

# Food Donor Guide



## Who is this guide for?

This guide has been prepared for businesses considering a partnership with a food rescue organisation.

While each donor/rescue relationship can be different, this guide outlines the general information that may help inform potential donors of what food rescue is, and how it can benefit their businesses.

## The Aotearoa Food Rescue Alliance (AFRA)

AFRA is a registered charity, and an Incorporated Society which supports and advocates for our food rescue members and the wider sector. AFRA is a collaboration of 30+ organisations involved in food rescue across the motu.

Our purpose is to provide national support for local food rescue organisations to reduce food waste and increase food security.

AFRA delivers for its members through our four pillars: **Collaboration**, **Best Practice**, **Capacity Building** and **Advocacy**.

For more information about AFRA and our food rescue members, visit our website [www.afra.org.nz](http://www.afra.org.nz).

## Acknowledgments

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Cover photo credit: Free Store Wellington

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Photo credit: Satisfy Food Rescue





# Aotearoa Food Rescue Alliance MEMBERS





# What is food rescue?

## **A third of the food produced globally is wasted from farm to fork.**

*In Aotearoa New Zealand the average household spends over \$650 on wasted food each year.*

## **One in nine people globally are undernourished.**

*In Aotearoa New Zealand, one in five children face food insecurity.*

### **What is food rescue?**

At its heart, a 'food rescue' organisation prevents food from being wasted by collecting and redistributing food to people in need. Although every food rescue organisation has its own way of doing things, most have this process in common:

#### **1. Collect**

Through partnerships with food donors, food rescues collect surplus good food, often directly from the donor (e.g. supermarkets, cafes).

#### **2. Sort**

Food rescues check the quality of the food before it goes out to recipients, and store the food in safe and hygienic conditions throughout the process.

#### **3. Distribute**

There are different ways of passing the food on to end recipients, which depends on what kind of food rescue operation you partner with.

There are a variety of operating models across the food rescue sector, and this can impact exactly how the organisation is run and the processes they follow.

### **Community hub food rescues**

These organisations often have other groups or agencies as recipients, who will then pass the food on to those who need or want it.

### **Freestore**

Freestores distribute rescued food directly to the recipient. Many have an open door policy that allows anyone to come and collect food if they want it.

### **Mixed model**

Some food rescue organisations are part of a larger operation, for example, a social or environmental hub.

# The impact of food rescue



## Delivered



10,231,478 kgs  
of food to people  
who need it.

## Provided



29,262,027  
meals into our  
community.

**Over the year 2021-2022,  
with the generosity of  
hundreds of food donors  
around the country,  
AFRA members have  
collectively made incredible  
achievements.**

## Rescued



\$76,633,770  
worth of good,  
nutritious food  
from landfill.

## Saved



20,250,312 kgs  
of CO2 (e)  
going into the  
atmosphere.

## Diverted



6,342,550,410  
litres of water  
from going  
down the drain.

## Why partner with a food rescue organisation?

### It improves the efficiency and profitability of your business.

By donating your quality surplus you can reduce your business costs. Research shows that for every \$1 businesses spent to reduce food waste, they saved \$14 in avoided waste management costs.\*

### It helps socially disadvantaged New Zealanders who require food assistance.

Your business will be helping to reduce food insecurity by ensuring quality surplus food reaches those who need it.

### It lowers the environmental impact of your business.

By donating rather than discarding your surplus food you can decrease the costs associated with producing, purchasing and transporting food that is wasted.

### It combats climate change by reducing the greenhouse emissions associated with food waste.

Diverting food from landfill will reduce the carbon emissions created by your business.

Our food rescue members greatly appreciate the generosity of their food donors and by partnering with one you can show customers your values align with positive and tangible social and environmental impacts. Food rescue organisations have a significant presence in their communities and they are always keen to share stories of working with their food donors.

*Photo credit: Nelson Environment Centre*



\*Briefing to investigate food waste in New Zealand - Report of the Environment Committee (2020)

## Legalities of donating food to charity : the Good Samaritan Clause - s 352, Food Act 2014

Also known as *Immunity of Food Donors*, this clause applies to businesses who donate food they would normally sell. Provided food is safe and suitable when it is donated and comes with any information needed to keep it safe and suitable, a donor is protected from liability under the Food Act 2014.

1. Food is **unsafe** if it is likely to cause the person eating it harm.
2. Food is **unsuitable** if it is contaminated, deteriorated, in a condition that affects its intended use or people can't tell what is in it.



Photo credit: Just Zilch Freestore



## Guidelines for what **not** to donate:

- Food past its 'use-by' date.
- Food that may have been opened, has damaged packaging or broken seals.
- Food that has clear signs of spoilage e.g. mould, slime, discoloration or rusty, dented or bulging cans.
- Packaged food that has had its original label removed.
- Food that has been thawed and then refrozen.
- General rubbish e.g. cut scraps or floor sweepings.
- Food that is subject to a current recall notice: a list of recalled foods can be found [here](#).
- Home prepared food.

## Are dented tins ok?

Each food rescue organisation will have a way of handling dented cans, but we recommend this advice from [LoveFoodHateWaste](#):

*"If a tin has a small dent, but otherwise there appears to be nothing wrong with it, the food should be safe to eat. But if a can has a deep dent – one that you can lay your finger into – it should be discarded."*

Use-by Date <i>Food Safety</i> <b>Do not donate food after this date.</b>	Best-before Date <i>Quality</i> <b>You can eat food after this date, but it may not be at its best.</b>
<p>A use-by date means there is a potential health risk if consumed after midnight of that date.</p> <p><b>Under no circumstances are products past their use-by date to be consumed unless they have been frozen prior to that date.</b></p>	<p>A best-before date indicates the period for when the product is at its optimal quality.</p> <p>Products with a best-before date are safe to consume after that date although the quality will deteriorate. If deterioration or spoilage becomes noticeable, it is then a health/ safety risk. If it looks ok and smells ok, you can generally eat it.</p>
<b>Do not donate food that has past its use-by date.</b>	Food can be donated after the best-before date provided it is fit to eat.

## **Please inform your partnering food rescue organisation if:**

- Food is safe to eat only for a limited time
- Food requires special handling or storage

## **When donating food please ensure that:**

- Packaging covers food and hasn't been used for anything other than food.
- Food items are separated from non-food items.
- Raw food is separated from cooked/ready-to-eat food.
- Hot food for donation is thoroughly cooked and kept above 60°C.
- Meat is hard-frozen when received.
- Other food that is frozen is still hard-frozen when received.
- Chilled foods for donation have been maintained in the chill-chain at or below 5°C.
- Where possible, keep allergen food separated from other food.

For further information, please see MPI ["Donations of food from commercial sources"](#).

## **Agreements**

It's really important that food donors and their partnering food rescue organisation have clear expectations about the food donation process and make sure the relationship between donor and rescuer is working for everyone.

After a new relationship is established with a food donor, many of our members use a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to clarify these expectations. You can also expect your partnering food rescue to keep in touch with you to check in and make sure everything is going well, or if there are any improvements that can be made.

An MOU will typically include understandings of the following:

- The nature of the food donation and the obligations of each party to ensure food safety and good process.
- That the donated food will not be sold to recipients and the food will be used for no purpose other than agreed.
- The food donor is protected under the Good Samaritan Act.
- The donated food will be distributed to recipient individuals/organisations based on agreements between them and the food rescue organisation.

## How to partner with your local food rescue.

While many food rescue organisations approach local potential food donors directly, you may wish to reach out to let them know you are interested in a partnership.



Check out [www.afra.org.nz/our-members](http://www.afra.org.nz/our-members) to see if there is food rescue organisation in your area.

There is also a members map on page 4 of this booklet.

Many of our members are listed in the [Circular Economy Directory](#) which is managed by the Sustainable Business Network.



If there is an organisation in your area, get in touch with them and let them know you're interested in having a chat about becoming a food donor. They will love to hear from you! They will likely arrange to come and meet with you to talk about the process. They also might invite you to come and check out their warehouse so you can see how the operation works.



If there is not a local food rescue organisation in your area, you could check in with the [New Zealand Food Network](#) (NZFN).

NZFN organises bulk purchase and delivery to food hubs around the country - many of whom are our members. They might be able to connect with you directly and get your food donations to where it's needed.

**Become a food rescue hero today!**  
**It's better for your business, better for the planet, and better for all our communities.**





The Aotearoa Food Rescue Alliance proudly works with

