

Food Rescue Services, Barriers, and Recommendations in Santa Clara County

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FOOD RESCUE SERVICES, BARRIERS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS IN SANTA CLARA COUNTY

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1. Executive Summary

California's Silicon Valley is one of the wealthiest places in the United States where job growth, income, and venture capital flourish at or near record highs. Despite these positive trends, many people in the region are struggling just to get enough food. In Santa Clara and San Mateo Counties 1 in 4 people and 1 in 3 children are at risk of hunger and food stamp participation in the region hit a 10-year high in 2012. Meanwhile, 40% of all food produced in the US is wasted. The reality of hunger and wasted food is costly to the environment, the economy, and the health of our communities.

The costs of uneaten food and empty bellies are often hidden but are significant. Each year hunger costs our nation $130.5 billion in health care for hunger-linked medical issues, $19.2 billion in reduced educational and workplace productivity, and $17.8 billion of charitable contributions to address hunger, totaling to $167.5 billion per year. In California, the cost of hunger was $19.6 billion in 2010. Meanwhile, the US spends $165 billion each year on food that just gets thrown away and then pays $750 million each year for its disposal. Wasted food is a disaster for the environment too as it wastes valuable resources like water and energy and is the third largest greenhouse gas emitter globally behind China and the US.

Locally, the figures are staggering too. In 2013 there were an estimated 125 million additional meals[1] needed to meet the needs of low-income families in Santa Clara County

[1] Information received over phone from Caitlin Kerk, Public Relations & Communications at Second Harvest Food Bank.

beyond food purchases and food assistance programs while 34 million pounds[2] of edible food went to the landfill in the county. This doesn't even include edible food currently going to compost or the millions of pounds of produce left unharvested on farms and on neighborhood fruit trees. There is a clear opportunity to connect surplus food to people that need it and clear social, financial, and environmental rewards for making it happen but history has proven that we can't keep doing the same thing and expect different results.

In 2013 there were an estimated 125 million additional meals needed to meet the needs of low-income families in Santa Clara County beyond food purchases and food assistance programs while 34 million pounds of edible food went to the landfill in the county.

Many efforts exist in Santa Clara County and across the county that aim to rescue surplus food and feed people. Yet both food and people are still falling through the cracks at alarming rates. Why are these efforts falling short? Through this research we sought to understand the gaps and challenges in the sector and to better understand where there are opportunities for innovation. Despite hard work and the best intentions, we learned that the food assistance sector is vastly under resourced and limited in its capacity to effectively meet demand for food recovery and distribution. These challenges are complex and these groups need investment, strategic support, and infrastructure to establish a more effective system for food rescue.



Simultaneously, we know that food alone won't solve hunger. There are multiple changes that need to happen on a systemic level in order to holistically and sustainably end the far-reaching causes and consequences of wasted food and hunger. These include but are not limited to: curbing the national overproduction of food, increasing resource-use efficiency in food production, streamlining the food assistance benefits process, improving education for all, offering nutrition education, and providing affordable housing and fair wages. While we work towards these long-term solutions, a coordinated and professional food rescue sector is a critical component of a sustainable food ecosystem.

[2] See Attachment 9.2 for details on calculation method.

This report gives a summary of food rescue policies and efforts in Santa Clara County, data and key findings from surveys and interviews, barriers to food rescue, recommendations for the county, and examples of successful programs across the nation. This report also reflects Food Shift's analysis and understanding of the complex food rescue ecosystem based on our own sector research, relationships, and food rescue activities. Food Shift hopes that this report and recommendations will help guide and inspire more research and action in Santa Clara County and across the country.

Given the resources demanded for food production, the current California drought, and the increasing realities of hunger and climate change, it is critical that we work across sectors to create improved systems that ensure a more just and sustainable use of resources and distribution of food. Santa Clara County can be the leader in developing innovative solutions and set the stage for the rest of the nation to follow. We welcome your feedback, and look forward to hearing from you as we work collaboratively toward a less wasteful and more just society.

"Receiving surplus foods does help our agency. It saves us from having to purchase certain foods for our hot meal and pantry program."



Food Shift rescued 658 lbs of surplus food from the BALLE Conference in June 2014.

Image source here.

1.1 List of Recommendations

Groundwork: Movement Building & Coordination

- Hire a county-level Food Rescue Coordinator.
- Establish a regional working group.

Food Rescue & Access: Increasing Infrastructure & Capacity

- Establish a grant program to increase the capacity and infrastructure of food rescue and redistribution efforts.
- Identify underutilized community assets like vehicles and storage.
- Explore and support technology for food rescue.
- Create an inter-agency food sharing network.
- Provide food safety trainings for food assistance organizations.

Addressing the Gaps: Research & Develop New Models

- Research food needs of food assistance agencies.
- Research food access barriers and opportunities for vulnerable populations.
- Expand innovative food access programs that feed people left out of current models.
- Support social enterprise food rescue models that are financially sustainable and provide jobs.

Government & Municipalities: Increasing Nutritious Donations

- Support AB 234 in streamlining the donation process for gleaned fruit.
- Create a model ordinance that provides clarity on exceptions to the franchise.
- Prioritize food rescue over composting.

Food Producers: Increasing Nutritious Donations

- Spread awareness among food service businesses about food donor protections and how to safely donate foods.
- Curate a widely-available list of organizations that accept food donations in Santa Clara County.
- Integrate food donation guidelines and practices into internal processes within businesses and institutions.
- Support and expand programs that utilize surplus produce from local farms and neighborhood fruit trees.

Source Reduction: Prevention of Wasted Food

While waste prevention is beyond the scope of this report, source reduction is essential in order to limit resource use involved with food production.



At Oakland's Feeding the 5000, 11,000 lbs of produce was turned into soup and smoothies and served to the community along with 2,000 rolls and 2,000 bags of bread -- all of which would have otherwise been wasted.

2. Introduction & Background

2.1 Pathways for Surplus Food

- **Feeding the hungry:** Food service businesses may donate their surplus food to food assistance agencies that feed food-insecure individuals and communities.
- **Feeding staff:** Some food businesses give their leftover food to staff members as a way to reduce waste, increase employee morale, and provided added benefits.
- **Feeding animals:** Food scraps are sometimes utilized as animal feed.
- **Compost:** Many residents and businesses compost their food scraps, which transforms organic material into a rich soil fertilizer.
- **Energy:** In addition to being converted into soil fertilizer in the process of composting, food scraps may be converted into a natural gas used for energy.

2.2 Summary of Existing Policies

The following local, state, and national policies influence food rescue and/or other forms of food recycling in Santa Clara County. The following highlights key policies and we acknowledge that there are additional policies surrounding food recycling and waste management that are not listed.

2.2.1 National Policies

Food Rescue:

- **Relieving donor liability:** The Bill Emerson Good Samaritan Food Donation Act (1996) relieves donors from liability when they are donating food in good faith to a nonprofit, except for cases of intentional misconduct or "gross negligence." The University of Arkansas School of Law published a recent report finding that there has never been an attempted or successful lawsuit regarding attempts to get around the Bill Emerson Act.
- **Charitable tax incentives:** The Tax Reform Act of 1976 provides tax incentives for charitable donations of "wholesome food" to nonprofits, and was extended to include

C and non-C corporations in 2014 by H.R.5771. The deduction amount is based on the difference between the wholesale and retail value of the food donated.

- **Federal food donations:** The U.S. Federal Food Donation Act of 2008 specifies that any contracts entered into by federal agencies above $25,000 that include the supply or sale of food must include a clause encouraging the contractor to donate surplus edible food to nonprofits that feed the hungry.

- **School food rescue:** On November 18, 2011, the Consolidated and Further Continuing Appropriations Act, 2012 (P.L. 112-55) amended the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act (NSLA) by adding a paragraph stating that it is legal to donate surplus food from school meal programs that are federally funded.

Non-Human Pathways of Food:

- **Animal feed:** The Swine Health Protection Act (1980) regulates the feeding of garbage to swine. Food-containing animal products must be treated in a specific way in order to be fed to other animals.

2.2.2. State Policies

Food Rescue:

- **Food safety & handling:** Food rescue organizations have to comply with state food safety regulations included in the California Retail Food Code (CalCode). For example, potentially hazardous foods in serving lines and salad bars may be left out for 12 hours between 41 and 45 degrees F but must be disposed of at the end of the night.

- **Selling gleaned produce:** AB 1990 is a California law that came into effect on January 1st, 2015, and permits backyard growers to legally sell gleaned produce to restaurants, corner stores, farmers markets, and directly from their homes.

- **Relieving donor liability:** Following the Bill Emerson Good Samaritan Food Donation Act, the California Retail Food Code (CalCode, p. 110, California Civil Code (1714.25), and California Food and Agriculture Code (Section 58501-58509) all reference that food donors will not be held liable for donating food in good faith to a non profit.

- **Charitable tax incentives:** AB 152 sets up incentives for farmers to donate produce to food banks, allowing them to be eligible to receive up to 10% of the inventory cost of fruits and vegetables.

Non-Human Pathways of Food:

- **Zero waste:** AB 341 set a goal for California to reach 75% zero waste by 2020 through source reduction, recycling, and composting.

- **Compost:** AB 1826 makes separate collection of commercial organic waste mandatory for businesses and multi-family dwellings beginning in 2016.

- **Animal feed:** The use of non-animal food discards to feed animals is regulated by the California Code of Regulations.

2.2.3 Local Policies

Food Rescue:

- **Food safety & handling:** Each food service business that handles unpackaged food of any kind in Santa Clara County is required to employ at least one person certified on food safety by an accredited entity, the most common of which is ServSafe. The county offers their own certification training and testing and complete list of training and examination providers on their website. Donating food service businesses must comply with the food safety guidelines discussed in the food certification trainings.

- **Selling gleaned produce:** Based on AB 1990, in Santa Clara County, people will need to complete a self-certification registration process to sell their produce. The Santa Clara Department of Environmental Health (DEH) is currently undergoing a comment period for the self-certification program, which ends on Friday, June 19, 2015.

Non-Human Pathways of Food:

- **Zero waste:** Several cities in Santa Clara County have committed to significantly reduce and divert solid waste. San Jose, Mountain View, Palo Alto, and Sunnyvale have adopted zero waste policies with the goal of no waste going to the landfill by 2020-2025. Some cities in the county have commercial food scrap pick-ups, including Mountain View and San Jose.



France will soon pass a set of policies to prevent wasted food, including the requirement that supermarkets donate their extra food to nonprofit organizations that approach them. They are also proposing the creation of a national food waste prevention agency with an annual budget of $33-43 million.

2.3 Summary of Existing Food Rescue Efforts in Santa Clara County

The organizations listed below are essential to keeping food out of the waste stream and redirected toward people. We acknowledge that there are important individuals and agencies involved in food rescue who are not listed here.

2.3.1 Second Harvest Food Bank

Second Harvest Food Bank[3] is one of the largest food banks in the nation and operates in Santa Clara and San Mateo Counties, providing food to almost 175,000 people in Santa Clara County per month[4]. The Food Bank runs a Grocery Rescue Program in which they pick up unsalable but still edible items from grocery stores including Target and SaveMart. They also receive unsalable, surplus, and items approaching their date labels from large-scale food producers including manufacturers, distributors, schools and institutions, and growers and packers. While they do not accept prepared foods, they do accept excess produce from neighborhood gardens and orchards and work closely with Village Harvest, a volunteer-based gleaning group.

Second Harvest Food Bank has done impressive work to establish several alternative distribution programs that give out food in new sites and in new ways to reach underserved populations. For example, their Kids NOW (Nutrition on Weekends) program provides healthy

[3] Image source here.
[4] Information received over phone from Caitlin Kerk, Public Relations & Communications at Second Harvest Food Bank.

food to children and families each Friday for over the weekend, when free or reduced-cost school lunches aren't available. Their Operation Brown Bag program distributes a weekly bag of groceries to low-income seniors and homebound individuals. A complete listing of the Food Bank's specialized programs can be seen here.

Second Harvest Food Bank also offers free food safety trainings for smaller agencies to better equip them to handle donations.

2.3.2 Gleaning

Village Harvest is a volunteer-based gleaning group that has picked and donated over 200,000 lbs of unharvested fruit from homes and small farms in 2014. Garden to Table, based in San Jose, is another group that mobilizes volunteers to glean fruit from neglected trees. In addition to picking up and donating 500 lbs of fruit each week, their efforts also include gardening and nutrition education, policy work, and operating a small-scale farm.



Village Harvest harvests and donates unpicked fruit.

Backyard fruit trees typically produce way more fruit than one family can eat. Village Harvest estimates that there are 10 million - 40 million pounds of fruit just from neighborhood fruit trees in the county, most of it unpicked by homeowners or gleaning groups.

There are also numerous farms in the region, with the agriculture sector having contributed a significant $260 million in gross sales in 2012. Produce is often left unpicked on farms due to factors including low retail prices and strict produce cosmetic standards from grocery stores. Approximately 7% of farms in the US are left unharvested each year leading to 6 billion pounds of of fruits and vegetables going to waste.

Image source here.

2.3.3. Volunteer-Based Food Rescue Organizations

Peninsula Food Runners operates in Santa Clara and San Mateo counties and uses a volunteer network to collect surplus food from grocery stores, restaurants, caterers, and other food service businesses. They deliver 30,000 meals per week to families and individuals in need.

Santa Clara University has a student-led chapter of the national Food Recovery Network, which collects leftover prepared food from the dining services and donates it to Martha's Kitchen, a soup kitchen in San Jose. The Santa Clara University Food Recovery Network was founded in May 2014 and has donated 830 pounds of food to date from dining halls. Stanford has their own student-led food rescue group called Stanford Project on Hunger (SPOON), which donates to Urban Ministries in Palo Alto. SPOON rescued and donated 12,500 lbs of food from dining halls during 2011-2012.

Food rescue extends beyond schools to sports games, events, and more. Rock and Wrap it Up! operates nationally to redistribute food from sport games, concerts, hotels, schools, and film sets. Through the program "Sports Wrap!" the group organizes the logistics to rescue food from Levi's Stadium after sports games and donates it to Martha's Kitchen in San Jose. Over 75 sports franchises have partnered with Rock and Wrap It Up's "Sport's Wrap!"

2.3.4. Food Rescue Technology Platforms

Peninsula Food Runners uses a web platform and is currently developing a smartphone app to coordinate volunteers and the collection and redistribution of surplus food. Food assistance agencies who would like food and volunteers who would like to help transport the food can sign up through this platform, and once a donor submits a donation pick-up request, the app automatically matches the donor with recipient organizations based on location, facility size, kind of food and hours of operation. Once the match has been made, an email and text message is automatically sent to volunteers to transport the food. The food rescue is typically completed within an hour.

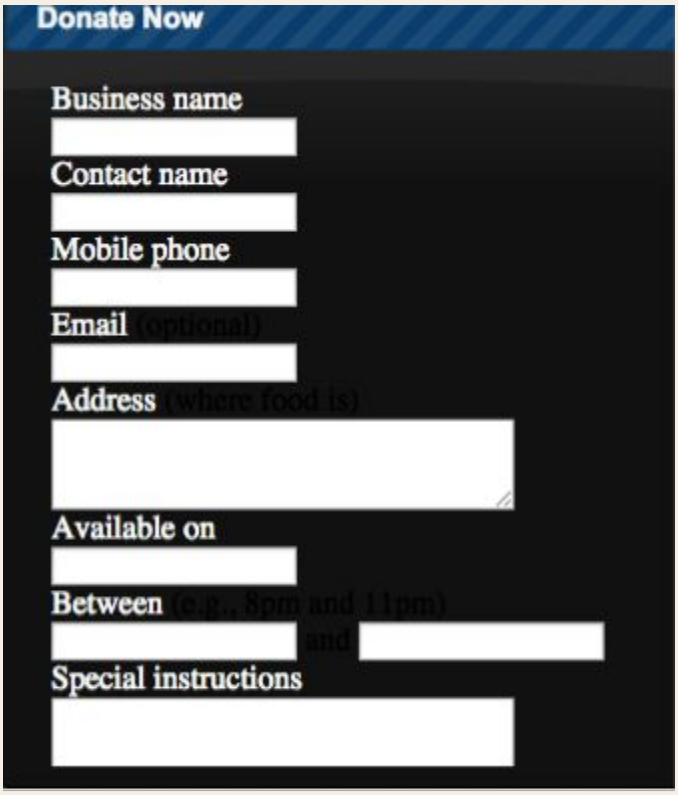
Similarly, Waste No Food, focused in San Jose and the South Bay Area, allows donors to post when they have surplus food, and nonprofits who sign up on the platform are notified when extra food is available and can arrange a pick up. Through this app, Waste No Food has facilitated the rescue and donation of 150,000 meals to date.

Recycle Stuff is a website developed by San Jose State University and lists sites which accept donated food in the Silicon Valley area.

Recycle Where is a website recently developed by StopWaste.Org, SF Environment, and Zero Waste Palo Alto that gives information on how to recycle goods, including sites which accept donated food.

2.3.5. Donations from Corporations

Google donates surplus food from 40 of its cafes through the Chefs to End Hunger program. In this program, Google's produce and dairy distributor, LA & SF Specialty, drops off donation packaging supplies - including boxes and foil sheet pans - when delivering food each day. Donations are picked up by LA & SF Specialty daily in refrigerated trucks during subsequent food drop offs, and brought back to their refrigerated warehouse in Alameda. About 1,000 pounds of food - including prepared vegetables, meats, starches, and desserts - is then distributed to 40 local agencies per week from the warehouse. This model efficiently redistributes food by utilizing existing transportation and refrigeration infrastructure.



Zero Percent is a Chicago-based food rescue platform that matches food donors with recipients through a user-friendly mobile or web app. To date, they have enrolled 298 donors and 250 nonprofits in the platform to donate 570,000 meals. They successfully pick up 98% of all requests.

Other tech companies may also be donating their food in Santa Clara County, although we were not able to get in touch with them during the course of this project. We have heard from our friends at Food Runners in San Francisco that the excess food from the tech industry is abundant beyond belief and requires incredible resources to package and redistribute.

In addition to donating food, some technology firms in Santa Clara County are supporting anti-hunger programs in other ways. Several high tech executives in Santa Clara County are partnering with Second Harvest Food Bank to co-chair their "Stand Up for Kids" campaign to alleviate local childhood hunger.

2.3.6. Direct Partnerships

While food assistance organizations may receive food donations from a food rescue group, often these organizations have direct partnerships with local food businesses. For example, Sunnyvale Community Services staff picks up surplus items from Target three times per week, including nonperishable goods, frozen meat, produce, snacks, cleaning supplies, and occasionally even bicycles to redistribute to individuals and families. Similarly, Neighbors Helping Neighbors in Palo Alto partners with a chef and picks up extra catered food to feed 5-30 people through their hot meal program.



1 Grain to 1000 Grains is a nonprofit in Menlo Park, CA that provides low-cost produce for low-income individuals. The organization purchases and receives donations of imperfect produce from farmers and unsold produce from grocery stores.

Image source here.

2.3.7. Working Groups

Feeding Silicon Valley is a partnership that launched in San Jose in January 2015 to address the problems of wasted food and hunger in Santa Clara County. Members include Silicon Valley Talent Partnership, City of San Jose Homelessness Response Team, Waste No Food, Team San Jose, food donors, and recipients. This group is now working to promote and engage new users in the Waste No Food app.

The Santa Clara Food System Alliance was developed by The Health Trust in 2011, and works to develop a sustainable local food system in the South Bay and Northern San Benito counties. The group discusses and takes action on topics such as food access and the preservation of farm lands. They published a report in 2013, the Santa Clara County Food System Assessment.

2.3.8. Non-Human Pathways of Food

Although this report focuses on food rescue efforts in the county, there are several programs underway in the county to divert food from landfills through alternative pathways. A few examples are included below:

- Some cities in the county have commercial food scrap pick-ups, including Mountain View and San Jose.

- Sustainable Alternative Feed Enterprises has partnered with Garden City Sanitation Inc. and Mission Trail Waste Systems to develop a pilot program in Santa Clara which dehydrates food waste and turns it into animal feed.

- The cities of Palo Alto and San Jose have developed or are currently developing anaerobic digestion facilities to create energy from surplus food.



Green Goose Farm in Petaluma feeds pigs with 95% of food waste rescued from local businesses.



A town in France is developing an "Adopt a Hen" program, giving 1-2 chickens to any household willing to feed food scraps to their chickens.

Image sources here and here.

3. Surveys & Interviews

3.1 Methodologies

To summarize current food rescue services, barriers, and opportunities in Santa Clara County, Food Shift conducted surveys and interviews with food producers (including restaurants, grocery stores, and schools), food rescue organizations (including Santa Clara University's Food Recovery Network and Peninsula Food Runners), food assistance organizations (including soup kitchens, food banks, and pantries), waste management groups, sustainability professionals, and others. Over the course of 6 months our process included:

- Compiling a database made up of 63 food assistance and rescue organizations, and 141 food producers in Santa Clara County.
- Developing two separate surveys for food assistance/rescue organizations and food producers based on our own knowledge and curiosity about potential challenges and opportunities in the sector.
- Disseminating the survey through email, partner organizations, social media, and phone calls.
- Receiving 25 completed surveys from food assistance/rescue organizations and 55 completed surveys from food producers.
- Conducting 37 interviews with food assistance organizations, food rescue organizations, food producers, waste management and sustainability professionals.

See a list of individuals and groups surveyed and interviewed in Attachment 9.5. Results from the surveys and interviews are integrated throughout the following sections of the report. Complete results from the survey are detailed in Attachment 9.6.

3.2. Quantity of Surplus Food Donated

Although a county-wide calculation of total surplus food donated is beyond the scope of this study, an estimation of the average quantity of donated food per business is shown below:

> 46% of food producers said they donate 100 lbs or less per day. On average, this totals to upwards of **36,500 lbs per business per year**.
>
> 17% of food producers said they donate 100-1,000 lbs per day. This totals to **36,500-365,000 lbs per business per year.**
>
> 37% said they did not know the quantity or donate on a per-event basis.

3.3 Quantity of Edible Food Discarded

In 2013, there were an estimated **34,000,000 pounds of edible food that went to the landfill** in Santa Clara County.

This is equivalent to:

25,806,000 pounds of carbon dioxide

26,153,846 meals

2,464 passenger vehicles on the road

This is a very low estimate, as it does not take into account the quantity of edible food left unharvested on farms and neighborhood trees, nor edible food that went into compost.

See calculation methods in Attachment 9.2.

3.4 Type of Surplus Food Donated

Prepared foods, **bread/baked goods**, and **produce** are commonly rescued:

- 70% of food producers that donate surplus food donate **prepared foods** (sandwiches, salads, etc.), making this the most common type of donated food.
- 52% of food producers that donate surplus food donate **bread/baked goods**, making this the second most common type of donated food.
- 68% of food rescue/assistance groups reported receiving rescued **bread/baked goods**, making this the most common type of received food.
- 60% of food rescue/assistance groups reported receiving rescued **produce**, making this the second most common type of received food.
- Other kinds of rescued food include: non-perishable food, meat or fish, dairy products, frozen foods, and outdated products.

4. Barriers to Food Rescue

The safe, reliable, and efficient rescue and redistribution of food is no easy task. The following barriers identify factors that inhibit food rescue, and are based on survey and interview findings.

<table>
<tr><th colspan="2">Lack of Infrastructure & Capacity</th></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="5">Food rescue and food assistance groups commonly reported having insufficient refrigeration/storage space, transportation, staff/volunteers, and/or kitchen space to successfully pick up, process, and distribute donations of surplus food.</td><td>43-61% of food rescue/assistance groups reported limited staff/volunteers, transportation, and storage/refrigeration to be the top challenge to food rescue while only 4% reported difficulty finding donors as their primary challenge.</td></tr>
<tr><td>“We can’t have our kitchen staff and drivers out all the time.”
- Food assistance/rescue organization</td></tr>
<tr><td>“[Rescued food] coming in requires more manpower to receive, glean, and process the foods...we are always looking for volunteers with physical abilities to assist us in this area.”
- Food assistance/rescue organization</td></tr>
<tr><td>“If we made millions of pounds of food available today, it would totally swamp the system. The food bank is the only one capable of increased magnitude.”
- Food assistance/rescue organization</td></tr>
<tr><td>“We are capable of picking and delivering more food than these [food assistance organizations] are able to use.”
- Food rescue organization</td></tr>
</table>

Lack of Sector Innovation	
Food rescue organizations are often limited in their scope and capacity and focus primarily on the immediate need of feeding people. While these efforts are critical, the sector has rarely made adjustments that allow for increased sustainability or innovation that would ultimately lead to long term systemic solutions toward reduced waste and hunger.	*"In the long run I would rather see a reduction in food waste. People would rather have the money than the handout of free food."* - *Food assistance/rescue organization*
	"Food banks are not invested in diversion... Their mission has nothing to do with the environment, only with feeding people… food banks need to be more flexible. They need to fit in new changes." - *Food assistance/rescue organization*
	"The Bay Area is a great place for food innovation because there is Silicon Valley (technology companies), the Central Valley (food), and the sophisticated Bay Area eater." - *Sustainability professional*

Unreliability in Collections	
Food-generating businesses report that food rescue groups are often unreliable and inconsistent in their pickup days and times which make it difficult to develop a consistent and professional donation routine. Again, this relates back to the limited capacity of food rescue groups. Despite their desire to collect surplus food in the community, they don't always have the resources to do so.	*"We have so much surplus food and we rely on [volunteers] who are flaky. Please send me reliable organizations who would pick up food!"* - *Food producer*
	"There's nothing like boxing your food for donation and then not having it picked up to kill participation." - *Food producer*
	"Reliability of the pick up volunteer/driver is important, otherwise donations may be cancelled." - *Food assistance/rescue organization*

<table>
<tr><th colspan="2">Unpredictability of Donations</th></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="2">Donations of rescued food can be unpredictable in terms of quantity, type, and timing, making it difficult to coordinate an appropriate recipient, driver, and meal in advance. As a result of the unpredictability, groups will often receive types and quantities of food that are not appropriate for their agency. Receiving large quantities of perishable things and having to turn them around in a short period time puts groups in panic mode.</td><td>39% of food rescue/food assistance groups surveyed reported the unpredictability of donations as being one of the top challenges of receiving rescued food.</td></tr>
<tr><td>“We can’t be running all over for last minute donations. We just don’t have the staff to do that.”
- Food rescue/assistance organization</td></tr>
</table>

<table>
<tr><th colspan="2">Nutrition of Rescued Food</th></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="2">Food assistance groups are not just looking for food donations, but healthful food donations. Many vulnerable populations are still stuck with food lacking adequate nutrition.</td><td>“We need less bread and more healthy food - not just more food. We often get junky food with empty calories - it's not just about volume but about quality.”
- Food assistance/rescue organization</td></tr>
<tr><td>“We have struggled with not getting the types and quantities of food we need from food rescue.”
- Food assistance/rescue organization</td></tr>
</table>

Inefficient Distribution	
Often due to capacity and public knowledge of their existence, well-established, large-scale feeding operations are more likely to receive donations than smaller groups. Since some agencies have more food than they need this can lead to food being wasted even though other agencies could have used that food.	*"If you are a big shelter and well established then you get everything. We need to even out the playing field."* - *Food assistance/rescue organization*
	"I end up with stuff that we don't need and other people other stuff that they don't need but we need." - *Food assistance/rescue organization*
	"We sometimes get so much that we have to make sure we can distribute it. We share it with other food pantries and have started extra days for clients to pick up food for the extras." - *Food assistance/rescue organization*
	"Some agencies get more food than they can handle and while they might do a wonderful job of feeding people, if you look in the back you see huge dumpsters and they are wasting. That bothers me because it shows that our system is not efficient." - *Food assistance/rescue organization*

Lack of Funding	
Most food rescue and assistance groups have limited funds to do the important work they are doing. This inhibits their ability to hire staff, build capacity, and acquire necessary infrastructure to continue and expand their programs.	*26% of food rescue/food assistance groups surveyed reported financial constraints as being a top challenge regarding rescued food.*
	"We're lean and mean." - *Food assistance/rescue organization*
	"Nobody wants to invest in a humanitarian mission. We need a model that's going to sustain itself financially." - *Food assistance/rescue organization*

The Myth of Liability	
Most businesses have a fear and misunderstanding of liability associated with donating food. Few businesses are familiar with the Good Samaritan Act which relieves donors of liability.	*62% of food producers surveyed are concerned about liability when they consider donating surplus food.*
	"I want to help the poor and less unfortunate...but due to risks involved we just throw the food in trash." - *Food producer*
	"In Santa Clara people are so concerned with liability. The health inspectors have really done a wonderful job at scaring everyone." - *Food assistance/rescue organization*

Lack of Knowledge	
Businesses do not always know where to donate their food.	*31% of food businesses reported not knowing how or where to donate as a main obstacle to donating food.*
	"For us, it's just a matter of finding someone who wants our food and then we will start donating." - *Food producer*
	"There is a need to connect the surplus food generators to the service organizations that need food." - *City representative*

Staff Time	
Businesses report that packaging extra food for donation takes extra staff time.	*28% of food producers reported that inadequate staff time to pack donations is a top challenge to donating food.*
	"It takes us an extra half hour to an hour to package and donate leftover food at the end of the night." - *Food producer*

<table>
<tr><th colspan="2">Lack of Priority</th></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="2">Some public agencies and technical assistance consultants do not prioritize food donation, because it is perceived as having little impact to diversion and little impact to greenhouse gas emissions (compared to composting and anaerobic digestion) despite the fact that if food wastage were a country it would be the third largest greenhouse gas emitter. The true costs of food disposal, the benefits of food recovery and the food recovery hierarchy are not widely known or integrated into business or municipal strategy around waste management.</td><td>“Although feeding hungry people is important, food rescue is super labor intensive, so it doesn’t make a lot of sense to prioritize it over other diversion alternatives. The [wasted food] is already digested or composted, so it is not a high priority. From a greenhouse gas perspective, the negative impact of running an extra truck route would take more energy than the positive impacts from the reduction in food waste.”
- Technical assistance consultant</td></tr>
<tr><td>“Because of how they track sustainability metrics, corporate campuses have a perverse incentive to load up on the recycling and compost (instead of doing waste prevention).”
- City representative</td></tr>
</table>

<table>
<tr><th colspan="2">Franchise Agreements</th></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="2">Many counties or cities have a franchise agreement with a waste management company for solid waste collection and/or recycling and green waste services. Most municipalities and waste collection service providers do not consider collecting surplus food for donation to be a violation of their exclusive franchises. However, there is a need to elevate the issue and ensure that there is transparency and consistency throughout the county.</td><td>“Don’t call it “food waste.” It’s not waste until it is wasted.”
- City representative</td></tr>
<tr><td>“The franchise hauler would probably want the right of first refusal [to pick up surplus food]. But they should look more like chefs than garbage men.”
- Collection services provider</td></tr>
</table>

5. Key Principles for Recommendations

- **Increase the capacity** of food assistance groups to adequately rescue and redistribute food before encouraging more donations.
- Develop and invest in **community-driven solutions** that are rooted in evidence of what the community needs.
- Nurture cross sector **collaboration** and leverage existing resources and efforts.
- Aim for the highest quality and **most nutritious** food first (organic where possible).
- Ensure that the surplus food and/or revenue generated from surplus food benefits those who are **most disadvantaged** in our communities.
- Food alone won't solve hunger. We must address the **systemic challenges** that lead to hunger and poverty.

6. Recommendations

The following recommendations are in direct response to the barriers and insights shared with and identified by Food Shift through surveys and interviews with key stakeholders in Santa Clara County, and the highlighted quotes are from conversations in our interviews and comments in the surveys. Additionally, Food Shift brings to these recommendations our own experience, background knowledge, and understanding of the challenges, opportunities, and players within the complex ecosystem around food production, food waste, and food access. The goal of these recommendations is to increase the efficiency, effectiveness, and equity of food rescue services in Santa Clara County in order to increase food access and reduce the environmental impacts of wasted food. The recommendations are listed in our suggested order of priority and implementation, as well as organized into project phases.

> Capacity and infrastructure challenges of the current food rescue system must be addressed before increasing demand for their services by encouraging additional donations.

One of the major findings of this research is that while food rescue/assistance groups and food producers in the county are doing a lot to rescue food, there are still hungry people and still massive amounts of edible food going to landfill. Since food assistance groups reported

often not having the capacity to pick up, process, and distribute food donations, it is essential to invest in food rescue infrastructure and capacity first before encouraging additional and varied kinds of donations. Investing in this infrastructure is critical and is a hugely under resourced and badly needed part of the solution.

We also need to understand why even with food assistance services in place, there are 125 million skipped meals in Santa Clara County each year. What's missing from food assistance efforts and what is needed to fill the gaps? What additional programs can we put in place to make sure there are no people without food? Once effective food distribution pathways are in place, actions are needed to streamline and clarify the donation process for businesses in order to encourage more and healthier food donations.

6.1 Groundwork: Movement Building & Coordination

GOAL: Establish a structure within which research can be conducted and recommendations can be discussed, coordinated, executed, and measured.

6.1.1 Hire a county-level Food Rescue Coordinator.

Several nonprofits, food service businesses, food banks, government entities, tech companies, and others in Santa Clara County are working towards solutions to end wasted food and hunger including food waste apps, food donation partnerships, and innovative food distribution methods. Each of these groups has an important role to play in the movement, while realistically each stakeholder's impact is limited by their particular set of skills, knowledge, resources, and connections. Too frequently these groups work in isolation from each other. Instead of working towards solutions in silos, these stakeholders need to come together to collaborate, share resources, leverage each other's work and learn from each others' experiences.

"All nonprofits are trying to do everything alone. We all do something well. When we work collectively we are more efficient."

We recommend hiring a full-time two year coordinator who would be responsible for bringing together a cross-sector working group of stakeholders to discuss, prioritize, track, and ensure implementation of food rescue solutions. The coordinator would align participants toward a common vision, engage and connect key players, secure funding, ensure execution of action, track impact, and create systems to support the food rescue

ecosystem. This role could be housed within Second Harvest Food Bank, the Feeding Silicon Valley working group, or another organization and funded through a private corporation or the AmeriCorps VISTA program.

6.1.2 Establish a regional working group.

Twenty-seven out of the 85 individuals surveyed, ranging from food service businesses to food assistance organizations to sustainability professionals, expressed interest in joining a working group to address issues and solutions about wasted food and hunger. The working group will allow for the creation of a focused vision, collective fundraising toward a common goal, the sharing of resources and skills across sectors, and the critical engagement of community allies that will more effectively be able to implement sustainable solutions. This working group is an opportunity for the county to demonstrate their commitment to these issues and give everyone a space to contribute their gifts.

A working group will allow for a focused vision, collective fundraising, the sharing of resources and skills across sectors, and the critical engagement of community allies that will more effectively be able to implement sustainable solutions.

The working group and its actions will be strengthened by having diversity and participation from a broad range of sectors including: local officials, food service businesses, technology companies, food rescue and assistance groups, academia, waste management, community representatives, public health, environmental groups, foundations, and others. Everyone has a role to play.

This working group could operate on a city or county level and should build upon or collaborate with Feeding Silicon Valley and other existing efforts for maximum impact. This report can be utilized to orient the working group around the barriers and as a starting point to discuss and prioritize the recommendations below. Each solution should be driven by the groups whom the solution will directly impact, including food assistance organizations, food service businesses, and food insecure individuals.



LA Food Policy Council

The LA Food Policy Council is a non-profit initiative created by the City of LA to make Good Food (healthy, affordable, fair and sustainable) available to all Angelenos. Their Food Resource Recovery Working Group seeks to advance policy goals that support a comprehensive vision for food recovery work, one that bridges and unites food assistance & food recycling advocates to address hunger, food access, good jobs, sustainability & thriving urban farms.

6.2 Food Rescue & Access: Increasing Infrastructure & Capacity

GOAL: Improve the infrastructure and capacity of food assistance organizations to expand the collection, processing, and distributing of food to those in need.

6.2.1 Establish a grant program to increase the capacity and infrastructure of food rescue and redistribution efforts.

Only 1 out of 23 food assistance organizations surveyed reported that difficulty finding food donors is a top challenge for them. Instead, the majority of food assistance organizations reported that limited staff or volunteers (60%), storage or refrigeration space (43%), and/or transportation (43%) to pick up, process, and distribute the donations were among their top challenges.

"If we made millions of pounds of food available today, it would totally swamp the system. The food bank is the only one capable of increased magnitude."

The results are clear - the desire to collect and redistribute surplus food exists but investment in the infrastructure and capacity is necessary in order for groups to adequately make use of and distribute increased donations

of rescued food. A grant program for food assistance agencies to support operations and capacity will allow them to improve and expand their feeding programs to better meet community needs.



Image source here.

6.2.2 Identify underutilized community assets like vehicles, kitchens, and storage.

Investing in human and infrastructure capacity is essential in order to effectively expand food rescue efforts, reduce wasted food and feed more people. More kitchen spaces, for example, are needed to process cosmetically imperfect or over-ripe produce to preserve and to potentially create value-added products that can be sold to generate revenue. Rather than putting additional vehicles on the road, renting expensive storage or kitchen space, or buying new refrigeration, taking advantage of existing infrastructure that is not being fully utilized is a smart, cost-effective, and environmentally efficient way to leverage available assets toward solving community challenges.

> "Consider partnering with companies that already have refrigerated trucks [for donation programs]. [It is] cheaper, and it develops empathy and support with more companies."

These underutilized spaces and vehicles in Santa Clara County should first be identified and mapped, and then could potentially be entered into a web or mobile platform to alert

community organizations about when they are available in real time. The process of identifying resources will also connect key stakeholders and may inspire additional partnerships and programs to emerge that creatively utilize existing resources.



Give Something Back Office Supplies is a B Corporation that delivers office supplies throughout California, and has set up a model to utilize their empty trucks on the road to transport food donations to food banks. Veritable Vegetable, also a B Corporation, is an organic produce distributor that offers space in its refrigerated hybrid trucks to move product for others.

Image source here.

6.2.3 Explore and support technology for food rescue.

Having an effective technology in place will streamline communication, transportation, storage, and tracking processes for both food recipients and donors. It will help ease the challenge of unpredictability of donations for recipients through alerting them about what kinds of food are available in advance. Aside from being used as a matching tool between surplus food and need, there is a an opportunity to utilize a technology to connect organizations with available storage, refrigeration, and/or trucks to store and transport food.

> "Technology is part of the solution to take food recovery to the next level."

In addition to previously highlighted food rescue technologies in Santa Clara County, there are tools and technologies outside of food rescue that move people, money, and products efficiently like Uber, Paypal, and FedEx. Leveraging existing platforms and systems for food rescue efforts is an opportunity to engage unlikely partners and build upon expertise and models that already operate smoothly. We recommend inviting logistics, innovation, and technology companies to the table to discuss customization, expansion or leveraging of these tools to improve food rescue and redistribution efforts.



CropMobster is a community exchange web platform based in Sonoma County, CA that has been successful in allowing farmers or other food producers to post free or discounted surplus food, in addition to other trades, events, or job opportunities.

6.2.4 Create an inter-agency food sharing network.

Multiple food assistance organizations reported that since food rescue donations are unpredictable in type and quantity, they often receive too much or too little of a certain kind of food to meet their client's needs. On an informal basis, some groups have contacts with other organizations and coordinate exchanges of donated food as needed.

Several food assistance/rescue organizations reported that it would be helpful to have a system to easily share and trade surplus food to equalize food distribution between agencies. For example, food assistance groups could have an email listserv between agencies and/or a web/mobile platform to which to post their requests for additional food and unneeded surplus food. The county-level Food Rescue Coordinator may also be able to provide coordination support for this network.

> "Agencies have not figured out how to broker excess [food] amongst themselves. There is a need for rebalancing."

6.2.5 Provide food safety trainings for food assistance organizations.

Second Harvest Food Bank currently has a program to provide free food safety trainings for food assistance agencies. We recommend scaling up, replicating, and/or marketing a subsidized version of this program in order for all food assistance agencies to be trained. This would help food assistance organizations confidently speak to donors about their food safety qualifications in order to encourage food donation partnerships.

> A free meal is only a temporary fix to a complex problem rooted in unemployment and structural inequality. The reason people are going hungry is not because of a shortage of food, it's because of poverty.

6.3 Addressing the Gaps: Research & Develop New Models

GOAL: Assess gaps in the existing food assistance system, and take action to serve populations left out of current models.

6.3.1 Research food gaps for food assistance programs.

While the 25 food assistance organizations that we surveyed tended to have enough food, a more extensive study is needed that engages more food assistance groups, ensures equal representation between geography and size of operations, and involves statistical expertise. Which food assistance groups need more food? What types of food are needed? How might agencies better meet the needs of their communities if they had the resources to do so? Carrying out this large-scale research will allow for strategic food rescue efforts through first identifying the quantity, type, and location of food needed by each community organization before soliciting more and new donations. The research could be conducted by Food Shift with support from a student group from a local university.

6.3.2 Research food access barriers and opportunities for vulnerable populations.

Many people are left out of current food assistance programs for a variety of reasons including not having the means or availability to get to the service during operating hours, being put on a waitlist for programs with high demand, complicated government benefit enrollment processes, feeling stigmatized by the services, or being unaware of available programs and services.

We recommend identifying individuals who are left out of the current food assistance models and exploring why current programs are not meeting their needs. Are there time and location constraints? Dietary restrictions? Complex or lengthy enrollment processes? Are they being put on waitlists? How would they ideally access their food, what ideas do they have, and what are the limitations? Understanding the barriers around food access for residents will allow for innovation and investment to be rooted in evidence of what the community needs. In addition to allowing for critical community insights, this research is an opportunity to engage community leaders and gain community buy-in for potential programs. The county could partner with Food Shift and a local university to implement this research.

6.3.3 Expand and develop innovative food access programs that feed people left out of current models.

Based on the findings from the research conducted in recommendation 6.3.2., develop new food access programs that can feed more people left out of current models.

Part of reaching underserved communities may involve working with Second Harvest Food Bank to scale up their existing specialized programs. The Food Bank has done impressive work to establish several alternative distribution programs that give out food in new sites and in new ways to reach underserved populations, including children and seniors. These programs may need more sites, different/longer hours of operations, and/or more staffing to better meet the needs of the community.

We also suggest exploring new innovative models in response to community insights that would increase food access in certain neighborhoods or for certain populations who are food insecure. These innovative efforts include healthy corner store conversion, increasing food stamp value at farmers' markets, or developing new distribution sites at schools or churches. The Los Angeles school district has implemented a program to give out surplus food to families after school. Expanding programs like these and developing new ones that address community barriers to food access is essential to reducing hunger and an opportunity to utilize more quality food that might otherwise be wasted.

6.3.4 Support social enterprise food rescue models that are financially sustainable and provide jobs.

Thirty-five years ago there were 400 food assistance organizations; now there are more than 50,000[5], yet the problems of wasted food and hunger persist and in fact are greater than ever before. While rescuing and redistributing food is a necessary response to the crisis of hunger in the short-term, it is not a long-term solution to address food insecurity in our communities.

[5] Data from "A Place at the Table" documentary (2012).

Food alone will not solve hunger. A free meal is only a temporary fix to a complex problem rooted in unemployment and structural inequality. The reason people are going hungry is not because of a shortage of food, it's because of poverty.

DC Central Kitchen is a social enterprise that rescues food that would otherwise go to waste; trains unemployed, formerly homeless, and formerly incarcerated individuals to process and cook the food; and distributes meals to local community members in need. Last year, DC Central Kitchen recovered over 800,000 pounds of food, distributed 1.7 million meals, and trained and graduated 85 students who had a 90% job placement rate.

We recommend that the county support and encourage food assistance organizations to explore ways they can generate revenue and provide jobs from their services. Food Donation Connection, for example, is a for-profit food rescue company that charges a percentage of the food donor's tax deduction. DC Central Kitchen generates over $5 million in revenue each year through their catering program.

Fare & Square in Philadelphia and Value Market in Santa Rosa, sell nutritious food staples at a low cost and accept food stamps. Revenue from these programs allows for job creation, expanded food rescue, and increased financial sustainability. The county can replicate and learn from these proven models to pilot holistic models within communities in Santa Clara County.

6.4 Government & Municipalities: Increasing Nutritious Donations

GOAL: Increase the nutrition and/or quantity of surplus food donated through government actions.

6.4.1 Prioritize food rescue over composting.

The amount of money and resources used to produce, process, transport, and dispose of food is significant. Just like we would prefer to see an antique oak door reused rather than chipped for fuel, we would rather see a carefully prepared meal eaten rather than composted. The

food recovery hierarchy should be used as a guideline for all County actions with food for people prioritized over food for compost.

We recommend that the county and the cities in the county make this priority explicit. By adding the food recovery hierarchy to existing diversion targets adds the “food recovery hierarchy” to existing diversion targets for businesses generating large quantities of food and organic waste. In France, any company producing waste above a given threshold will legally have to direct those resources to their highest possible use, in the following order: animal feed, industrial uses, anaerobic digestion and composting.



Food Shift worked in partnership with St. Vincent de Paul to set up a food donation and waste tracking program at two Andronico’s Community Markets locations. Many items that were previously composted or landfilled at the stores were instead donated, putting one store on track to save $27,000/year in reduced compost and trash disposal costs! These results show the benefits of a investing in food rescue rather than incurring the costs of landfilling or even composting edible food items.

In reaching out to organics generators, public agency staff and service providers should incentivize and encourage food donation. Based on our interviews with service providers and public agency staff, we know that they are willing to provide information to their customers on donating surplus food and that there is not a general awareness about this issue among their customers.

The county could also encourage participation in the EPA Food Recovery Challenge and display Rock and Wrap it Up’s Whole Earth Calculator on the county website. These actions will help quantify and illustrate the benefits of food rescue, costs of food disposal, and provide tools and incentives for tracking.

We recommend providing information about food rescue services along with the greenhouse gas and cost benefits of food rescue over composting to all commercial customers within the county. Attachment 9.2 provides a sample calculation of the greenhouse gas reduction

benefits of food rescue in Santa Clara County. Based on this estimate from 2013, if all edible food in Santa Clara County that currently goes to landfill was instead rescued and distributed to people, as much as 26 million meals could be served and 25 million pounds of greenhouse gases could be reduced.



6.4.2 Create a model ordinance that provides clarity on exceptions to the exclusive franchise agreement.

Based on our interviews of public agency staff and service providers, we know that some rescue or salvage activities have the potential to conflict with exclusive franchises. None of the service providers interviewed would want to negatively impact food rescue activities through strict enforcement of their franchises (which could prevent food rescue groups from picking up surplus food). However, some public agency staff have had to "look the other way" and allow food rescue activities to move forward (even if they could be considered a franchise violation).

Since rescuing food to feed hungry people is a priority for the county, it may be desirable to clarify that food rescue is a legitimate and desirable activity through adoption of a resolution, ordinance or franchise exemption at the county and municipal level. This way, food rescue organizations are not operating in a "grey area" and public agency staff and service providers

do not have to “look the other way” in enforcing their franchises. Attachments 9.1 and 9.3 provide model language for a resolution and franchise exemption.

6.4.3 Support legislation that streamlines the overall food donation process

AB 1990 is a California law that came into effect on January 1st, 2015, and permits backyard growers to legally sell produce to restaurants, corner stores, farmers markets, and directly from their homes. In Santa Clara County, people will need to complete a self-certification registration process to sell their produce.

It’s essential that we make doing the right thing easy and not put up barriers for people who want to donate food.

AB 234 is in response to AB 1990 and will ensure that residents who are donating or selling a small amount of produce will not be discouraged from doing so with the added step of the registration process from AB 1990. In particular, AB 234 will exempt residents from the self-certification program who are donating their produce or who are making low volume transactions to a permitted food facility. It’s essential that we make doing the right thing easy and not put up barriers for people who want to donate food.

6.5 Food Producers: Increasing Nutritious Donations

GOAL: Increase the nutritional value and/or quantity of donations through actions that engage entities with surplus food.

6.5.1 Spread awareness among food service businesses about food donor protections and how to safely donate foods.

Over half (61%) of businesses surveyed reported that they are concerned about liability when they consider donating food. Many businesses are unaware that the National Good Samaritan Act protects donors from liability when they donate food to a non profit. A recent report reveals there has never been an attempted or successful lawsuit regarding attempts to get around the Good Samaritan Act. There is clearly a gap in knowledge about these protections for food donors.

We recommend that the county incorporate donation guidelines, donation tax incentives, and information about the Good Samaritan Act into the Santa Clara County Department of Environmental Health's food safety certification training program. As discussed previously, Ending Hunger in Silicon Valley has already created food donation food safety materials, developed in conjunction with the Santa Clara County Department of Environmental Health, which could be incorporated into the food safety trainings.

"I want to help the poor and less unfortunate...but due to risks involved we just throw the food in trash."

6.5.2 Curate a widely-available list of organizations that accept food donations in Santa Clara County.

Many food producers would like to donate their food, but don't know where to donate. A transparent, publicly available information source would expand access to food sources and food distribution sites and would enhance efficiency. In particular, we recommend the county create and/or promote a frequently-updated or crowd sourced list of organizations in Santa Clara County that accept food donations.

It would be beneficial to work with a website partner like Recycle Stuff or Recycle Where, and delegate a point person in Santa Clara County to add and routinely update local food-receiving agencies on this website, as well as promote this site to Santa Clara County businesses. This site could also be included as a resource in food safety trainings.

"For us, it's just a matter of finding someone who wants our food and then we will start donating."



Ample Harvest is a website that connects backyard fruit growers with food assistance organizations that need donations of produce. Currently, 7,297 food pantries across the country are listed on their web platform to receive produce and as of 2011, over 20 million pounds had been donated.

6.5.3 Integrate food donation guidelines and practices into internal processes within businesses and institutions.

Current management often influences the initiation and success of a business or institution's food donation program. As management changes, sometimes successful existing food donation programs are ended or largely scaled back, cutting off a food supply for the recipient agency. It is therefore essential to integrate donation guidelines into an entity's internal operating procedures, so as to ensure sustainability of donation programs throughout management changes. For example, catering companies could include an option to donate food on all outreach materials for their client's events. Schools and hospitals could incorporate donation guidelines into their internal operating procedures. Please see Attachment 9.3 for a sample contract provision surrounding food donations. We recommend that the county circulates this to local businesses and institutions.

6.5.4 Support and expand programs that utilize surplus produce from local farms and neighborhood fruit trees.

Numerous groups, including Village Harvest and Garden to Table, make use of Santa Clara County's bounty through gleaning and donating produce from homeowners' unharvested fruit trees and from small orchards. One gleaning group in the county said that they were operating beyond capacity, receiving more requests for harvests than they could possibly meet. Village Harvest estimates that there is approximately 10-40 million pounds of produce from neighborhood fruit trees in Santa Clara County, mostly unpicked by homeowners or gleaning groups.

It is recommended that the county works with the existing gleaning groups to increase their capacity to harvest and make use of this produce, as well as unpicked produce from local farms. AB 1990 now allows gleaned produce to be sold to corner stores, restaurants, farmers' markets, and from individuals' homes, which will open the door for more avenues to which to distribute the enormous supply of Santa Clara County's unpicked produce. In addition not providing increased healthful donations, gleaning provides a great opportunity to increase public awareness about wasted food as well as community building through volunteer work.

"We need less bread and more healthy food - not just more food. We often get junky food with empty calories - it's not just about volume but about quality."

6.6 Source Reduction: Prevention of Wasted Food

While waste prevention is beyond the scope of this report, source reduction is essential in order to limit resource use involved with food production. The United States produces over twice as much food as we need to feed every single person. While improving county-level food rescue, efforts must simultaneously work towards reducing the over purchasing and overproduction of food. This will curb the water, soil, energy, money, and human labor unnecessarily expended to produce excess food. Businesses can save significant money through waste reduction and purchasing only what they need.



The StopWaste Smart Kitchen Initiative offers free source reduction assistance and Lean Path, a food waste tracking tool, to reduce pre-consumer food waste at mid- to high-volume food service operators in Alameda County, California. Lean Path is a proven method to cut pre-consumer food waste in half and reduce food costs by 2-6%.

Image source here.

Source reduction is essential in order to limit resource use involved with food production.



7. Conclusion

The paradox of hunger existing in the presence of such wealth and abundance is unjust and is a call to action for us all. Food rescue offers a practical solution to keep food out of the waste stream and redirected toward people. Yet, we know that the current food rescue infrastructure is limited in its ability to meet demand, leaving food and people falling through the cracks.

The food rescue system is dominated by non-profit sector organizations operating on a shoestring (much like the recycling movement was in the 1970s). Large scale investment in recycling infrastructure occurred in the 1990s due to public policy initiatives at the state and local level (e.g., AB 939, curbside and commercial recycling, C&D ordinances, etc.). In order to maximize recovery of edible food, this activity needs to be brought out of the shadows, legitimized through public education, and elevated through public policy initiatives. These could include infrastructure investments, grants and loans, contracts, databases, ordinances, and education and outreach programs. With government support, a food recovery service sector could be developed as an extension of our current waste management system and as a way to create jobs in the green economy.

These initiatives go far beyond what food assistance groups can and should accomplish alone. Sector innovation and outside involvement is essential if we are going to solve these challenges. We can't keep doing the same thing and expecting different results and food recovery groups can't do it alone. Investment, innovation, and collaboration are needed in order to shape a more efficient and conscious system that feeds people instead of landfills. The government has the unique ability to bring together private knowledge and resources that would otherwise be fragmented, facilitate cross sector collaboration, and acknowledge the complexity and interconnection of these systemic issues.

Ultimately, this challenge is a great opportunity. By trimming waste and diverting food loss we can alleviate hunger, create jobs, cut costs for businesses and municipalities, combat climate change, conserve natural resources, and cultivate more sustainable communities. We hope the report provokes discussion, catalyzes collaboration, and inspires action.
We are truly inspired by your commitment and we'd be delighted to continue exploring solutions with you.

Image source here.

8. Resources

8.1 A report by the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC) about how the U.S. is losing almost half of its food from farm to fork to landfill:
http://www.nrdc.org/food/files/wasted-food-ip.pdf

8.2 A report by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) on the quantity, value, and calories associated with U.S. food loss:
http://www.ers.usda.gov/media/1282296/eib121.pdf

8.3 A 2015 report on statistics in Silicon Valley, including housing, health, environment, and more: http://siliconvalleyindicators.org/pdf/index2015.pdf

8.4 A 2014 report from the Santa Clara County Children's Agenda that provides data on children's access to healthy food, family situations, and education among other measures of health and well-being. The 2014 Data Book shows that the number of hungry children in our community has significantly risen over recent years to 153.7 million "missing meals" in 2014:
http://storage.ugal.com/3283/2014DataBook.pdf

8.5 The Insight Center for Community Economic Development's Elder Index, which is a measure of the cost of older adults' basic expenses, including food, housing, healthcare, and transportation. Forty-eight percent (48%) of adults over age 65 in Santa Clara County don't have enough income to meet their basic needs, which often requires them to choose between essential needs like medicine, food, and utilities:
http://www.insightcced.org/communities/besa/cal-eesi/eesiDetail.html?ref=44

8.6 An article about how Second Harvest Food Bank has programs in place to assist the almost half of Santa Clara County seniors who struggle to afford basic needs:
http://www.shfb.org/Page.aspx?pid=918

8.7 A list of resources that Stanford University offers to nonprofits:
http://www.gsb.stanford.edu/organizations/leverage-gsb/act-nonprofits

8.8 Ag Innovations conducted a project in partnership with Second Harvest Food Bank in which they interviewed food banks about their primary challenges to food assistance and identified possible paths forward. While their report is not yet published, Ag Innovations may be contacted at info@aginnovations.org so that you can be alerted when the report is available.
http://www.aginnovations.org/project/community-partner-strategy-project

8.9 The Santa Clara County Food System Assessment (2013) gives an overview of the food system in Santa Clara County and recommendations for improvement. http://www.caff.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/Final_VersionASSESS_010814_sm.pdf

8.10 The Santa Clara County 2013 Crop Report gives an overview of farming in the county. http://www.sccgov.org/sites/ag/news/Documents/2013%20Crop%20Report%20Pubv4%20pepper%20foldout.pdf

8.11 A report detailing recommendations about what it would take to get to a food secure NYC by 2018: https://nyccah.org/files/Food%20Secure%20NYC%202018%20Plan_0.pdf

9. Attachments

9.1 Sample Resolution in Support of Food Rescue Organizations
9.2 Sample Greenhouse Gas Estimate
9.3 Sample Franchise Exception and Contract Provision
9.4 Definitions of Key Terms
9.5 List of Surveyed and Interviewed Groups
9.6 Survey Results

9.1 Sample Resolution in Support of Food Rescue Organizations

WHEREAS, food insecurity and hunger are daily facts of life for millions of low-income residents in Santa Clara County; and

WHEREAS, 1 in 4 people in Santa Clara County struggle to attain adequate nutrition and 1 in 3 children are at risk of hunger; and

WHEREAS, 48 percent of adults over age 65 in Santa Clara County don't have enough income to meet their basic needs. That often forces them to choose between necessities like food, shelter, and medicine; and

WHEREAS, there is a growing awareness of the important public and private partnership role that community-based organizations, institutions of faith, and charities provide in assisting the hungry and food insecure people; and

WHEREAS, more than 60 local community based organizations in Santa Clara County rely on the support and efforts of volunteers to provide food assistance and services to vulnerable people; and

WHEREAS, 1,133,000 tons of solid waste were disposed by Santa Clara County communities in 2013 and as much as 15.5% or 170,000 tons were discarded food; and

WHEREAS, Santa Clara County [or City of xxx] recognizes that redistributing edible food to hungry people is a priority over diverting edible food to composting or anaerobic digestion.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Supervisors [or the City Council] hereby commits to work with its franchisees to amend its collection and processing franchise agreements to acknowledge food rescue as an exception to the exclusive franchises.

PASSED AND ADOPTED by the Board of Supervisors of the County of Santa Clara [or City Council of xxx], State of California this [day] of [month], [year] by the following vote:

AYES:

NOES:

ABSENT:

9.2 Sample Greenhouse Gas Estimate

SAMPLE CALCULATION ESTIMATING GREENHOUSE GAS BENEFITS OF FOOD RESCUE

1,133,000	Tons of Solid Waste Disposed by Santa Clara County Communities in 2013
170,000	Approximate Amount of Food Discarded (based on 15.5% - CalRecycle estimate)
17,000	Tons of Recoverable Edible Food (assuming 10%)
34,000,000	Pounds of Recoverable Edible Food
	Estimated Greenhouse Gas Reduction using Rock and Wrap it Up Food Recovery Calculator
25,806,000	Pounds of Carbon Dioxide Equivalent
26,153,846	Meals
2,464	Equivalent Number of Passenger Vehicle removed from the road (using U.S. EPA Clean Energy Calculator)

ESTIMATING THE TONS OF EDIBLE FOOD DISCARDS DISPOSED BY THE COMMERCIAL SECTOR

1,133,000	Tons of Solid Waste Disposed by Santa Clara County Communities in 2013
560,835	Estimated tons of Commercial Waste (based on 49.5% - CalRecycle estimate)
86,369	Approximate Amount of Food Discarded (based on 15.4% - CalRecycle estimate)
8,637	Tons of Recoverable Edible Food (assuming 10%)
17,273,718	Estimated Greenhouse Gas Reduction using Rock and Wrap it Up Food Recovery Calculator
13,110,752	Pounds of Carbon Dioxide Equivalent
13,287,475	Meals
1,252	Equivalent Number of Passenger Vehicle removed from the road (using U.S. EPA Clean

	Energy Calculator)

ESTIMATING TONS OF EDIBLE FOOD DISCARDS PROCESSED AT SAN JOSE ANAEROBIC DIGESTER (ZWED)

90,000	Tons of Commercial Organics processed per year at ZWED
9,000	Tons of Recoverable Edible Food (assuming 10%)
18,000,000	Pounds of Recoverable Edible Food
	Estimated Greenhouse Gas Reduction using Rock and Wrap it Up Food Recovery Calculator
13,662,000	Pounds of Carbon Dioxide Equivalent
13,846,154	Meals
1,305	Equivalent Number of Passenger Vehicle removed from the road (using U.S. EPA Clean Energy Calculator)

9.3 Sample Franchise Exception and Contract Provision

SAMPLE FRANCHISE EXCEPTION

Exceptions to Franchises.

In addition to the limitations to the franchises referenced in the Agreement, the collection, processing and disposal of the following material is not exclusive to the franchises:

a. Surplus food donated to an operation committed to redistributing food to feed hungry people transported by persons or entities processing a valid permit, franchise, or license from the County [or City] to transport surplus food.

SAMPLE CATERING CONTRACT PROVISION

LEFTOVERS
All leftover food, prepared but not served, cannot be thrown away, but must go to an anti-hunger agency.

In accordance with State Health Codes, Caterer reserves the right to discard any food items where there is a reasonable risk for food borne illness to occur.

Link to Bill Emerson "Good Samaritan Act"
http://www.foodtodonate.com/Fdcmain/LegalLiabilities.aspx

9.4 Definitions of Key Terms

- **Food assistance organization/service:** Any group or program that provides food to individuals and/or families in need.
- **Food access:** The geographical, economic, logistical and cultural ability to acquire sufficient, safe, and nutritious food.
- **Food insecure**: Those who are unable to consistently obtain and consume food.
- **Food recovery/Food rescue:** The collection and donation of edible but otherwise-wasted food to feed people.
- **Food rescue organization:** An organization with the purpose of collecting food that is edible but would otherwise be discarded to donate to food assistance organizations. Some food assistance organizations also rescue food internally.
- **Food producer:** Any entity -- including businesses, corporations, schools, institutions, farms, and housing communities -- that generates food and could potentially donate surplus food.
- **Gleaning:** To gather leftover produce from neighborhoods and farms.
- **Missing meals:** The quantity of additional meals needed yearly by low-income families and not covered by purchases or food assistance programs. This is often manifested as individuals skipping meals.
- **Surplus food:** Edible unsold or unserved food.
- **Food wasted/wasted food:** Edible or once-edible food that is not eaten by people and instead goes to the landfill.

9.5 List of Surveyed and Interviewed Groups

Surveys

55 food producers:

- 17 restaurants
- 8 caterers
- 3 grocery stores
- 2 event centers
- 2 hospitals
- 2 tech companies
- 1 school
- 1 farm
- 19 other food service businesses (including movie theater, golf course, candy store)

25 food assistance/rescue organizations:

- 17 food assistance groups
- 8 food rescue organizations

Interviews

Food Shift conducted 37 interviews with the following food producers, food assistance/rescue organizations, and other sustainability groups:

8 food producers:

- Chavez Supermarket (San Jose)
- Esther's German Bakery (Mountain View)
- Google (Mountain View)
- Handheld Catering (Santa Clara)
- Regional Medical Center of San Jose (San Jose)
- Santa Clara Valley Medical Center (San Jose)
- Stanford University Dining (Stanford)
- Team San Jose (San Jose)

8 food assistance organizations:

- La Comida de California (Palo Alto)
- Loaves & Fishes (San Jose)

- Martha's Kitchen (San Jose)
- Neighbors Helping Neighbors (Palo Alto)
- Second Harvest Food Bank of Santa Clara and San Mateo Counties (Santa Clara County)
- St. Joseph's Family Center (Gilroy)
- Sunnyvale Community Services (Sunnyvale)
- The Health Trust (San Jose)

5 food rescue organizations:

- CropMobster (Bay Area)
- Garden to Table (San Jose)
- Peninsula Food Runners (Santa Clara County)
- Village Harvest (San Jose)
- Waste No Food (San Jose)

16 other sustainability & waste management groups/individuals:

- Acterra (Silicon Valley)
- Ag Innovations (California)
- Cascadia Consulting Group (National)
- City of Mountain View
- City of Palo Alto
- City of San Jose
- City of Sunnyvale
- Institute for the Future: Food Futures Lab (Palo Alto)
- Fork to Feed (Reno, NV)
- Garden City Sanitation (San Jose)
- Peninsula Sanitary Service (Stanford)
- Recology Mountain View
- Republic Services of Santa Clara County
- Richard Getman, Independent Recycling Consultant (San Jose)
- Sierra Club (National)
- Silicon Valley Talent Partnership (Silicon Valley)

Other organizations that are recommended for interviews:

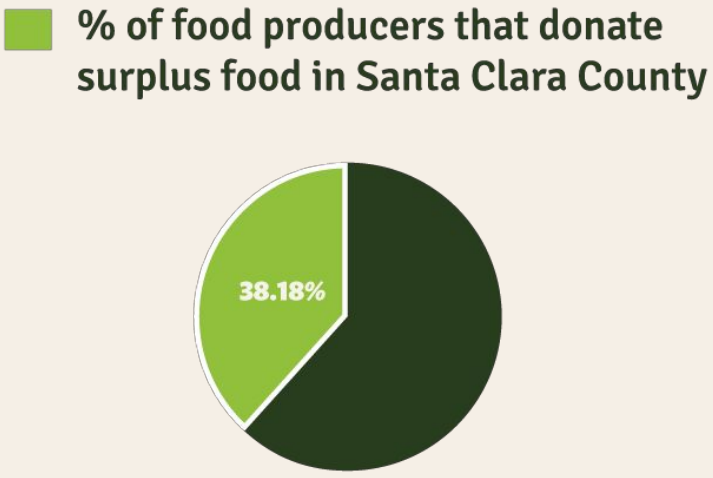
- Santa Clara County Farm Bureau
- Veggielution Community Farm
- Sacred Heart Community Service

9.6 Survey Results

Fifty-five (55) food producers and 25 food assistance/rescue groups were surveyed. While a larger sample size is needed in order to get truly accurate and representative numerical data, the **broad findings** from this initial survey identify important challenges and opportunities across potential food donors and recipients.

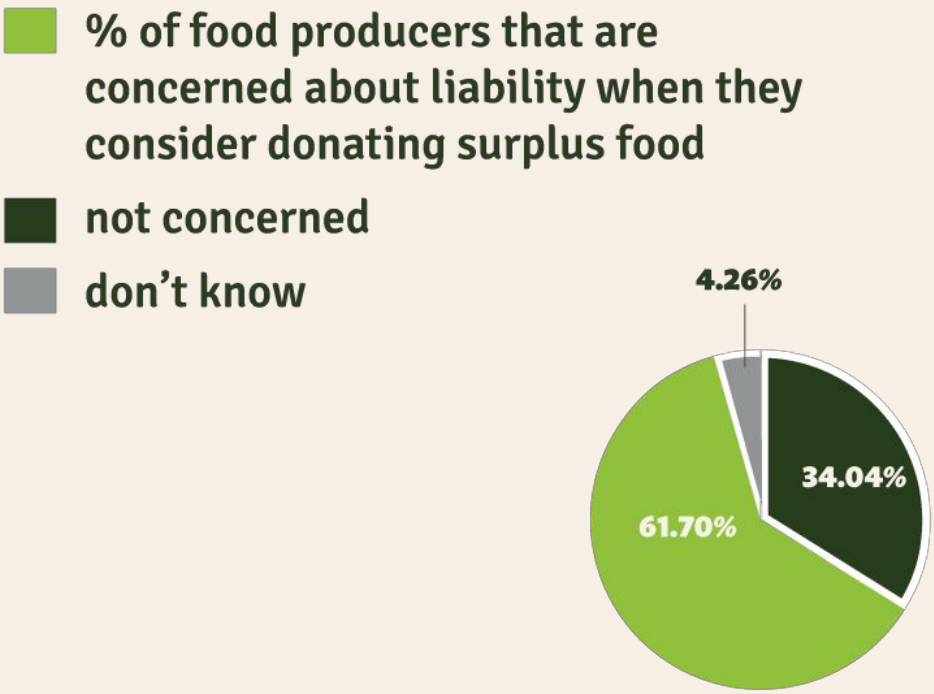
- **Prepared foods, bread/baked goods, and produce are commonly rescued.**
  - 70% of food producers that donate surplus food donate prepared foods (sandwiches, salads, etc.), making this the most common type of donated food.
  - 52% of food producers that donate surplus food donate bread or baked goods, making this the second most common type of donated food.
  - 68% of food rescue/assistance groups reported receiving rescued bread or baked goods, making this the most common type of received food.
  - 60% of food rescue/assistance groups reported receiving rescued produce, making this the second most common type of received food.
  - Other kinds of rescued food include: non-perishable food, meat or fish, dairy products, frozen foods, and outdated products.

- **Small donations are common.**
  - The majority (46%) of businesses who donate surplus food donate 100 lbs or less per day.
  - The majority (30%) of food assistance/rescue organizations receive 100 lbs or less of food per day.



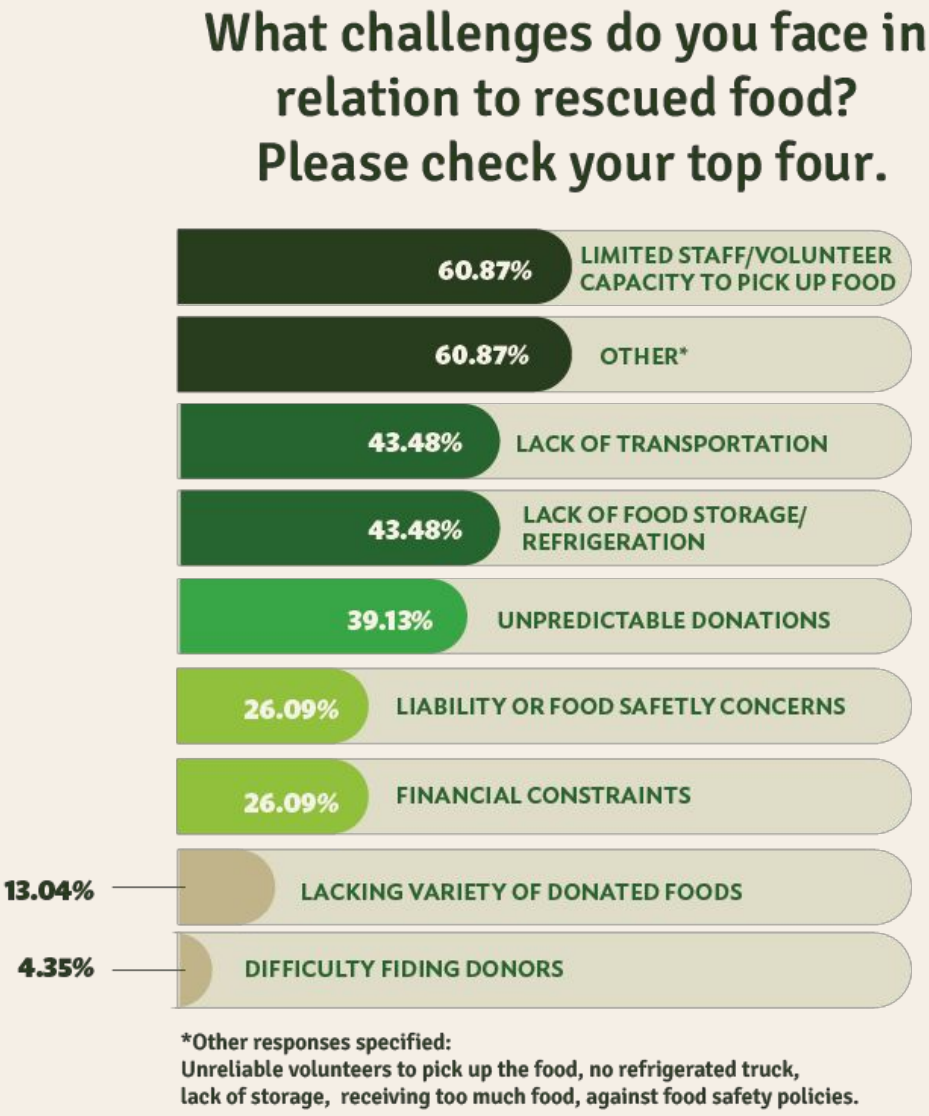
- **Many businesses aren't donating food.**
  - Only 38% of food producers reported donating surplus food.

- **Fear about food safety liability is prevalent among potential donors.**
  - 62% of food producers are concerned about liability when they consider donating surplus food.



- **Potential donors are frequently more motivated by ethical rather than financial reasons.**
  - 92% of food producers reported 'feeding the hungry' as their primary incentive to donating food. Other primary incentives for donating food include:
    - environmental sustainability (67%)
    - ethical or moral consciousness (58%)
    - positive branding (40%)
  - The less commonly chosen incentives include:
    - charitable tax deductions (19%)
    - increasing staff engagement/satisfaction (19%)
    - financial savings (10%)
    - "other - write in" (10%): increasing business awareness about wasted food.

- **Lacking capacity/infrastructure is a greater challenge than finding food donations.**
  - 61% of food rescue/assistance groups reported limited staff/volunteer capacity to pick up food as one of their top challenges.
  - 61% wrote in an "other" response as one of their top challenges, including: unreliable volunteers to pick up the food, no refrigerated truck, lack of storage, receiving too much food, and against food safety policies.
  - 43% reported lack of transportation to pick up donations as one of their top challenges, 43% lack of storage/refrigeration, 39% unpredictable donations, 26% liability or food safety concerns, 26% financial constraints, 13% lacking variety/types of donated foods and only 4% difficulty finding donors.



- **There are a range of challenges to donating food for businesses.**
  - 54% of food producers reported that safety and liability concerns are a top challenge to donating food, making this the most commonly reported challenge to donating food.
  - Other selected top challenges include:
    - not having enough food to donate (43%)
    - being unaware of how or where to donate (31%)
    - inadequate staff time to pack donations (28%)
    - timing of surplus food makes it difficult (28%)
    - not having enough storage, refrigeration, or packaging for the food (26%)
    - "other - write in" (20%): Management policy, lack of staff engagement/enthusiasm, already composting food, unaware of the consequences of wasted food, no easy financial incentive, unpredictable amount of surplus food each day, unreliable volunteers who pick up the food, not understanding what kinds of food are acceptable for donation.

- **Ideas for solutions to improve food rescue were varied among businesses.**
  - 43% of food producers reported using a web/mobile platform to connect them with a nonprofit organization who needs surplus food as a solution to reduce wasted food in their business, making this the most commonly selected solution.
  - Other selected solutions include:
    - assistance establishing a food donation program (31%)
    - setting up a food donation program (31%)
    - using a technology tracking tool to assist in measuring, managing, and preventing waste (31%)
    - consulting to track and prevent wasted food (24%)
    - "other - write in" (26%): outside storage, more predictable donation quantities each day.

- **Ideas for solutions were varied among food rescue/assistance groups.**
  - 45% of food rescue/assistance groups reported grant writing/fundraising support as a top solution to improve food rescue within their organization.
  - Other recommended solutions include: increased refrigeration/storage space (41%), transportation support to recover surplus food (36%), a system to easily share/trade surplus food with other agencies (36%), a web/mobile platform to better connect food donors and recipients (32%), off-hours food rescue coordinator/driver (27%), food rescue coordinator (23%), payment from businesses for food rescue service (23%), and scheduled pickup times or more advance notice (9%).

- 62% of food rescue/assistance organizations voted that having an educational campaign to encourage food donation and inform businesses of their liability protections would make the biggest difference as a county action in improving food rescue within their organizations.
- Other supported county-level actions include: a statement from the health department encouraging food donations from businesses (57%), financial investment from the county to support food rescue efforts (52%), fewer legal restrictions around the donation of prepared foods (43%), a designated county-sponsored food rescue coordination (38%), increased financial incentives for businesses which donate food (38%), and a ban on food in landfills (10%).

- **Businesses and food assistance/rescue organizations are engaged and want to be part of the solution.**
  - 17 food producer respondents said they would be interested in participating in a regional working group.
  - 10 food assistance/recovery respondents said they would be interested in participating in a regional working group.