



FOOD DONATION TOOL KIT





FOOD DONATION TOOL KIT

Contents

Foreword	4
The issue of food waste and its environmental and social impacts	6
Why donate surplus food?	9
Do you have surplus food going to waste?	10
Legalities of donating food to charity	13
Ensuring donated food is safe	14
Considering ‘best before’ and ‘use by’ dates	17
Foodbank	20
OzHarvest	23
SecondBite	26
For more information	30



Foreword

Food waste is an issue that affects everyone in the food supply chain including cafés, restaurants, retailers and hotels, as well as the catering and farming sectors. It also affects wholesale and manufacturing food companies.

The amount of food a business throws away is one indicator of the efficiency of the business. If your business creates a lot of food waste, then you're not operating as efficiently as you could be.

Food waste makes no business sense as it negates your bottom line in two ways:

- 1) every bit of food your business throws away is food that you once paid for, and
- 2) you have to pay to have it collected and taken to landfill. By reducing your food waste, you financially improve your bottom line and the efficiency of your operations. By reducing the amount of food that ends up in landfill, you also help the environment.

When it comes to minimising food waste in business, there is huge room for improvement. The National Waste Report estimates that 21.5% of business waste is food.¹ Indeed, it's estimated that Australian businesses throw away more than 1 million tonnes of food waste every year. In NSW alone, businesses annually send more than 400,000 tonnes of food to landfill.²

The first priority for businesses wanting to tackle food waste is to look at your planning, purchasing, preparation and storage and see where you can implement any improvements. However, no matter how efficiently you run your business, you will always end up with some kind of food waste, much of which is edible. This tool kit has been designed to show you how to donate that edible surplus food to charities.

Donating your surplus or leftover food to charities can achieve four key outcomes:

- it improves the efficiency and profitability of your business
- it helps socially disadvantaged Australians who require food assistance
- it lowers the environmental impact of your business
- it combats climate change by reducing the greenhouse emissions associated with food waste.

This tool kit will help your business to achieve these outcomes. It is full of tips and solutions that will help you reduce the amount of food that your business wastes and support local charities. It has been brought to you by Do Something!, NSW Environment Protection Authority and SecondBite. For more information, visit foodwise.com.au or lovefoodhatewaste.nsw.gov.au.

JON DEE
Founder and Managing Director
DO SOMETHING!

¹www.ephc.gov.au/sites/default/files/WasteMgt_Nat_Waste_Report_FINAL_20_FullReport_201005_0.pdf. ²Department of Environment, Climate Change and Water (2010). Commercial and industrial waste in Sydney – Overview. September 2009. Internet: <http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/resources/warr/09616ClwasteSurvey.pdf>.



The issue of food waste

and its environmental and social impacts

Did you know?

- Australians spend \$7.8 billion a year on food that we buy and then throw away³
- 21.5% of Australian business waste is food⁴
- More than 1 million tonnes of food waste are thrown away from businesses every year⁵
- In Sydney alone, businesses send 300,000 tonnes of food to landfill each year⁶
- 1.2 million Australians do not have access to a safe, nutritious and culturally appropriate food supply and only 10% consume enough vegetables every day⁷
- Hunger is a hidden epidemic – each year, two million Australians will rely on food relief and around half of them will be children
- These children will often go to school without breakfast or to bed without dinner⁸
- When food waste breaks down in landfill it produces methane, a greenhouse gas that's 25 times more powerful than carbon dioxide⁹
- Dumping a kilogram of beef wastes the 15,000 litres of water used in its production¹⁰
- Australia's food supply chain is responsible for approximately 23 per cent of Australia's total greenhouse gas emissions, making it the second-highest emissions generating activity after power stations¹¹
- Wasting food wastes water, energy and natural resources.



³Do Something! www.FoodWise.com.au. ⁴⁺⁵www.ephc.gov.au/sites/default/files/WasteMgt_Nat_Waste_Report_FINAL_20_FullReport_201005_0.pdf. ⁶Department of Environment, Climate Change and Water (2010). Commercial and industrial waste in Sydney – Overview. September 2009. Internet: <http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/resources/warr/09616ClwasteSurvey.pdf>. ⁷SecondBite 2010 Annual Report. ⁸Foodbank ⁹IPCC ¹⁰Do Something! www.FoodWise.com.au – based on CSIRO data about water use associated with beef. ¹¹LoveFoodHateWaste.nsw.gov.au. This includes direct emissions from agriculture, and those attributed to energy, transport, food production, processing and distribution.



When it comes to food production, Australia truly is the lucky country, producing enough fresh food to feed 60 million people – that’s nearly enough to feed the nation 3 times over.¹² However, recent data suggests that 4 million tonnes of food is wasted every year in Australia. Of this, 1.38 million tonnes is business food waste and 2.6 million tonnes is household food waste.¹³

This surplus food could feed millions of Australians everyday.

¹²Australia and Food Security in a Changing World’ –s Report of the PMSEIC Expert Working Group October 2010.

¹³Do Something! www.FoodWise.com.au.

Why donate surplus food?

Donating surplus food enables your business to directly provide benefits to people who are living in disadvantaged circumstances whilst having a positive impact on the environment.

The benefits to your business from food donation include:

- saving on your waste disposal costs
- providing food directly to people in need
- impacting positively on staff morale
- reducing the volume of food in landfill
- helping you to achieve your business’s environmental targets.

Food redistribution organisations such as Foodbank, OzHarvest and SecondBite support large and small welfare agencies who provide various forms of emergency food relief - from breakfast programs for kids who go to school hungry, right through to community kitchens that provide daily meals for people who are homeless or living with disadvantage.

So if you have surplus food, why not redistribute it instead of just sending it to landfill? The positive impact this decision can have is the best option for your business, the community, and the environment.

Do you have surplus food going to waste?

It doesn't matter whether you're a farm, a manufacturing centre, a distribution hub, a café, a restaurant or a catering firm; there are options available to you that will allow you to donate your surplus food to people who need it most in your local community.

Examples of surplus food in your business might include:

- products close to 'best before' or 'use by' date
- excess and slow moving stock or deleted lines
- products that are incorrectly labelled or have no label
- products with damaged packaging
- sample size and bulk products
- ingredients and finished products that fall outside of specification
- surplus food from breakfast, lunch or dinner services eg. salads, sandwiches, muffins and cakes.

There are a variety of options that can help organisations to reduce the amount of food that they waste - these include smarter and more efficient purchasing practices and the ability to redistribute surplus food, still fit for consumption, before it makes its way to landfill.

The food rescue 'sector' has seen exponential growth in recent years. This has led to the development of some very practical options and advice that is specifically applicable to food businesses.

For more information visit foodwise.com.au or lovefoodhatewaste.nsw.gov.au

Did you know?
**NSW businesses throw out
an estimated 400,000
tonnes of food each year**





Surplus produce occurs for many reasons:

- blemishes/imperfections
- short shelf/sale life
- over-ordering/over-catering
- demands for perfect produce.

Taking into consideration that you have done all you can to firstly reduce your food waste levels, the next step is to understand your available food donation options, and to then implement a practical food donation solution.

Legalities of donating food to charity

The Civil Liability Amendment (Food Donations) Act 2005 is in place in NSW to protect food donors. Similar legislation exists elsewhere. This Act offers protection for food donors from civil liability as long as the food is donated for a charitable purpose with the intention that the consumer will not have to pay for the food, and where the food was safe to consume at the time of donation.

Businesses donating surplus food must ensure that:

- the food is donated in good faith for a charitable or benevolent purpose
- the food is donated with the intention that the receiver of the food does not have to pay for the food
- the food is safe to eat when it leaves the possession or control of the donor, and
- the donor gives the charity any information it needs to ensure the ongoing safety of the food.

The donor should also check to ensure that the charity is doing everything necessary to keep the food safe.

Ensuring donated food is safe

When donating surplus food your business must take the same precautions as you would for food that you sell:

- Take care when handling, storing, packing and transporting food
- Store donated food in clean, covered food-grade containers
- Keep high-risk foods such as meat, seafood, poultry, eggs, dairy products and small goods, or foods which contain these ingredients, such as sandwiches, quiches and prepared salads, below 5°C or above 60°C and out of the Temperature Danger Zone (between 5 degrees Celsius and 60 degrees Celsius)
- Ensure that the food is collected by or delivered to a charity in the shortest possible time
- Where possible, keep high-risk foods out of the Temperature Danger Zone while being transported
- Throw away any high-risk food left in the Temperature Danger Zone for more than 4 hours
- Everyone involved in handling donated food should maintain the highest standard of personal hygiene and cleanliness
- Ensure that the food is packaged in a manner that optimises quality and freshness and ensures that it arrives at the food charity fit for human consumption.

Did you know?
21.5% of Australian business waste is food



Snapshot: PRODUCERS

a) I own an independent grocer in a regional town and have produce that I have to unfortunately throw out even though it is still OK.

What can I do? Contact SecondBite. They have a food redistribution model called Community Connect and can link your surplus food directly to a local food relief charity.

Another option would be to contact Reap Food Rescue. Businesses in regional NSW can use the Reap Food rescue tool

kit. An online resource developed by OzHarvest, it supports and connects regional food businesses with local charities.

b) I manage a small farm and the latest yield is not quite to the industry specifications required.

What can I do? Contact Foodbank or SecondBite. SecondBite have a food redistribution model called Community Connect and can link your food surplus directly to a local food relief charity.



Considering 'best before' and 'use by' dates

Food has labels such as 'use-by' and 'best-before' dates to tell us about the shelf-life of the product. These date labels inform us about how long food can be kept before it becomes unsafe to eat or loses its quality. Each type of date has an important but different meaning.

'Use-by' labels indicate the date by which the food must be eaten. After this date, food may be unsafe to eat even if it looks fine. The food may have developed bacteria and be considered no longer fit for consumption. After a 'use-by' date, food should not be eaten by anyone.

'Best-before' labels indicate when the food is at its optimum. Foods are still safe to eat after this date as long as they are not damaged, deteriorated or perished. You can expect these foods to retain their colour, taste, texture and flavour as long as they are stored correctly.

Food which has passed its 'best before' date can still be donated to charity provided it is not damaged, deteriorated or perished.

For more information regarding 'use by' and 'best before' dates please visit the NSW Food Authority and the Food Standards Australia websites.

What foods can be donated?

- Leftover unused portions of food that have not been served to customers or clients such as sandwiches or salads from a café
- Food purchased by a food related business that becomes surplus to their requirements such as fresh or long-life produce
- Excess food at food markets or supermarkets
- Food grown at farms that does not meet the size or cosmetic criteria set by supermarkets
- Food that has damaged or incorrect packaging from food manufacturers.



Do I need to pay for the service?

Charitable food collection organisations do not charge for their services but some charge handling fees for large amounts of food. Talk to the food charity for their guidelines relating to this. One thing that all the food charities have in common is a need for donations that enable them to assist the many Australians who rely on them for daily nourishment.

How do I arrange a service?

Contact the organisations listed over the following pages and a representative will get you started.

How much notice do I need to provide to organise a pick up/collection?

As much notice as possible is always welcome, though reasonable volumes of food can often be picked up at short notice. For normal food pick ups, the level of notice needed can vary between the charitable food collection organisations. Regular food pick ups are welcome as they allow the food charities to better plan their collection routes. Talk to each food charity for details about their notification guidelines.

Did you know?
Over 4 million tonnes of food is wasted in Australia each year



Snapshot: INDUSTRY

a) I own a food distribution business and we have a lot of non-perishable stock that is close to its 'best before' date and I am unable to sell it.

What can I do? contact Foodbank NSW. They will talk you through the type of food you have to ensure it is safe and edible. They will then discuss the method of collection - this may involve them picking it up from you, or it may involve your organisation taking it to their warehouse in Wetherill Park.

b) I own a food manufacturing business and we have mislabeled a load of non-perishable food items.

What can I do? contact Foodbank NSW. They will talk you through the type of food you have to ensure it is safe and edible, and then discuss either a collection or how you can deliver food to their warehouse in Wetherill Park.

How do I donate my food?

There are currently three organisations involved in food redistribution. It is a small sector and the organisations are in constant contact with each other, so whatever your food surplus may be, they will help you to find the best available option.

The organisations are:

Foodbank

Foodbank is the largest hunger relief organisation in Australia – last year alone it redistributed enough food for 32 million meals. Foodbank is a national organisation with distribution centres in all state capitals, NT and eight regional centres with a total of 20,000 square metres of warehousing. Foodbank deals in large and small volumes of shelf stable, chilled and frozen food primarily in palletised form. It is not geared towards accepting prepared food for immediate consumption. Food companies deliver their donations to the warehouses or arrange for it to be collected. It is then sorted, packed and collected by over 2,500 charities and community groups for distribution to people in need. This may be as prepared meals, food hampers or emergency parcels.

Foodbank endeavours to accept all food products fit for human consumption. Food producers, manufacturers, wholesalers and retailers wishing to make a donation can use the contact details below.

Contact Foodbank

Web: www.foodbank.org.au

Email: office@foodbanknsw.org.au

Telephone: (02) 9756 3099





OzHarvest

OzHarvest is a non-denominational charity that rescues excess food which would otherwise be discarded. This excess food is distributed to charities supporting the vulnerable in Sydney, Canberra, Newcastle, Adelaide and Brisbane.

In Sydney, OzHarvest currently delivers 150,000 meals per month with a fleet of seven vans. OzHarvest believes that good food should not go to waste. By distributing it to those in need, they turn excess food into a resource and save thousands of kilograms of food from being dumped into landfill each year.

Businesses in regional NSW can use the Reap Food Rescue tool kit. An online resource developed by OzHarvest, it supports and connects regional food businesses with local charities.

OzHarvest food donation guidelines

- OzHarvest operates 6 days a week:
Monday to Friday from 9am to 10.30pm
Saturday from 5pm to 10.30pm.
- OzHarvest would prefer that food is packaged before they collect it. However they understand that this is not always possible. OzHarvest is able to provide packaging if you do not have your own. Any packaging that you can provide will help them to more efficiently use their resources.

Snapshot: HOSPITALITY

a) I own a café in central Sydney and I hate throwing out food at the end of the day, knowing it is still good to eat.

What can I do? Contact Ozharvest, who run a food rescue charity with branches in Sydney, Canberra, Newcastle, Adelaide and Brisbane. They have vans driving around town and will run through the options available to you. The food will have to be safe and packaged for transportation.

b) I run a catering business and we have a heap of food left over from a corporate event.

What can I do? Contact OzHarvest and they will run through the options available to you. Late notice can reduce the opportunity for collection so if you are having an event, especially if there is the potential for surplus, please contact OzHarvest in advance.

It is a good idea to have their number located on your kitchen wall (02 9516 3877) to help keep your staff thinking about food redistribution. It also provides quick access if you have any questions about food collections.





■ The OzHarvest drivers and volunteers will be able to transfer the food to their containers if you are not able to do this for them. Just let the team know prior to collection if you require this extra assistance. They want to make the donation of food as easy as possible.

■ OzHarvest is doing its best to come and collect food with short notice. However, they appreciate as much notice as possible.

OzHarvest can collect the following types of food:

- food from regulated food providers
- fresh produce without significant decay
- chopped fresh produce
- prepared foods that are excess to requirements
- frozen or fresh meat
- dairy products
- eggs
- frozen foods
- bakery items up to 24 hours old
- canned and packaged foods in original packaging
- food that is past its 'best before' date but not 'use by' date.

OzHarvest will not collect the following food:

- food that is not from a regulated food provider
- home prepared food
- stale bread and other bakery items
- oysters and other high risk seafood
- anything containing alcohol
- food where the packaging has been damaged so that the sanitary seal has been compromised
- food that is at or past its 'use by' date
- produce with significant decay
- cooked rice.

Contact OzHarvest

Web: www.ozharvest.org

Email: info@ozharvest.org

Telephone: (02) 9516 3877

SecondBite

SecondBite is committed to making a positive difference to people by identifying sources of nutritious surplus fresh food and produce that might otherwise go to waste and facilitating its safe and timely distribution to agencies and people in need.

SecondBite has a focus on fresh produce, with 75% of the over 1 million kgs of food they redistributed in 2011 being fresh fruit and vegetables. They provide a delivery model of service to agencies, and have created SecondBite Community Connect™.

This is an innovative model of food rescue that facilitates the redistribution of surplus food from local food donors directly to local community groups anywhere in Australia. SecondBite also have a research department looking at long-term preventative solutions to address food insecurity. The latest research paper is 'The social and nutritional impact of fresh rescued food on community meal programs and their clients'.

SecondBite food donation guidelines

SecondBite agrees to collect the food from the donor and offers protection to the donor as long as the following conditions have been met:

- The food must be safe to eat when it leaves the possession or control of the donor
- The donor gives SecondBite any information it needs to have to ensure the ongoing safety of the food
- Care has been taken when handling, storing and packing food
- High Risk Food is stored in clean, covered food-grade containers
- High risk foods such as: meat, seafood, poultry, eggs, dairy products and small goods, or foods which contain these ingredients, such as sandwiches, quiches and prepared salads, are kept below 5°C or above 60°C and out of the Temperature Danger Zone



- The food is to be collected by SecondBite in the shortest possible time
- High-risk food left in the Temperature Danger Zone for more than 4 hours has been discarded
- Everyone involved in handling donated food has maintained the highest standard of personal hygiene and cleanliness
- The food container is labeled with the appropriate information required: product name, date prepared, use by date and where possible – ingredients
- The food will be in an edible state in 48 hours time from collection
- 'Use by' dates must have at least 2 days life remaining
- 'Best before' dates must have at least 2 days life remaining for refrigerated items
- 'Best before' dates may only be up to 3 months past for dry goods and providing the food is still fit for consumption.

SecondBite will not collect the following types of food:

- Food past its 'use by' date
- Refrigerated food past its 'best before' date
- Dry goods that are 3 months past the 'best before' date
- Food that is damaged or perished to an extent that affects its reasonable use
- Leaking or unsealed products
- Cracked or broken eggs
- High risk items
- Food with visible mould or contamination
- Refrigerated items not stored and maintained at less than 5°C
- Frozen items not stored and maintained at less than minus 15°C
- Food that has been left in a bain-marie
- Foods that have been served to the public on a buffet and/or unwrapped and exposed.

Contact SecondBite

Web: www.secondbite.org.au

Online enquiry form: www.secondbite.org/contact_us/

Telephone: 1800 263 283 (2NDBTE)



For more information

To find out more on the issue of food waste and how your organisation can reduce food waste through food donations, please visit:

DO SOMETHING!

Do Something!

www.foodwise.com.au

Telephone: (02) 9519 8766

Email: admin@foodwise.net.au



Foodbank
An Australia Without Hunger

Foodbank

www.foodbank.org.au

Telephone: (02) 9756 3099

Email: office@foodbanknsw.org.au



Love Food Hate Waste program

www.lovefoodhatewaste.nsw.gov.au

Telephone: (02) 8837 6000

Email: info@lovefoodhatewaste.nsw.gov.au



OzHarvest

www.ozharvest.org

Telephone: (02) 9516 3877

Email: info@ozharvest.org



REAP

www.reap.org.au

Email: reap@ozharvest.org



SecondBite

www.secondbite.org.au

Telephone: 1800 263 283

Email: admin@secondbite.org





Do Something! and NSW Environment Protection Authority would like to thank Foodbank, OzHarvest and SecondBite for their input into the tool kit, and the NSW Food Authority for reviewing this document.

We would like to acknowledge Russell Shields from SecondBite who assisted us in the writing of this tool kit.

