

Food Rescue in Orange County

Food rescue is defined as the practice of safely retrieving edible food that would otherwise go to waste, and distributing it to those in need. The recovered food is edible, but often not saleable. Additionally, products that are past their “sell by” dates or are imperfect in any way, such as a bruised apple or day-old bread can also be rescued.



Millions of pounds of food and groceries go to waste each year and yet, one in eight people living in Orange County are at risk of food insecurity on any given day. As a food service establishment, you can make a difference by donating unsold perishable and/or prepared food to feed these food insecure families in our community.

The Bill Emerson Good Samaritan Food Donation Act

To encourage businesses to donate healthy food that would otherwise go to waste, the 1996 Bill Emerson Good Samaritan Food Donation Act was passed to encourage the donation of food and grocery products to non-profit organizations for distribution to individuals in need without fear of persecution under protection of the law. For more information, please visit: wastenotoc.org.

Who Can Donate Food?

Grocery Stores - Your grocery store can donate food and grocery products that are needed in your community. This ensures that good edible food is kept out of local landfills and provided to those who would benefit the most. Current large donating partners include Ralphs, Albertsons, Food-4-Less, Fresh & Easy, Gelson's, Walmart and select Trader Joe's locations.

Restaurants and Caterers - When your business has unsold prepared/perishable food at the end of the day, or leftovers after an event these products can be collected and redistributed to local food pantries.

The Benefits of Food Donation

Save money by the cost reductions associated with reduced food waste, including tax deductions on all donations and added value marketing for business via cross promotion.

Who Provides Food Collection Services?

One such program is Waste Not OC Coalition which provides a safe, efficient way to donate surplus food without fear. Waste Not OC provides free scheduled pick-ups in temperature-controlled trucks and delivers food directly to member charities. They can also provide your business with accurate donation records.

For more information about grocery store or restaurant food rescue programs, please visit wastenotoc.org or call Waste Not OC Coalition at (855) 700-WNOC (9662) or via email at: WasteNotOC@gmail.com.

