE that goes to the landfill breaks down anaerobically and produces methane; methane is 21 times more potent than CO2 as a greenhouse gas.

33 million tons of food were wasted in the U.S. in 2010—enough to fill the Empire State Building 91 times.

AN ESTIMATED 40% of the food produced in the U.S. goes uneaten.

A SINGLE restaurant in the U.S. can produce approximately 25,000 to 75,000 pounds of food waste in a year.

#FoodBetterHarvard