

# Senator George J. Mitchell Center for Sustainability Solutions

## Food Rescue MAINE: Developing Triple Bottom Line Solutions – economic, social, and environmental – to End Food Waste in Maine

### Sustainability Problem

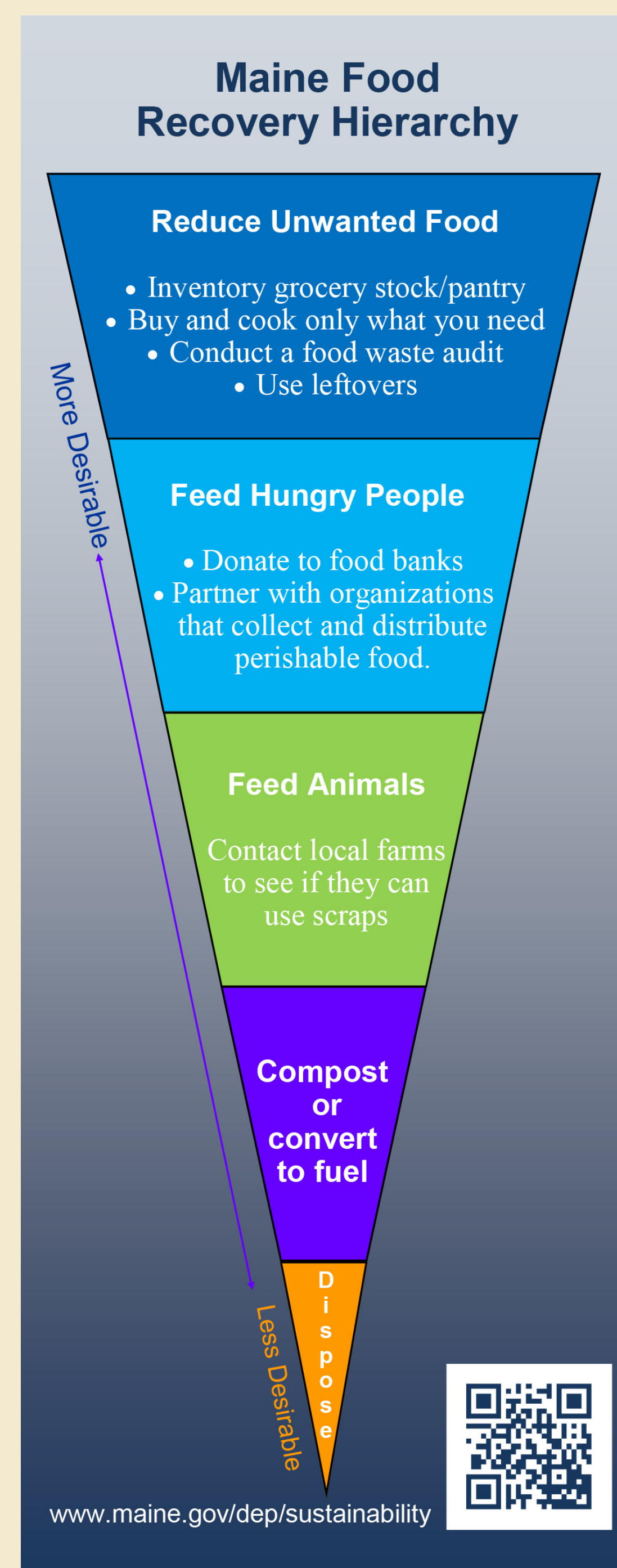
In Maine nearly 1/3 of the food we produce is never eaten, over 360,000 tons annually.

The majority of our wasted food and loss is good and edible, and yet it goes to the landfill or incinerator.

- Economically: wasted food = higher food costs & scarcity

- Socially: food waste and loss = hunger (1 in 5 children are food insecure) and health problems

- Environmentally: food waste = methane gas (28 times more powerful than carbon dioxide) with U.S. emissions equal to 50 million gas-powered cars annually



### Team and Partners

#### Team Leaders:

- Susanne Lee, Mitchell Center
- Travis Blackmer, Economics

#### Graduate Student:

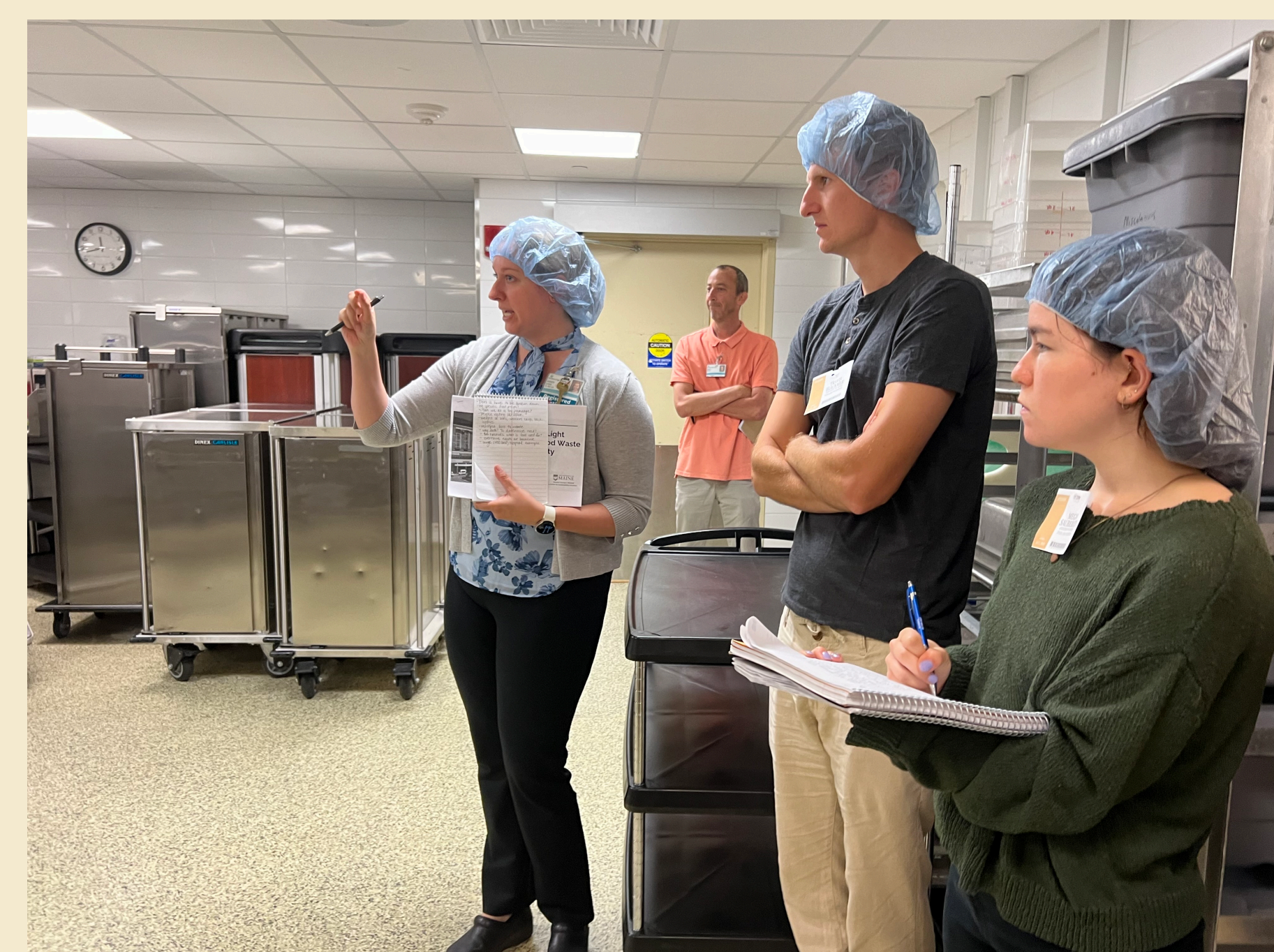
- William Brennemen, Anthropology and Environmental Policy

#### Undergraduate Students:

- Kathryn Busko, EES/Journalism
- Megan Sauberlich, Economics

#### Key Partners:

- Maine Dept. of Env. Protection
- Maine Dept. of Education - Child Nutrition
- Hannaford Supermarkets/Ahold Delhaize USA
- Good Shepherd Food Bank
- Governor's Office of Policy Innovation and the Future



### Solutions Approach

- Build diverse faculty, student, and stakeholder research teams.
- Review local, national and global "best practices."
- Develop stakeholder-driven, community-focused, sustainable solutions.
- Implement statewide, scalable pilots to test solutions:
  - Food Waste Tracking & Measuring
  - Food Recovery
  - Food Waste Education
  - Maine Food System Infrastructure
  - Landfill Diversion: Composting
- Share success through ongoing public engagement.



### How Our Work Is Making a Difference

- Food Rescue MAINE Educational Resources: website, social media, community events, and more *Education builds sustainable awareness and action.*



[umaine.edu/foodrescuemaine/](http://umaine.edu/foodrescuemaine/)

- 2024 Maine Food Waste Generation Study *Data guides the solutions development process.*
- Maine School Cafeteria Food Waste Study *Multi-solution study teaches future leaders and citizens to reduce, recover, and divert food waste.*
- Maine Circular Food System GIS Map & Resource Locator *Comprehensive data mapping provides the foundation to support a waste-free, circular food system.*