

According to the US Environmental Protection Agency, twenty percent of all garbage is food waste. This is the combination of that half orange you threw away from breakfast, the tomatoes from your sandwich at lunch, and those tater tots at dinner. If all 327.2 million people in the US do this, a hundred and fifty thousand tons of food is wasted every day. Multiply that by three hundred and sixty-five, the number of days in a year. Millions of tons of food are wasted every year in the US, throwing billions of dollars in the trash can. By tossing the three carrots at lunch, you're wounding the national and global economy.

Did you know that 40 million people in the US have food insecurity? This means that they struggle to get the nourishment that they need. Almost five times the amount of people in the biggest city in America are going home to less-than-full pantries. 16.2 million of those 40 million are kids. When you throw away your lunch, or part of your lunch, the food that will land itself in a landfill could feed one of the many kids who don't have enough to eat. If you're not going to eat your hotdog, give it to someone else. It's better than it going to the garbage.

When your carrots go into the landfill, they hurt more than the economy. As they rot, they produce methane, a greenhouse gas that has twenty-one times the global warming power of carbon dioxide, an ingredient in air. The more wasted food, the more food in the landfill, and the more methane gas polluting the environment.

But there are some parts of foods that you just can't eat, such as apple cores. Where should these scraps go? In a compost bin, of course! While they'll still produce methane there, it will spread the gas out instead of having all the garbage at one regional landfill. If you have a garden, even a tiny one, compost can be very beneficial. Although you may not think of it as

one, composting is a form of recycling. When you take your apple core, which was grown in a garden, let it rot in a compost bin, then plant it back in a garden, the nutrients from the fungi produced in the rot grow the apple tree you planted. In a way, you've grown an apple from an apple.