

# Restaurant owner finds new way to recycle food waste

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KAMAS -- Restaurants throw out a lot of food every day. In fact, Recycle Utah says 25 percent of restaurant food is wasted, but now one restaurant owner has an idea on what to do with it all.

Sean Wharton, owner of The Gateway Grill in Kamas, has an interesting way of dealing with food waste: He gives excess food his customers didn't pig out on to his pigs.



"I think it's my effort to give back to society and be more of a producer than a consumer," Wharton said.

It always bugged Wharton how much food got tossed away, so he decided to have his restaurant staff throw extra food away in a separate bucket.



"Everyone is like, 'Where's the pig box?' It's an instinct, and you look to save the food," Wharton said.

Now, the food isn't wasted. Wharton raises pigs on it and sells them to people. In fact, five recently went to a Weber County petting zoo.

"It's an excellent idea," said Insa Riepen, executive director for Recycle Utah. She says Wharton has inspired about 10 other restaurants in Summit County to join the program. Lots of farmers can benefit.

"If the chef is willing to work with the program like this, to sort out their waste and then get the credit for it, then it works," Riepen said.

Not only does sorting scrap food help feed Wharton's pigs, but it also decreases his garbage bill, which he says any restaurant owner would love. "My food waste has gone from twice-a-week pickup on the dumpsters to once every other week," he said.

That's saving him about \$250 a month. But more importantly, it's saving food that would otherwise go to waste.

[Recycle Utah](#) says it would like to see restaurants in other communities come up with programs to donate food waste to their local farmers.

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