



second harvest
HEARTLAND[®]

A collage of fresh produce. The left side shows a close-up of several bright orange carrots with green tops. The right side shows a white onion, two red apples, and a potato. The text 'RETAIL FOOD RESCUE MANUAL' is overlaid in white on the carrot image.

RETAIL
FOOD RESCUE
MANUAL

Updated **April 2022**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Food Rescue Basics

- 1 Introduction
- 2 Food Sources
- 3 How Food Gets to Our Hungry Neighbors

Safe Food Transport

- 3 The Good News About “Good Sam” Laws
- 4 Safe Food Transport*
- 5 Temperature Guidelines: Frozen*
- 6 Temperature Guidelines: Refrigerated*



Retail Food Rescue

- 7 What is Food Rescue
- 8 Roles and Responsibilities*
- 9 Collection Process*
- 11 Managing Your Retail Relationship
- 12 Store Engagement and Recognition Ideas
- 13 Grievance Resolution Procedure*

* Topics or tools the agency contact should share with Food Rescue collectors

Appendix:

- Food Donation Left Behind Notice
- Transporting Product Temperature Log
- Food Rescue Reporting Sheet
- Closure/Collection Delay Notice

HAVE QUESTIONS? Call **651-282-0876** | Email **orders@2harvest.org**

WELCOME TO SECOND HARVEST HEARTLAND'S FOOD RESCUE PROGRAM

Your participation in the Retail Food Rescue Program is an important link connecting the guests of your food shelf or meal program to the millions of pounds of nutritious food that go unsold in our retail markets every year. Through Second Harvest Heartland's partnership with retailers, wholesome and essential grocery products that are no longer marketable are collected through a donation process and made available to our neighbors in need.

Our work builds on donations of shelf-stable foods such as boxed cereals and canned fruits, vegetables and proteins—which remain valuable additions to the tables of those in need—by offering the benefits of fresh selections for families. With the help of agency partners, perishable items that are removed from retailer shelves in the morning can find their way to a family's dinner table that evening.

As a Feeding America network hunger-relief organization, Second Harvest Heartland's innovative Food Rescue program makes partnerships possible with a variety of retailers, from local stores such as Lund's & Byerly's and Cub Foods, to national chains like Walmart and Target.

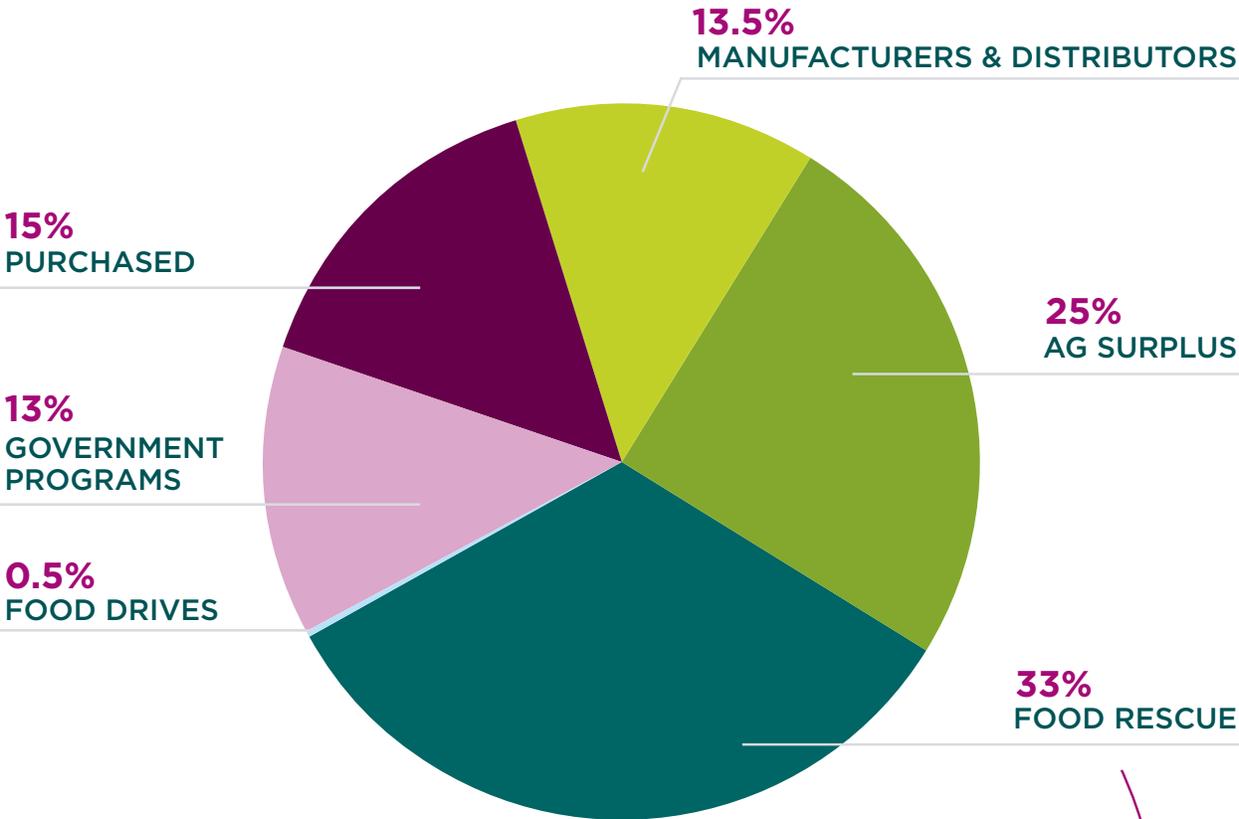
Our program's focus on food safety, adequate training and reliable collections enables our retailers to incorporate the donation program into their daily operations, ensuring food will get to those in need. None of this work would be possible without volunteers and staff.

During your initial training and ongoing support from our Food Rescue team, you will learn what it takes to be an effective representative of the Food Rescue program.

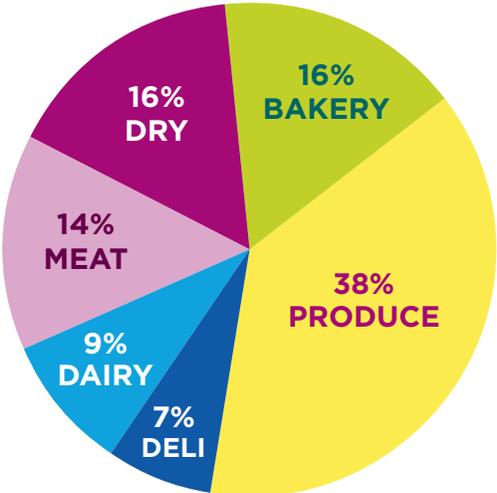
Thank you for your dedication to ending hunger. Your time and commitment are essential.



SECOND HARVEST HEARTLAND'S FOOD SOURCES



FOOD RESCUE SOURCES



SOURCE: Second Harvest Heartland. *FY21 Sources of Food* (Spreadsheet). Accessed February 8, 2022.

HOW FOOD GETS TO OUR HUNGRY NEIGHBORS



THE GOOD NEWS ABOUT "GOOD SAM" LAWS

Good Samaritan Laws protect donors, nonprofit food banks and agency partners from liability for the foods and other essentials they donate. These laws are uniform throughout the country. Because of The Bill Emerson Good Samaritan Food Donation Act of 1996, food donations can be made without fear of liability in the unlikely event something happens to the product after it is donated.

THE BILL EMERSON GOOD SAMARITAN FOOD DONATION LAW

- Protects donors from liability when donating to a nonprofit organization
- Protects donors and agency partners from civil or criminal liability if product is donated or distributed in good faith and is deemed safe at the time of donation or distribution
- Requires establishment of "gross negligence" or intentional misconduct before a donor is considered liable for harm caused by donation
- Establishes a minimum standard throughout the country
- Recognizes that donation of food close to the date of recommended retail sale is not, in and of itself, grounds for finding gross negligence.



SAFE FOOD TRANSPORT FOR TEMPERATURE SENSITIVE PRODUCTS



Use passive or active temperature control devices based on travel distance:

- Shorter than 30 minutes: use a freezer blanket or cooler with ice packs.
- Longer than 30 minutes: use a refrigerated truck.



Track and log sample temperatures to ensure refrigerated/freezer items are transported safely and for best quality:

- A sample temperature reading is required for all frozen and refrigerated products. One item per department, per visit.
- Temperatures must be recorded at points of collection (at the store upon arrival and at your destination/agency).
- Temperatures must be written down and the logs saved for a year, to be presented at the compliance site visit.
- If the temperature exceeds the limits (see guidelines on next page), make note of your actions taken.

SAFE FOOD TRANSPORT TRAINING

All food rescue partners are encouraged to watch the [Safe Food Transport](#) webinar. You can access the link in the Food Rescue section of Agency Zone.

PROPER EQUIPMENT

All agencies must acquire and use proper transport and temperature equipment. Each agency partner will be responsible for sourcing these items. For more information on ordering equipment, please visit the Food Rescue section of Agency Zone.

TEMPERATURE GUIDELINES: FROZEN

Follow these guidelines for temperature collections at the retailer and upon arrival at the distribution site. A sample temperature reading is required for all frozen and refrigerated product. A sample consists of one item per department, per visit.

FROZEN PRODUCT

IF THE TEMP IS	WHEN IT'S COLLECTED AT YOUR STORE	WHEN IT'S RECEIVED AT YOUR SITE
 <p>Lower than 32°F</p>	<p>✓ Suitable for consumption.</p>	<p>✓ Suitable for consumption.</p>
 <p>32°F – 41°F</p>	<p>✗ Do not collect. Alert store staff and Second Harvest Heartland Food Rescue Staff. Leave behind a “Donation Left Behind” sheet at the store.</p>	<p>— <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not refreeze. • Refrigerate. • Check for quality. • Distribute within 48 hrs. </p>
 <p>Higher than 41°F</p>	<p>✗ Do not collect. Alert store staff and Second Harvest Heartland Food Rescue Staff. Leave behind a “Donation Left Behind” sheet at the store.</p>	<p>✗ Dispose.</p>

TEMPERATURE GUIDELINES: REFRIGERATED

Follow these guidelines for temperature collections at the retailer and upon arrival at the distribution site. A sample temperature reading is required for all frozen and refrigerated product. A sample consists of one item per department, per visit.

REFRIGERATED PRODUCT

IF THE TEMP IS	WHEN IT'S COLLECTED AT YOUR STORE	WHEN IT'S RECEIVED AT YOUR SITE
 <p>Lower than 32°F</p>	<p>✓ Suitable for consumption.</p>	<p>✓ Suitable for consumption.</p>
 <p>32°F – 41°F</p>	<p>✓ Suitable for consumption.</p>	<p>✓ Suitable for consumption.</p>
 <p>Higher than 41°F</p>	<p>✗ Do not collect. Alert store staff and Second Harvest Heartland Food Rescue Staff. Leave behind a “Donation Left Behind” sheet at the store.</p>	<p>✗ Dispose.</p>

FOOD RESCUE PROGRAM

Don't throw away your chance to help



Every day, Second Harvest Heartland's Retail Food Rescue fleet and food shelf partners collect thousands of pounds of produce, dairy, deli, meat, bakery and grocery items from local grocery retail partners. This donated product is distributed to food shelves and meal programs to share with our hungry neighbors.

In 2021, **500+** retail partners donated **39.7 million** pounds of food.

Our agency partners collected **60%** of Food Rescue donations through local partnerships.

HOW THE FOOD RESCUE PROGRAM HELPS YOUR COMMUNITY:

- Provides a fresh, nutritious variety of product to feed neighbors in need
- Reduces amount of discarded food at retail grocery stores
- Furthers environmental sustainability
- Boosts employee morale
- Strengthens communities

THE DONATION PROCESS IS EASY, EFFICIENT & SAFE.

The Bill Emerson Good Samaritan Act encourages businesses to donate food by protecting companies from civil and criminal liability.



Second Harvest Heartland operates a fleet of refrigerated trucks in the metro area and coordinates with agency partners throughout Minnesota to collect donations.

A SAMPLING OF OUR FOOD RESCUE DONORS



QUESTIONS? Call **651-282-0876** or email orders@2harvest.org



ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

Food Rescue staff and agency partners work together to implement and sustain a successful program.

SECOND HARVEST HEARTLAND FOOD RESCUE STAFF

CORPORATE-LEVEL INTERACTION

- Resolve program issues
- Ensure compliance
- Submit donation reports

COMMUNICATE WITH STORE

- Regular visits to store location
- Program changes
- Long-term changes to schedule or collecting agency

CONNECT WITH AGENCY

- Respond to unresolved issues, questions and concerns
- Donation trends and patterns
- Program changes
- Support relationship between donor and agency

PROVIDE RESOURCES

- Agency partner on-boarding
- Create store-specific stewardship and recognition materials

AGENCY PARTNER

STORE-LEVEL INTERACTION

- Resolve basic issues
- Comply with program standards
- Submit monthly statistics to Second Harvest Heartland

COMMUNICATE WITH STORE

- Thank employees and leadership
- Temporary changes to schedule
- Develop and steward relationship with donor

CONNECT WITH SECOND HARVEST HEARTLAND FOOD RESCUE STAFF

- Questions and concerns
- Unresolved issues
- Significant changes in leadership or donation trends
- Temporary or emergency changes in collection schedule
- Any safety related issues that arise at the store

PROVIDE RESOURCES

- Staff/Volunteer on-boarding
- Deliver store-specific stewardship and recognition materials

RETAIL FOOD COLLECTION PROCESS

Donation collection protocols vary by donor, and will be clarified during your introductory meeting with Second Harvest Heartland Retail Food Rescue Program staff and store employees.

COLLECTING

The collection process might look like the following:

1. Enter the donor site through the back receiving door.
2. Identify yourself to the receiver/manager on duty before entering the sales floor, and sign in at receiving, if necessary.
3. Proceed to the departments with non-perishable donation items (grocery, bakery, general merchandise).
4. Continue to frozen perishable donation items (meat, frozen); record sample temperature in log.
5. Continue to refrigerated donation items (produce, dairy, deli); record sample temperature in log.
6. Once items are collected at the back door, items can be approved for removal by the receiver and loaded into vehicles.
7. Thank staff and communicate any foreseeable changes to the schedule.
8. Refrigerated and frozen donations must be covered/contained by a passive temperature control device (e.g. a freezer blanket or cooler) if you are not collecting with a refrigerated truck.
9. Items covered with a passive temperature control device must be returned to storage facility within 30 minutes.
10. Arrive at the distribution site. Log sample temperatures of frozen and refrigerated donations.
11. Weigh and record donation weights by category (typically bakery, dairy, deli, frozen, grocery, meat and produce) to be used for reporting through Second Harvest Heartland. Sort and stage food for distribution.



SORTING

Be sure to prioritize what you are sorting and putting away in the following order:

1. Cooler Items
2. Freezer Items
3. Dry Items

REPORTING

Pounds must be separated and weighed into these categories for all retail donors
(*Kwik Trip is the exception*):

- Bakery
- Meat
- Perishable/Prepared (Deli)
- Nonfood (Household Products)
- Dairy
- Produce
- Mix (Dry Goods)



The food rescue product you collect must be reported through the MealConnect website no later than the 10th of the following month.

You are welcome to enter them when your collections for the month are completed.

This step is critical to serving our retail donors for the following reasons:

- Ability to measure success of program, compare across stores/regions, and look for opportunities to improve program
- Motivates store employees
- Shows that product was donated to a 501(c)3
- Provides proof of receipt in case of an audit
- Helps tell the story of community impact through pounds and meals provided
- Reports are shared with their Board and leadership

BEST PRACTICES FOR YOUR RETAIL RELATIONSHIP

DEVELOP RELATIONSHIPS. Know department heads by name. Thank them and other staff for their participation in the Food Rescue Program.

IDENTIFY YOURSELF. Wear a name tag to signal to staff and customers that you are representing your hunger-relief organization.

SHOP SEPARATELY. If you need to visit the store as a customer, do so separately from your collection visits.

BE PROMPT. Call the store if you are going to be late or are unable to collect.

COMMUNICATE CHANGES. If your agency will be closed for a holiday or any other reason, please notify your store. Around holidays, a retailer's ability to store anything extra can become difficult. Letting them know which days are affected and when regular collections will resume is appreciated.

PARK COURTEOUSLY. Know where to park your vehicle. Ask if you are uncertain.

RETURN EQUIPMENT. If you use borrowed milk crates, return them on your next trip. If you use a cart, return it to the location you found it.

BE AWARE. Try not to interrupt regular business or customer activities and interactions.

COLLECT CAREFULLY. Always ask if you are unsure if a product is meant for donation. Leave areas as neat and clean as you found them.

RESOLVE ISSUES. If you have a concern, contact your Food Rescue Specialist, remembering to respect the ongoing relationship with the retailer.

PLAY IT SAFE. Clean your vehicle prior to collection, and remove all environmental hazards, such as antifreeze, motor oil and other chemical or physical hazards.

CONTROL TEMPERATURE. Using a thermometer, record a sample temperature of each refrigerated and frozen pallet once at the store and again at the destination site. Always use a freezer blanket or coolers with ice packs. Never transport food more than 30 minutes in a non-refrigerated vehicle.

REFUSE GRACIOUSLY. Food that does not meet the donation standards may be refused at the store (per the donation guidelines the donor has agreed upon), including food at out-of-range temperatures, food not fit for human consumption, food with broken internal packaging and otherwise ineligible product. Thank them for setting the product aside and explain why you cannot accept it. Report recurring issues to your Food Rescue Specialist at Second Harvest Heartland. Use the "Donation Left Behind" notice in the Appendix of this document.

STORE ENGAGEMENT & RECOGNITION IDEAS

Expressing appreciation to your retail partners is a great way to maintain a positive relationship and keep them engaged in the Food Rescue program. Volunteers and other donors in your community are often receiving some form of recognition. Think of your retail partners the same way. Providing recognition, whether in a formal or informal way, is important to managing your relationships. Here are some ideas for how to say “thank you” to your Food Rescue retail partners.

- Formal store recognition with a certificate recognizing how many meals have been provided in the community because of the amount of food they have donated*
- Table at the store for a community event
- Attend store meetings/huddles
- Invite store employees to community events at your location or to volunteer at your agency
- Host an open house for your retail partners to come and visit your agency
- Create personalized thank you messages



- Ask clients to write what the accessibility of food means to them on paper plates and share with the store
- Share stories of your partnership on social media and in the press**
- Think about what you do with other donors and utilize some of those ideas



*Please contact your Food Rescue Specialist to coordinate this kind of store recognition.

**Please check with your Food Rescue Specialist to plan this as it will require a conversation with the store and the potential need for photo releases.

GRIEVANCE RESOLUTION PROCEDURE

Second Harvest Heartland facilitates and oversees the Food Rescue relationship between retailers and partner agencies. This relationship can be complicated and sometimes misunderstandings or problems arise, so we want to ensure that our partners feel comfortable raising concerns. Below is a grievance procedure to resolve these issues. Know that complaints pertaining to these issues can be made without fear of reprisal.

In many cases, complaints can be worked out directly with the store personnel. In cases where the issue cannot be resolved between the agency representative and the store employees, steps may be taken as follows:

- 1** Work with the store department manager or store manager, as appropriate, to resolve the issue.
- 2** If this proves unsuccessful, inform your Food Rescue Specialist so that they may attempt to solve the issue.
- 3** If this proves unsuccessful, please alert your Food Rescue Specialist so that additional steps can be taken.
- 4** If Second Harvest Heartland feels the issue is significant and a satisfactory resolution cannot be found, consideration will be made to end the relationship. Likewise, if the agency partner deems the relationship is no longer a good fit, the agency may discontinue the partnership at any time, preferably with a 30 day notice.

APPENDIX

NOTICE: FOOD DONATION LEFT BEHIND

REASON

- Does not meet boxing requirements
- Product is not boxed
- We ran out of room and will return
- Product is out-of-temp range
- Meat is not frozen (will collect when frozen)
- Dates are beyond eligibility for donation
- Moldy or poor quality product

Thank you for participating in the Food Rescue program with us.

We appreciate your commitment to upholding the food safety requirements for donation.



Questions? Please call us at 651-282-0876

NOTICE: FOOD DONATION LEFT BEHIND

REASON

- Does not meet boxing requirements
- Product is not boxed
- We ran out of room and will return
- Product is out-of-temp range
- Meat is not frozen (will collect when frozen)
- Dates are beyond eligibility for donation
- Moldy or poor quality product

Thank you for participating in the Food Rescue program with us.

We appreciate your commitment to upholding the food safety requirements for donation.



Questions? Please call us at 651-282-0876

NOTICE: CLOSURE / COLLECTION DELAY

_____ will be closed and not collecting donations

on the following dates: _____

We will resume regular collections on: _____

We recognize that these extended closures will create a challenge with the amount of space you have available to store donations. Because we value the time and labor you give to the Food Rescue Program, **please do not hold highly perishable donations for longer than two days.**



Questions? Please call us at 651-282-0876

NOTICE: CLOSURE / COLLECTION DELAY

_____ will be closed and not collecting donations

on the following dates: _____

We will resume regular collections on: _____

We recognize that these extended closures will create a challenge with the amount of space you have available to store donations. Because we value the time and labor you give to the Food Rescue Program, **please do not hold highly perishable donations for longer than two days.**



Questions? Please call us at 651-282-0876