

# From Shopping Cart to Trash Can: How American Families Waste Food

## Abstract

Food waste is a **serious problem**

- Families go hungry
- Resources are wasted
- Global warming worsens

One of its biggest contributors are overlooked: **American Families**

**But how is food being wasted?**

## Objectives

Compile data to find...

- What foods are being thrown out
- How food is wasted
- State waste per capita
- US Consumer Spending Habits
- What kinds of families waste more

Within the years **2010 – 2020**

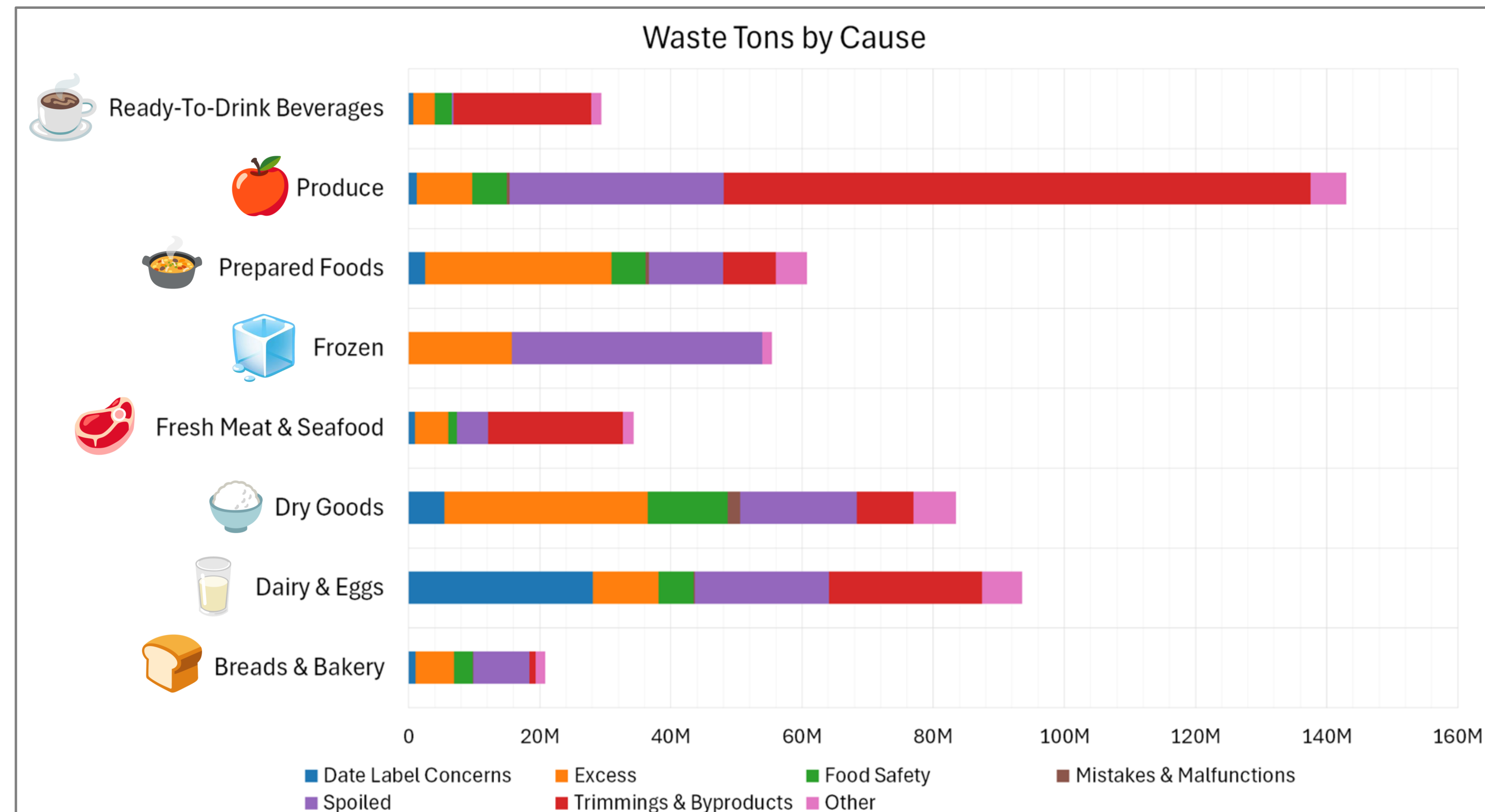
## Methods

Analyze data through code and specialized programs

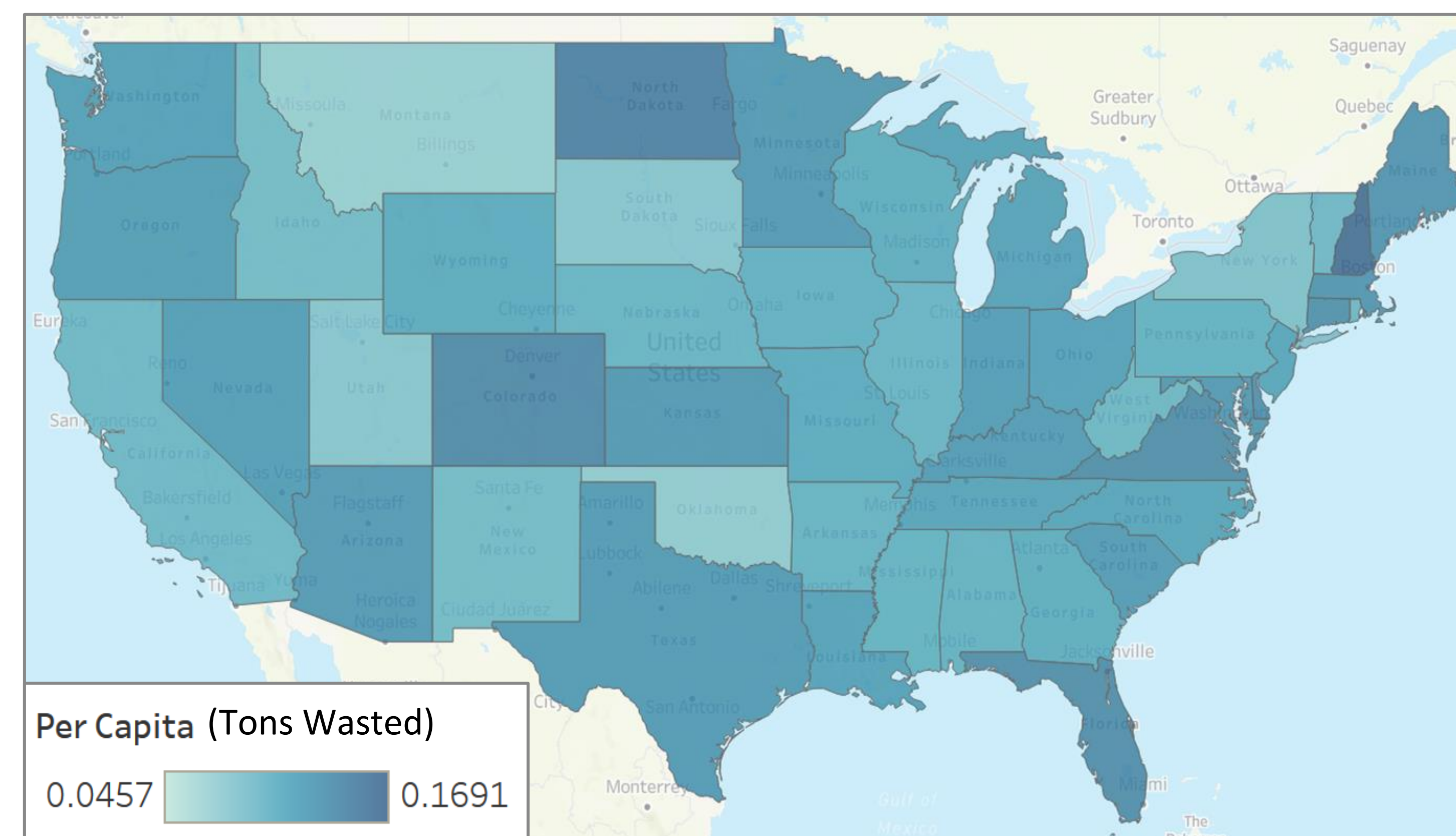
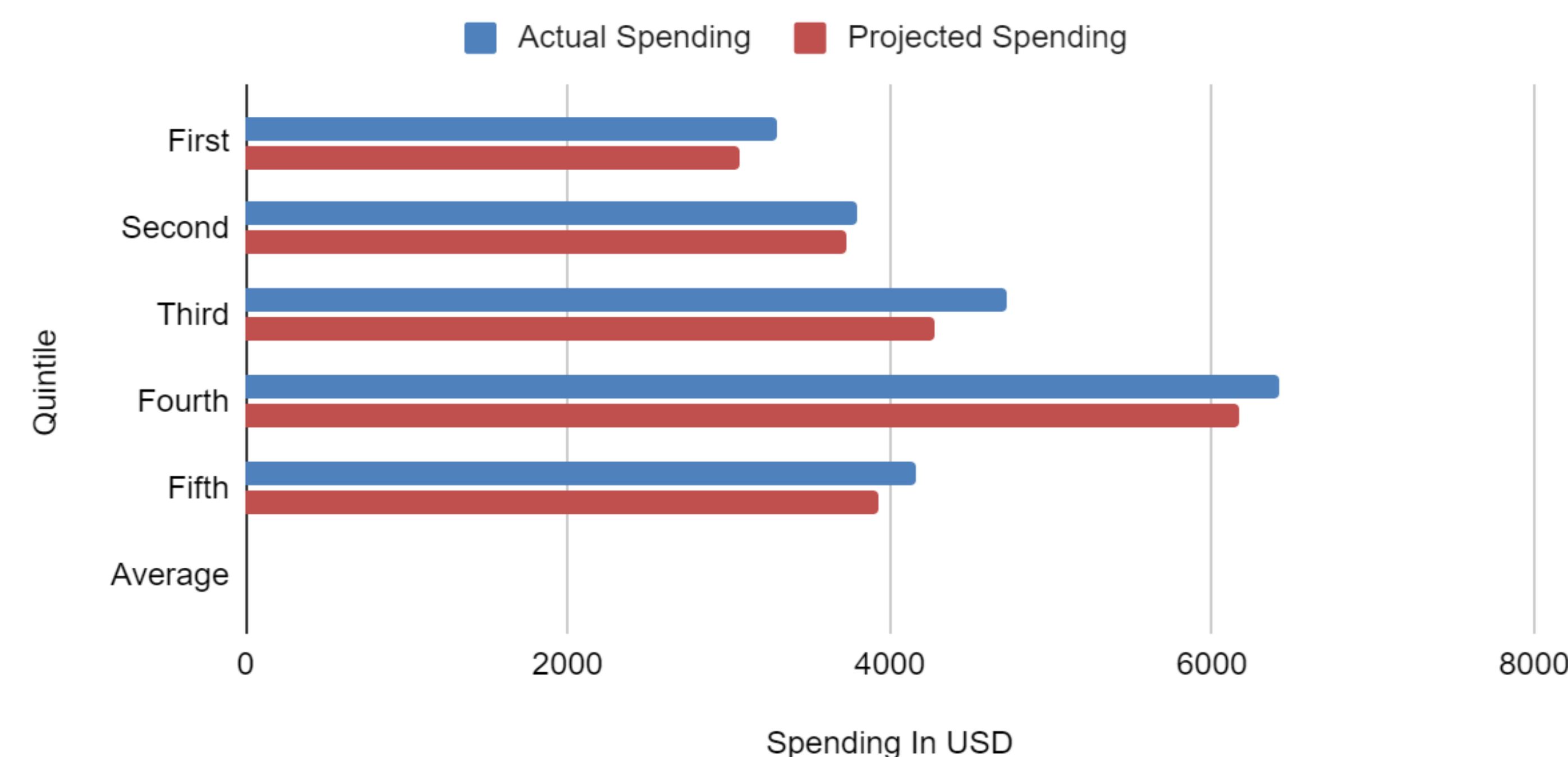
- Python Libraries (Numpy, Pandas)
- Tableau
- Google Sheets



## Results



US Consumer Average Food Spending vs Projected Food Spending Adjusted for Inflation (2010-2020)



## Significance

### Waste Tons By Cause

- Most Wasted Foods: Produce, Dairy & Eggs, Dry Goods
- Most Influential Causes: Trimmings & Byproducts, Spoiled food, and Excess food.

### Average vs Projected Food Spending

- Largest Gap: Fifth Quintile
- Consistency: **Spending** is outpacing **inflation** in all economic groups

### State Trends

- Most Wasteful: Colorado, New Hampshire, Alaska, Florida, and Maine
- Least Wasteful: Hawaii, New York, Oklahoma, Montana, and Utah

## Conclusion

- Families buy more food than they can eat, and throw out massive amounts of scrap
- US Consumer food expenses have been outpacing inflation throughout the 2010's, which could suggest that families are buying more food year over year.
- States that waste more have less infrastructure to implement waste prevention programs, while low waste states have more robust food waste prevention programs

## References

- ReFED. (n.d.). *Insights Engine Methodology*. Methodology. <https://insights.refed.org/methodology>
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- Bureau of Labor Statistics. (n.d.). Inflation Calculator. Retrieved from [https://www.bls.gov/data/inflation\\_calculator.htm](https://www.bls.gov/data/inflation_calculator.htm)