



HOW TO START
**A FOOD RESCUE
PROGRAM**
IN YOUR COMMUNITY

FOOD RESCUE GUIDE 2019



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Food Rescue Guide: Summary

Food Rescue is a local, non-profit, community organization that accepts safe, nutritious and useable food and distributes the food through local organizations to individuals and families in need of food.

Nine Steps to Getting Started

1. Do research
2. Talk with local groups
3. Approach local store managers
4. Recruit volunteers
5. Find a site
6. Meet government requirements
7. Identify sponsors
8. Communicate regularly
9. Track food & success

Benefits to the Community

When you choose to rescue good food rather than throw it away, you and your community will reap excellent benefits.

- Help those in need of food security
- Reduce food wastage
- Support local social organizations in the community
- Collaborate with local partners
- Conserve the environment
- Encourage recycling and composting

What about Liability?

Most food establishments say their number one concern about donating food is liability. There's good news! In 2008, the NWT Legislative Assembly passed Bill 19, the Donation of Food Act, a critical step in allowing food donor organizations to donate safe, edible food to help feed the hungry. The Act passed unanimously. The Donation of Food Act (2008) enables businesses and organizations to donate and distribute good food to the community. Some of the donated food may be reaching or past the "best before date."

That is right. Your donation of good-to-eat food will not get you in trouble. You are protected under the NWT Donation of Food Act (2008).





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Why Food Rescue?

Food Rescue is a local non-profit community organization that accepts safe, nutritious and useable food and distributes the food free of charge through local organizations to individuals and families in need of food. It develops at the community level using local food resources, volunteers, food donors, and sponsors.

Currently, one Food Rescue is operating in the NWT but hopefully, this guide will help you start a Food Rescue program in your community. Each community in the NWT is unique and has a different level of resources – so you will need to find what works best for your community.

Food Rescue Yellowknife, for example, has been operating successfully for over eleven years and has created a model that works well in a small city. The model is streamlined, efficient and effective (more about this under the typical day and key positions sections).

Here are some interesting facts about Food Rescue Yellowknife's operational model.

- Food Rescue began in June 2008, with all food products being processed in the kitchen of a private home, and its garage was converted into a warehouse. In total, Food Rescue collected and distributed approximately 8,000 kilograms of food in 2008. In 2009, the operation moved to its own facility – two double-walled insulated arctic camp kitchen tents.
- In the 2018/19 fiscal year, Food Rescue Yellowknife received over 148,000 kilograms of food from a variety of sources. Of that, 96% or over 142,000 kilograms, was distributed back to the community through various organizations (18) such as Salvation Army, the YWCA, shelters, schools, seniors centre, daycares, and youth groups.
- Food Rescue operates weekdays from 8:30 am to 4:30 pm.
- There are over 50 volunteers per year working with Food Rescue, the majority of whom are retired seniors.
- Teams of 4-6 people work each day (Monday to Friday) to receive goods, sort produce, pack orders, track inventory and make client deliveries. Two part-time paid positions (driver and site coordinator) round out the personnel of Food Rescue. Originally these positions were volunteer until 2011.
- Food Rescue relies on food donations from the major retail grocery stores, wholesalers and other businesses in Yellowknife. It also relies on sponsors and individuals for in-kind and cash donations to keep the operation working well.

- Food Rescue is part of the City Compost program and recycles glass, plastic, cardboard and boxboard.
- Food Rescue is a non-profit society and holds registered charitable status.

2018/19



148,288 kg



142,083 kg

of food
receivedback to the
community

Year	Recovered (kg)	\$ Value	Compost/ Discarded	Distributed (kg)	\$ Value
2008	8,000	\$35,200	400	7,600	\$33,440
2009/10	62,214	\$273,742	3,111	59,103	\$260,055
2010/11	100,209	\$440,920	1,946	98,263	\$432,357
2011/12	113,790	\$500,676	4,149	109,641	\$482,420
2012/13	129,985	\$571,934	5,583	124,402	\$547,369
2013/14	174,347	\$767,127	5,793	168,554	\$741,638
2014/15	177,602	\$781,449	7,144	170,458	\$750,015
2015/16	157,920	\$694,848	7,617	150,303	\$661,333
2016/17	170,996	\$752,382	8,207	162,789	\$716,272
2017/18	146,511	\$644,648	6,346	140,165	\$616,726
2018/19	148,288	\$845,244	6,205	142,083	\$809,875
Total (kilograms)	1,389,862	\$6,308,169	56,501	1,333,362	\$6,051,500
Total (pounds)	3,057,697		124,302	2,933,396	

Food Banks Canada value adjustment from \$4.40/kg to \$5.70/kg in 2018

Am I Liable?

To encourage the donation and distribution of wholesale food and to protect donors such as grocery stores and wholesale distributors as well as local organizations from any civil or criminal liabilities, Bill 19, also known as the *Donation of Food Act*, was passed by the NWT Legislative Assembly and enacted by the Commissioner of the NWT in 2008. This Act enables local businesses to donate food that is still good to consume but maybe reaching or past the “best before date.” The Act also protects local organizations who distribute this food to families and individuals. Under this Act, food donors may donate food if the food is suitable for consumption, meaning its quality, age, packaging, and condition are suitable to be consumed. In turn, the agencies that distribute the donated food are also free from any civil or criminal liability, knowing that the food is safe and suitable for consumption. This Act applies to individuals or organizations who distribute the donated food free of charge.

Bill 19 is a win-win for everyone in the NWT!

What do the terms food “expiry date” and “best before date” mean?

“Expiry date”

“Only five food items in Canada have expiry dates. All other products have a best before date, which is not an indicator of food safety. Food can be still consumed after the best before date has passed.” (Second Harvest.ca, 2019)

According to the Canadian Food Inspection Agency, the five types of products that need to be labelled with an expiration date are:

- Baby formula and other human milk substitutes.
- Nutritional supplements.
- Meal replacements.
- Pharmacist-sold foods for very low-energy diets.
- Formulated liquid diets.

Products with an expiry date should not be consumed after the expiry date has passed.



“Best before date”

According to the Canadian Food Inspection Agency, the “best before date” gives you information about the freshness and potential shelf-life of the unopened food you are buying. This must appear on pre-packaged foods that will keep fresh for 90 days or less.

You can buy and eat foods after the “best before date” has passed, but it may have lost some of its freshness, flavour and nutritional value, and its texture may have changed.

What are the steps to starting a food rescue program in a community?

Nine Steps to Getting Started

1. Do research

- a. The first step to starting a program is to do your research and find out where and how you can be helpful. Check out the grocery stores in your community and find out what they do with their food products once the “best before date” is reached.
- b. Research other food rescue and food bank programs in the NWT and elsewhere.



2. Talk with local groups

- a. Check with shelters, food banks, churches, meal programs, schools and daycares in your community. Ask if a food rescue program is needed and doable in your community. If it is, invite them to partner with you.

3. Approach local store managers

- a. Approach your local grocery store and set up a meeting to discuss a partnership with the store manager(s) to donate food and explain the NWT Donation of Food Act which protects everyone.
- b. Identify a place in the store for easy pick-ups and develop a schedule.
- c. Start small and build momentum over time.

4. Recruit volunteers

- a. Build a team of volunteers. In many communities, nothing beats word of mouth. Churches and community groups are a great place to start. Recruit friends, co-workers or small groups to help and find times that work for everyone. Be sure to appreciate them often.

5. Find a site

- a. You will need a site location for your program, with running water, heat, storage capacity, refrigerator/cooler and freezer space, and an area for a small office with a telephone, computer and internet access.



6. Meet government requirements

- a. Apply for facility permits, register as a society and set up a Board of Directors.
- b. Check with your city or community office for specific requirements and refer to the GNWT for territorial requirements. Registering as a charitable organization is done through the Canada Revenue Agency.
- c. Many funding agencies require insurance for your board of directors – so check.

7. Identify sponsors

- a. Contact potential sponsors to support your operation through both cash contributions and in-kind donations. If you have your charitable organization status in place with Canada Revenue Agency, you will be able to offer charitable donation receipts for the value of the donation.

8. Communicate regularly

- a. Let your local government and local media know about your program – first to let everyone know that the program exists and its role; second to raise awareness about the difference between “best before dates” and “expiry dates” and that food past the “best before date” is still safe and nutritious; and third to gain more financial and volunteer support for your program.

9. Track food & success

- a. You will need to track the amount of food that is picked-up and distributed to local groups or individuals. Set up an inventory list and weigh/measure the food that is picked up. These statistics are helpful for reports and determining growth and success in your program.

What is a typical day in the life of a food rescue operation?

At its core, Food Rescue is a concept and may run differently in your community. For example, the operation might be active on fewer days of the week, have different volunteer roles, or possibly even connect directly with the people who need food. This section shows how it works in Yellowknife, with a general overview of a typical day.

8:30 AM-Noon

These steps are from the perspective of the kitchen manager, driver and the kitchen helpers:

- Pick up donated food items from grocery stores partners (two stores in the am for FR done one at a time).
- Unload and weigh incoming goods from partners.
- Go through all produce, cleaning up what is useable and discarding to the compost bin what is not.
- Sort food into coolers, freezer, shelving or kitchen as appropriate
- Pack orders with dry goods (known as bulk), cooler items and frozen foods for the day depending on client lists and availability of goods.
- Move the outgoing order to the loading garage.

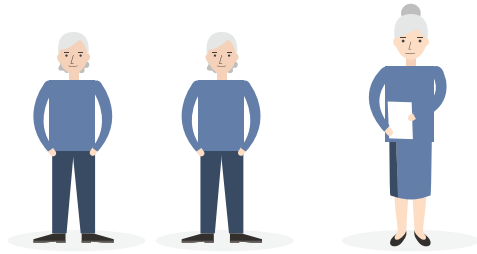


1:00 – 4:30 pm

These steps are from the perspective of the kitchen manager, driver and the kitchen helpers:

- Load delivery van with the various client deliveries for that day.
- Deliver goods to clients unloading at each stop.
- After deliveries, pick up donated items from third grocery store on the way back to site.
- Unload, sort, inventory and store these items as appropriate.





Ongoing daily duties of driver, kitchen helpers and kitchen manager:

- Clean counters, shelving, coolers, freezers and kitchen equipment.
- Sweep, vacuum and wash floors.
- Start orders for the next day's clients.
- Maintain excel spreadsheet inventory.
- Repackage dry good items for the Yk Food Bank (rice, flour, pasta, tea, coffee, sugar etc)
- Weigh compost bins before discarding in outside receptacle.
- Sort all recyclables such as plastics, cans, bottles, paper etc.
- Maintain daily worker roster on Google calendar.

Tips

- Start small
- Control your costs
- Build positive relationships with donors, sponsors and partner organizations
- Develop a strong positive reputation
- Ask people for help
- Communicate your successes
- Write proposals for funding



What are the types of positions in a food rescue operation?

TYPES OF POSITIONS AT A FOOD RESCUE SITE (Dependent on size and funding)

Site Manager

(Part-time employee if funding is available)

- Manages the day-to-day operations
- Ensures the availability of volunteers
- Assigns daily tasks as required for volunteers and staff
- Receives items from donors
- Distributes items to recipient organizations
- Maintains a good working relationship with donors and recipients
- Looks for more efficient and effective ways to run the daily operations

Kitchen Manager

(One per shift - volunteer)

- Oversees the kitchen
- Ensures incoming food is weighed and recorded
- Calls the main recipients to see if they need anything above their standing order
- Labels outgoing food and decides what goes in each box
- Schedules volunteers through a Google calendar
- Fields calls from new volunteer inquiries and follows through
- Shares cleaning duties

Kitchen Helpers

(Two per shift - volunteers)

- May help weigh food
- Process food under the direction of the Kitchen Manager (This could include composting any spoiled produce and cleaning up the good produce but can also include making applesauce and pureeing bananas or tomatoes. They also sort through dented cans and clean milk cartons and do a variety of tasks to “rescue” food.)
- Share cleaning duties

Driver

(Part-time employee working four days a week and a volunteer working on Friday)

- Monday to Friday picks up food donations in the morning, take the food to the Food Rescue facility, and deliver the food to recipient organizations in the afternoons
- Picks up the food at the grocery store or wholesale distributor at a set time and place within the building
- Wears appropriate Food Rescue vest so store employees know the driver works for Food Rescue
- Takes recycling to appropriate recycling places
- Assists the kitchen manager and helpers as needed
- Shares cleaning duties

Driver's Helper

(One per shift - volunteer)

- Assists driver at each stage
- Helps weigh food at Food Rescue site
- Wears appropriate Food Rescue vest
- Assists the kitchen manager and helpers as needed



What are the ongoing tasks that come up regularly throughout the year?

Getting started is a great accomplishment, and the day-to-day work is important and rewarding. However, it is also critical to take care of some other tasks that come up regularly throughout the year.

These tasks include:

- Grant and funding applications – yearly or multi-year arrangements
- Reports to the Canada Revenue Agency and other funders/sponsors - annually
- Volunteer appreciation – annual events such as breakfast or feast events
- Donor and sponsor appreciation – letters of appreciation, ads in the local paper or on the radio
- Social media events and website presence - ongoing
- Site maintenance such as furnace check, water tank cleanup, etc. – summertime and as required
- Vehicle maintenance and repairs – annually and as required
- Financial recordkeeping – monthly reports and annual financial reviews/audits
- Collecting and organizing data and statistics – daily, monthly and yearly reports
- Utilities and communications – telephone/internet, heat, electrical, garbage, recycling, fuel, water and sewage – monthly and ongoing
- Scheduling of volunteers, staff and pickup and delivery days and times - monthly
- Staff training in food safety and lifting heavy items appropriately – annually and for new staff as and when needed - contact GNWT Industry, Tourism and Investment (ITI) and Worker's Safety and Compensation Commission (WSCC)
- Board meetings – number depends on bylaws



What is safe to donate?

All donated food must be handled in accordance with local safe food handling requirements. Here is a general guideline of food that is safe to donate.

Safe	Unsafe
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commercially prepackaged food • Freezer food that is properly frozen • Properly labeled food • Fruit and vegetables • Canned foods • Fresh inspected raw meat that can be frozen right away 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food or drinks with alcohol and/or medicinal ingredients • Severely dented cans • Food in packages that have been opened • Unlabeled food • Spoiled produce • Uninspected meat, dairy or eggs • Raw milk

For specific information on food safety, please contact the following GNWT departments:

- Industry, Tourism and Investment at <https://www.iti.gov.nt.ca/en/services/food-safety>
- Health and Social Services at <https://www.hss.gov.nt.ca/en/services/environmental-health/food-safety-training>

Other resources:

- National Zero Waste Council. (2018). Reducing waste and recovering food in Canada: Guidelines to minimize wasted food and facilitate food donations. Retrieved from www.nzwc.ca/focus/food/guidelines-for-food-donations/Documents/18-064-NZWC-GuidelinestoMinimizeWaste-v9.pdf

Who accepts food donations?

There are several agencies in your community that will happily accept food donations if you have established a positive relationship with these agencies in advance. Some typical agencies include women`s shelters, day shelters, churches, food banks, youth groups, seniors or Elders centres, schools and daycares. Also, local groups will accept food donations for community and sporting events.

Your job will be to collect the food donations and distribute the food to these agencies or individuals in need. It is strongly recommended that you work through local agencies and social groups in your community. One possible suggestion is to partner with local Food Banks and operate joint Food Bank/Food Rescue organizations.

Set up a system that will work best for your community.

Who are the donors and sponsors?

Food Donors

Any food business can donate their edible surplus food:

Retailers	Hotels
Restaurants	Caterers
Wholesalers	Mining companies
Expeditors	Fisheries
Agricultural growers	Hospitals/Community Health Centres

However, you will rely heavily on the retail grocery stores in your community for ongoing, consistent food donations. Build a strong positive relationship with your local grocery store managers.

Sponsors

You will need sponsors who can provide in-kind and/or cash contributions for your ongoing operational needs. Local organizations and businesses will support you if they understand the purpose and benefits of Food Rescue and that Food Rescue is a volunteer, non-profit organization.

When you choose to rescue good food rather than throw it away, you and your community will reap excellent benefits.

- Help those in need of food security
- Reduce food wastage
- Support local social organizations in the community
- Collaborate with local partners
- Conserve the environment
- Encourage recycling and composting

In addition to local sponsors, there are government programs that support food security efforts at the community level. Websites such as FoodRescue.ca and SecondHarvest.ca provide information on sponsors, foundations and resources.

Why become a non-profit society?

These are the benefits of becoming a non-profit society in the NWT:

- Become a legal entity
- Can own property
- Can enter into contracts
- Can be eligible to register as a charity with Canada Revenue Agency which enables your non-profit society to offer tax receipts for in-kind and cash contributions to businesses and organizations
- Can qualify for government grants
- Can apply for lottery or bingo licences
- Limits personal liability of members

For more complete information on charities and tax receipts, please contact Canada Revenue Agency at <https://www.canada.ca/en/services/taxes/charities.html>

The requirements of becoming a non-profit society in the NWT are:

- Have five or more people apply to incorporate as a society
- Complete an application and notice of address of the society
- Pay a fee of \$50
- Write a set of Bylaws (rules for the Society) that includes the creation of a Board of Directors
- Hold annual general meetings
- File financial statements and a list of directors annually with the Registrar of Societies

For more complete information, please contact the GNWT Department of Justice at <https://www.justice.gov.nt.ca/en/non-profit-societies/>

What should be composted or recycled?

Food Rescue operations promote minimizing the waste of food by accepting food products from donors and helping to conserve the environment through composting food waste, diverting food from the landfill and recycling wherever possible.

In Yellowknife, Ecology North and the City of Yellowknife spearheaded a composting program. This allows Food Rescue Yellowknife to collect and send its volumes of compost to a centralized facility. Ecology North has encouraged similar composting programs in other NWT communities. Check to see if this program is available in your community.

Food Rescue Yellowknife uses the centralized composting program for any food waste and the recycling depots in the city that take glass, plastic, cardboard and boxboard. Work with your community to promote composting and recycling.

What other resources are available?

National Resources

Food Rescue Canada - <https://www.foodrescue.ca/public/public-resources>

Second Harvest research - <https://secondharvest.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Avoidable-Crisis-of-Food-Waste-The-Roadmap-by-Second-Harvest-and-VCMI.pdf>

NWT

Bill 19 Donation of Food Act - https://www.assembly.gov.nt.ca/sites/default/files/08-10-07_bill_19.pdf

Non-profit Societies <https://www.justice.gov.nt.ca/en/non-profit-societies/>

Industry, Tourism and Investment at <https://www.iti.gov.nt.ca/en/services/food-safety>

Health and Social Services at <https://www.hss.gov.nt.ca/en/services/environmental-health/food-safety-training>

Food Rescue Yellowknife

- Telephone: (867) 669-3663 (669-FOOD)
- Website: foodrescue@northwestel.net
- Email address: www.foodrescueyellowknife.com
- Video: The Art of Giving – Food Rescue
 - <http://artofgiving.ca/take-out-food?width=90%25&height=100%25&maxHeight=600px&maxWidth=960px>





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