



# **Guide to Food Rescue & Relief In the Illawarra**

Proudly hosted and  
governed since 2005 by



**Healthy  
Cities**  
Illawarra

# Together

Feeding people,

Fighting food waste

## Acknowledgement

Food Fairness Illawarra acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the land we live and work on. We pay our respect to Past, Present and Emerging Elders. We recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as the first agriculturalists who continue to inspire us through their food culture and ecological land management.

# Table of Contents

<b>1. Introduction.....</b>	<b>4</b>
Food Insecurity & Food Waste .....	4
Definitions:.....	4
<b>2. In the Illawarra .....</b>	<b>5</b>
Food Rescue.....	5
Food Relief.....	7
<b>3. Collaboration .....</b>	<b>8</b>
Food Rescue & Relief Working Group.....	8
Food Rescue & Relief Network.....	8
Your Fair Food Directory Listing .....	9
<b>4. Additional Food Donations .....</b>	<b>10</b>
Link Up with the Food Rescue Organisations.....	10
Engaging Additional Food Donors .....	10
Maintain Good Relationships!.....	11
Organise a Food Drive .....	11
<b>5. Establish a Food Relief Program.....</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>6. Food Safety .....</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>7. References .....</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>8. Support.....</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Appendix 1: Food Donor Outreach – Email Template.....</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>Appendix 2: SecondBite Coles Donation Guide .....</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>Appendix 3: Generic Food Donation Guide .....</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Appendix 4: SecondBite Community Connect Collection Process.....</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>Appendix 5: Thank You Note – Template .....</b>	<b>22</b>

# 1. Introduction

The "Guide to Food Rescue & Relief – in the Illawarra" provides a comprehensive overview of the region's food rescue and relief landscape. Its main objective is to facilitate a greater understanding of the sector and foster stakeholder collaboration. The guide also offers practical tools and strategies to increase food donations, food safety, and things to consider when establishing a food relief program.

The guide is targeted at existing and new food relief organisations, food rescue organisations, volunteers, and anyone interested in the Illawarra food rescue and relief sector. This guide was developed as part of the Regional Food Donation Coordinator pilot funded by the NSW Environment Protection Authority (NSW EPA) under the banner of Food Fairness Illawarra. The guide has been informed by the Illawarra Food Relief and Rescue Working Group, making it a valuable resource that reflects the expertise and experiences of those who work in the sector locally. By providing a centralised and accessible resource, this guide aims to strengthen the food rescue and relief sector in the Illawarra and contribute towards addressing food insecurity in the region.

## Food Insecurity & Food Waste

The 2022 Foodbank Hunger report revealed that over 2 million households (21%) in Australia faced severe food insecurity. In the Illawarra region, this translates to 65,000 families who cannot access food to meet their health and cultural needs, while tonnes of edible food go to landfill. Despite significant efforts by food rescue and relief organisations, only 38% of food-insecure households received aid from community organisations<sup>1</sup>. While insufficient resources were identified as barriers, practical factors such as lack of awareness and eligibility for services and psychological barriers such as shame and entitlement were also noted. Increased collaboration amongst food rescue and relief organisations could provide a collective response to address these challenges, increase food donations, and reduce edible food waste in landfill. Scaling up the amount of food that is rescued could support more food-insecure households and simultaneously prevent food waste.



**Foodbank Hunger Report 2022 provides valuable insights into the state of hunger in the community, including trends and statistics related to food insecurity, poverty, and hunger relief efforts. It could be a valuable resource for your next grant application.**

## Definitions:

**Food donors** – supermarkets, food businesses and individuals who donate surplus food to a food rescue or relief organisation.

**Food rescue** – the donation of edible food that would otherwise go to waste.

**Food rescue organisations** – collect and distribute large volumes of rescued food from food donors and either directly deliver it to food relief agencies or store it in warehouses, ready for distribution to agencies for a fee or for free.

**Food relief agencies** – community organisations that focus on supporting community members with food provision and, in some cases, are also involved in food rescue.

**Illawarra Food Relief and Rescue Working Group** – a working group established under the banner of Food Fairness Illawarra to foster open communication within the food rescue and relief sector to share practical knowledge and learnings to ensure a coordinated response.

---

<sup>1</sup> Foodbank Australia. (2022). Hunger report 2022. Retrieved from <https://reports.foodbank.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/Foodbank-Hunger-Report-2022.pdf>

## 2. In the Illawarra

We are fortunate to have a food rescue and relief sector that collectively rescues a vast amount of food to feed an increasing number of people in need. This work has an enormous impact and is often accomplished on a shoestring budget, with the support of exceptional volunteers. The sector comprises multiple food donors (including the three major supermarkets), three national food rescue organisations, and over 32 food relief agencies, see Figure 1.

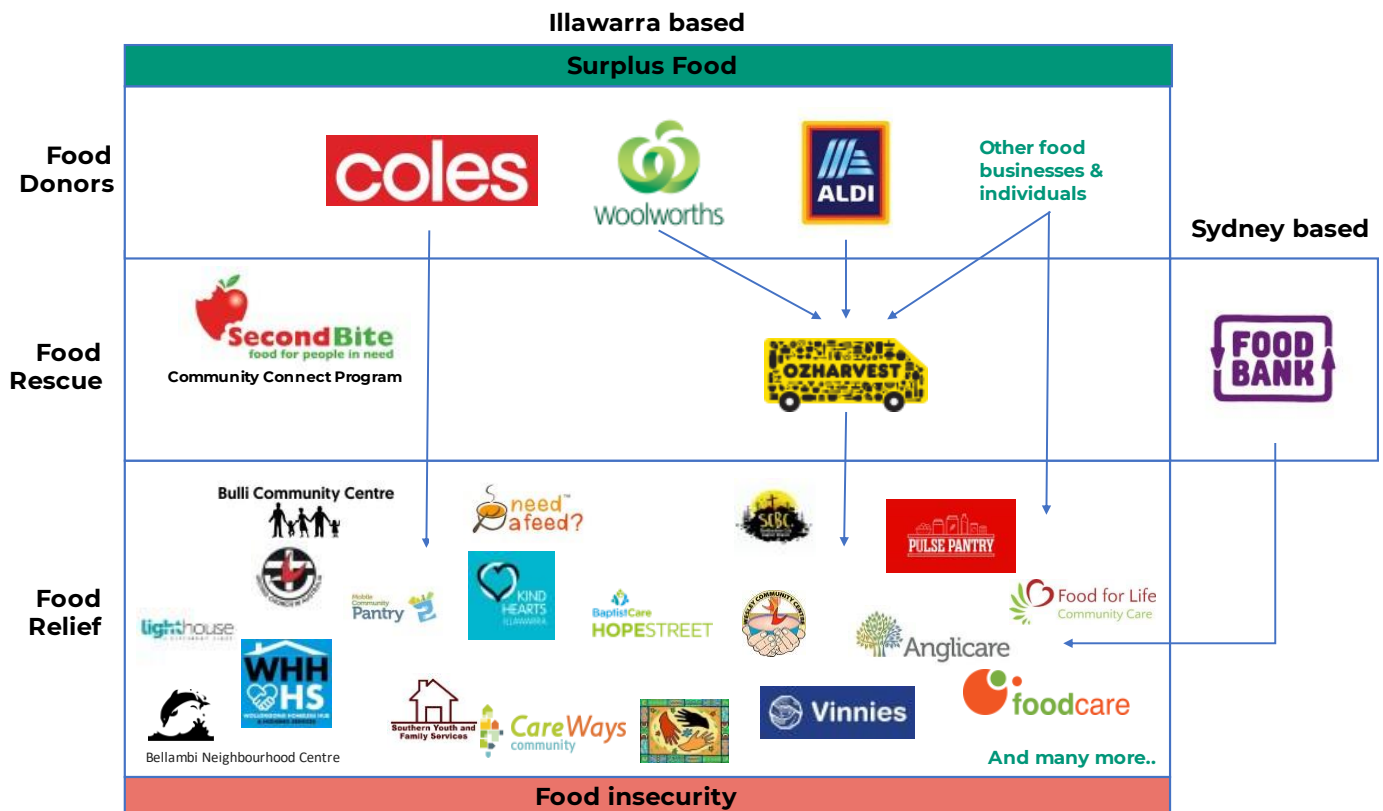


Figure 1: Food rescue and relief landscape

### Food Rescue

The food rescue aspect involves collecting surplus food from supermarkets, farmers, and businesses, which would otherwise go to waste. This rescued food is then distributed to or used by various food relief agencies. OzHarvest plays a significant role in spearheading food rescue efforts in the Illawarra. They collect surplus food five days a week from all Woolworths and Aldi stores in the area, as well as from other independent donors, supporting 44 local agencies. In addition to OzHarvest, several food relief agencies in the Illawarra directly collect food donations from donors. They participate in programs such as SecondBite's Community Direct Program for Coles supermarket stores or leverage their own established connections with donors. Although Foodbank is not physically located in the Illawarra region, they play a complementary role in the local food rescue efforts. Foodbank offers access to rescued and bulk-purchased pantry items to local food relief agencies at a cost-recovery price.

### OzHarvest

A national food rescue organisation that aims to recover excess fresh food from donors and transport it directly and at no cost to food relief agencies. OzHarvest has been operating in the Illawarra region since 2013 and expanded their operations in 2020 by establishing a small warehouse and deploying two full-time vans to collect surplus food. They now collect from all Woolworths and Aldi supermarket stores and other donors and deliver this food to 44 food relief agencies that feed people in need. OzHarvest's unwavering commitment to diverting food waste and addressing food insecurity makes a significant impact in the Illawarra.



Apply to become a partner: [Food Rescue for charities](#)

Email: [Andrew.Turner@ozharvest.org](mailto:Andrew.Turner@ozharvest.org) or [info@ozharvest.org](mailto:info@ozharvest.org) Call: 0490 430 099 or (02) 9516 3877

To learn more, please visit [www.ozharvest.org](http://www.ozharvest.org)

### SecondBite

A national food rescue organisation that collaborates with various food producers and retailers, including a national partnership with Coles. Its main objective is to recover excess fresh and nutritious food and provide it to local food relief agencies without charge. SecondBite runs its Community Connect program in the Illawarra region, facilitating direct food collection by local food relief organisations from donors like Coles.



Sign up as a charity Community Partner, email: [andrew.wilcox@secondbite.org](mailto:andrew.wilcox@secondbite.org) / [admin@secondbite.org](mailto:admin@secondbite.org) or call: 0478 414 869 / 1800 263 283

For more information: [www.secondbite.org](http://www.secondbite.org)

### Sydney-Based

#### Foodbank

Australia's largest food redistribution organisation, Foodbank plays a vital role in serving as the primary pantry for the charity sector. They offer various rescued and purchased food and groceries, focusing on pantry items such as sauces and breakfast cereals. Orders can be placed online, typically in bulk quantities, with rescued items offered free of charge, and the purchased items have a small cost recovery fee. Foodbank operates out of a distribution centre in Sydney, and customers can either pick up their orders or have them freighted to the Illawarra for a transportation fee.



Apply to become a charity partner: [Foodbank Charity Partners](#).

Email: [office@foodbanknsw.org.au](mailto:office@foodbanknsw.org.au) or Call: (02) 9756 3099

For more information: [www.foodbank.org.au](http://www.foodbank.org.au)



#### Opportunity:

**Share Foodbank collection or transport fees with peer food relief organisations.**



## Food Relief

In the Illawarra region, over 32 food relief agencies actively work to meet the diverse needs of vulnerable and disadvantaged communities. These organisations serve a wide range of people, from families struggling to make ends meet, to individuals experiencing homelessness and/or other forms of disadvantage. Food relief is often used as a soft entry point for these organisations to establish trust with individuals and families and provide a platform for offering additional support services such as counselling, financial counselling, legal assistance, and other forms of aid. The food relief landscape in the Illawarra region is characterised by a diverse range of organisations, including large national organisations, small non-government organisations (NGOs), and completely volunteer-based initiatives.

Our longstanding [Low Cost & Free Meals Directory](#)\* provides an overview of all the organisations that collectively feed our community in need

\*This excludes school-specific breakfast programs



*Image 1: Food Relief in the Illawarra, including Maxyne from the Warrawong Resident Forum setting up their Tuesday food hub.*

## 3. Collaboration

We recognise that working together can achieve more significant outcomes and create positive change for those experiencing food insecurity in our community.

### Food Rescue & Relief Working Group

Quarterly working group meetings are hosted by Food Fairness Illawarra to foster open communication within the food relief and rescue sector, to share practical knowledge, and ensure a coordinated response. A shared action plan is developed to provide a roadmap for collective action in this space. To join the quarterly meetings, email [mail@foodfairnessillawarra.org.au](mailto:mail@foodfairnessillawarra.org.au)

### The *Food Rescue and Relief Network*

The *food rescue and relief network* is a two-way distribution email group operated by Food Fairness Illawarra to foster increased communication and collaboration among all stakeholders in the Illawarra food relief and rescue sector. The email group aims to share information and resources that can contribute to the sector's collective efforts, including surplus food donations, spare resources, upcoming opportunities, and more.

**Note:** The *food rescue and relief network* is intended for relevant, meaningful, and respectful discussions and should not be used for spamming or sharing irrelevant information.

#### How to join:

1. Email [mail@foodfairnessillawarra.org.au](mailto:mail@foodfairnessillawarra.org.au)
2. A welcome email will be sent once the administrator has actioned your request to join.
3. For easy access, add the email to your contacts and save the welcome message in your inbox so you can refer to it.

#### How it works:

1. Email [Foodrescue-discuss@healthyillawarra.org.au](mailto:Foodrescue-discuss@healthyillawarra.org.au).
2. This is a private list; only approved members will receive your message.
3. To streamline communication and reduce back-and-forth exchanges, we encourage you to provide clear instructions and only respond if you are interested or have something to contribute. For example:

All,  
I have an urgent surplus of 4 crates of Apples that I need to find a home for. If you or anyone you know is interested in them, please let me know as soon as possible.

Pickup can be done during office hours at our Healthy Cities Illawarra Office at 6-10 Princess Highway, Fairy Meadow. The crates will need to be picked up by Friday at 4 pm.

To express your interest, please respond to this email with the number of crates you want to pick up and the preferred pickup time.

Thank you in advance for your prompt response.



**Audience:**

All interested stakeholders in the food rescue and relief sector, including:

- food rescue representatives
- food relief representatives
- (optional) other stakeholders who have a vested interest, e.g., local Councils, Department of Community and Justice, Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District

**Administrator:**

Food Fairness Illawarra Coordinator, hosted by Healthy Cities Illawarra.

**How to unsubscribe:**

There are several ways to leave an Outlook.com group.

1. Use the “Leave group” option in the list’s welcome email message.
2. If you’ve been added to the list with your Outlook.com, Hotmail.com, or Live.com email addresses, you can leave the group. > Leave the group from the Group Settings pane > In the left pane, under Groups, select the group you want to leave. > At the top of the message list, select \*\*\* > Settings. > Select Leave group, or.
3. Email the administrator at [mail@foodfairnessillawarra.org.au](mailto:mail@foodfairnessillawarra.org.au)



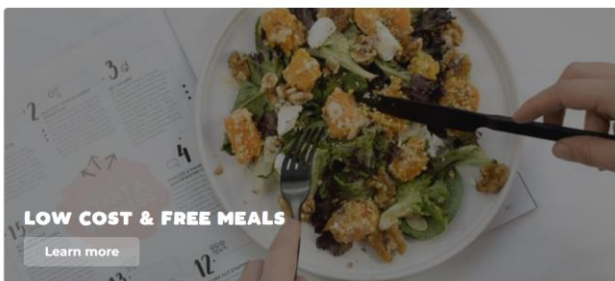
**Let’s work together to make the *food rescue and relief network* a valuable platform for communication and collaboration within our food rescue and relief sector!**

## Your Fair Food Directory Listing

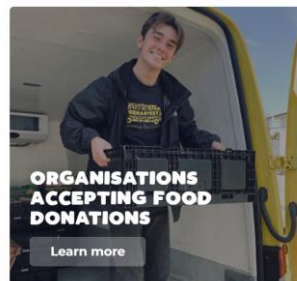
Our Fair Food Directory provides an all-inclusive overview of the Illawarra’s food system actors, including Low Cost and Free Meals providers. An overview of the food rescue and relief sector is crucial for various reasons.

- It helps to identify gaps and areas where additional support is required, promotes coordination and collaboration among different organisations, reduces duplication of efforts, and ensures efficient resource allocation.
- It helps people in need of food relief to access available services easily.
- It raises awareness about the issue of food insecurity, the efforts being made to address it, and the opportunities to support it.

Relevant categories for the food rescue and relief sector include:



[Printable](#) & [Online](#)



[Online](#)



[Online](#)

To ensure that the Fair Food Directory remains current and accurate, every organisation involved in food rescue or food relief must be encouraged to create a listing and keep it up to date.



**Use our [step-by-step guide](#) to create or update your directory listing to keep the Fair Food Directory current and accurate.**

## 4. Additional Food Donations

If you're looking to secure additional food donations to support an existing food relief program or to establish a new one, there are various avenues that you can explore.

### Link Up with the Food Rescue Organisations


**1. Become an OzHarvest charity partner:**

Please fill out their [Charities](#) form. This will give them all the information they need about your organisation. Their team will then be in touch with the following steps. Due to the high demand for OzHarvest's service, you might initially be placed on their waiting list. They will do everything they can to get to you and be in touch as soon as something becomes available.

**2. Join the SecondBite Community Connect Program:**

If you have sufficient people power and transport to commit to regular collections from one of the local Coles Stores, email [andrew.wilcox@secondbite.org](mailto:andrew.wilcox@secondbite.org) / [admin@secondbite.org](mailto:admin@secondbite.org) or call 0478 414 869 / 1800 263 283; note that some stores have already been linked up with other organisations. Therefore, allocation will depend on the available collection slots. See [Appendix 4](#) for more information.

**3. Become a Foodbank charity partner and place your first pantry order:**

Complete the Foodbank [membership form](#) and follow their [online ordering guidelines](#). Due to Foodbank operating from a distribution centre in Sydney, you will either need to arrange collection or pay for delivery. This offers a fantastic opportunity to share collection or delivery fees with peer food relief organisations. 

### Engaging Additional Food Donors

This can effectively increase your food donations, especially if you have sufficient resources such as people power and transportation to handle regular collections. Although OzHarvest and SecondBite already collect from the three major supermarket chains, numerous other potential food donors can be reached out to. Below are some steps to consider when reaching out to a potential food donor:

1. **Research potential donors:** Identify potential food donors by researching local grocery stores, farmers, retailers, restaurants, cafes, catering, and food manufacturers in your area. Identify the right contact person and the best method to approach them.
2. **Outreach:** To attract potential food donors, contact them through email, phone, or in-person visits. You can use our [Food Donor Outreach – Email Template](#) as a starting point. In your communication, clearly explain your organisation's mission and the potential impact of their donation, emphasising how it can help reduce food waste while supporting your community's well-being. Be transparent about the logistics of how donations can be made and the types of food you can accept and are most in need of. It is crucial to verify whether the potential donor has existing food donation arrangements.
3. **First collection/delivery assessment:** Schedule a first collection or delivery assessment once a food donor is interested in donating. This is an opportunity to assess the quality and quantity of the donation, as well as to establish a process for future contributions. During the assessment, confirm the logistics of the donation, including the types of food to be donated, the frequency of donations, and any special instructions for handling or storing the food. This is also an opportunity to express gratitude and reinforce the impact of their contribution to the community.
4. **Maintain good relationships:** See page 11.

## Maintain Good Relationships!

After all the hard work of establishing partnership, either with a food donor or a food rescue organisation, maintaining a good relationship is essential. According to a pilot study by OzHarvest, maintaining solid relationships with donors can increase the quality and quantity of donations received by 37%<sup>2</sup>. Here are some tips for success:

1. **Clear, respectful, and constant communication:** Ensure all parties understand the partnership's goals, expectations, and responsibilities. Communicate openly and honestly and respond promptly to any queries or concerns.
2. **Reliability, consistency, and timely collection:** Ensure that goods or services are collected on time and to the expected process. Be consistent in your timing and manner of work and maintain reliability to show appreciation for the partnership.
3. **Express gratitude and acknowledge the value of the partnership:** Take time to show appreciation for the collaboration and its importance. A simple thank you can go a long way in maintaining a positive relationship. Where appropriate, share good news stories and recognise the donor's contribution (see [Appendix 5](#) for a template thank you letter).
4. **Continual assessment:** Regularly assess the partnership to ensure both parties benefit and meet the objectives. Adjust the collaboration as needed to keep up with changing needs or circumstances, such as your capacity for bread.
5. **Proactive problem-solving:** Address any issues or concerns as soon as they arise to prevent them from becoming more significant.

## Organise a Food Drive.

While food drives may not include rescued food, they are still an effective way to increase food donations and engage the broader community in supporting your program. Below are some steps to consider when planning a food drive:

1. **Set a realistic goal:** Decide on the type of food items you want to collect during the drive. Setting a realistic goal can encourage participation and ensure that the drive is successful.
2. **Choose accessible locations:** Identify one or more locations that are easily accessible and visible to the public, such as community centres, churches, schools, and/or supermarkets. Consider partnering with local businesses to set up additional collection sites.
3. **Determine a timeframe:** Determine a timeline for the food drive that works well for the community and allows enough time for donations. Consider hosting the drive for several weeks to increase the chances of success.
4. **Approach partners and set up collection bins:** Contact relevant partners and organisations to secure their participation and support. Set up donation bins or boxes at the designated locations, ensuring they are clearly labelled and visible to the public.
5. **Spread the word:** Promote the food drive through flyers, social media, email, and word of mouth. Encourage community involvement by highlighting the need for donations and providing information on the types of items to donate, such as non-perishable items like canned goods, pasta, and rice.
6. **Collect and sort donations:** Once the food drive is complete, collect and sort the donations, ensuring they are within the expiration date and in good condition. Express gratitude to the donors and partners who supported the drive. Remember, a successful food drive relies on the community's support and participation, so keep them engaged and informed throughout the process.

<sup>2</sup> Department of Planning, Industry and Environment. (2021). NSW Waste and Sustainable Materials Strategy 2041. Retrieved from [https://www.dpie.nsw.gov.au/\\_\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0006/385683/NSW-Waste-and-Sustainable-Materials-Strategy-2041.pdf](https://www.dpie.nsw.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0006/385683/NSW-Waste-and-Sustainable-Materials-Strategy-2041.pdf)

## 5. Establish a Food Relief Program

Whether you are establishing a new or additional food relief program, careful planning, coordination, and ongoing evaluation is necessary to ensure efficient and effective food delivery to those in need. By following this practical checklist, you can make a meaningful impact on alleviating food insecurity in your community:

1. **Assess the need:** This involves identifying the vulnerable populations in your area, such as low-income households, homeless individuals, and/or food-insecure families, and understanding their specific food relief needs and challenges. It's crucial to avoid duplication of services by identifying existing food relief activities in your community. This can help you identify any gaps in services and ensure that your efforts are complementary rather than redundant. Consulting with local community leaders can also provide insight into your community's needs and help you identify potential partnerships and resources.
2. **Establish partnerships:** Collaboration with local businesses, organisations, and community leaders can help you access resources, identify potential volunteers, and broaden the reach of your food relief program. See [Chapter 3 – Collaboration](#) for the available avenues to collaborate with the food rescue and relief sector.
3. **Apply for grants:** Securing funding can help establish and maintain a successful food relief program. To apply for funding, identify potential funding sources that align with your mission and goals. Review their eligibility requirements, application guidelines, and deadlines. Develop a compelling proposal outlining your food relief efforts objectives, target population, methods, and expected outcomes.
4. **Source food donations:** Use the avenues identified in [Chapter 4 – Food Donations](#) to source food donations for your program.
5. **Mobilise and manage volunteers:** Establish roles, responsibilities, and safety protocols. Recruit and train volunteers to help collect, sort, pack, and distribute food. Keep volunteers engaged and motivated by recognising their contributions and providing ongoing support.
6. **Plan logistics:** Develop a detailed food collection, storage, and distribution plan. Consider food safety regulations, transportation, storage facilities, volunteer management, and distribution channels. Create standard operating procedures (SOPs) to ensure consistent and efficient operations.
7. **Ensure food safety:** Follow proper food safety practices to maintain the food's quality and safety; see [Chapter 6 – Food Safety](#).
8. **Foster community engagement:** Build awareness and support for your food relief efforts through community outreach, public relations, and social media. Engage with local stakeholders, businesses, and government agencies to garner support and resources. Seek feedback from the community to improve your food relief program continuously.
9. **Monitor and evaluate:** Regularly monitor and assess the impact and effectiveness of your food relief efforts. Collect data on the number of people served, types of food distributed, and feedback from beneficiaries. Use this information to assess your program's effectiveness, identify areas for improvement, and report on outcomes to stakeholders.
10. **Continuously improve:** Review and refine your food relief program based on feedback, lessons learned, and changing community needs. Seek opportunities for innovation, collaboration, and sustainability to ensure long-term impact and success.

## 6. Food Safety

How food is stored, handled, and transported throughout the food rescue and relief process is vital to ensure it remains safe and fit for human consumption. Whether you are an organisation that rescues donated food or provides food relief to individuals, it is imperative to always adhere to standard food safety guidelines. This will help ensure that the food reaches those in need in the best possible condition. Here is our checklist:

1. Everyone handling, storing, and transporting donated food should maintain the highest personal hygiene and cleanliness standards.
2. Food safety training is recommended for relevant staff and volunteers.
3. Store and transport raw and cooked foods separately to prevent cross-contamination.
4. To ensure food longevity and prevent spoilage, it is essential to consider the most appropriate storage methods. Factors such as temperature, humidity, and packaging materials can all affect food quality and freshness. Depending on the type of food, storing it in a cool, dry place, refrigerator, or freezer may be necessary.
5. Always store food in clean, covered, and labelled food-grade containers to prevent exposure to bacteria and other contaminants.
6. Check the date marking on packaged food items before using them in your program. E.g.,
  - o Use By: food must be eaten or thrown away by this date, even if there is no sign of spoilage.
  - o Best Before: food will remain safe after the date, provided it is not spoiled, damaged, or perished.
7. It is essential to abide by temperature control guidelines for potentially hazardous foods, such as meat, seafood, poultry, dairy products, eggs, and other prepared dishes that contain these ingredients. This includes popular items like sandwiches, salads, and pies. See image 1.

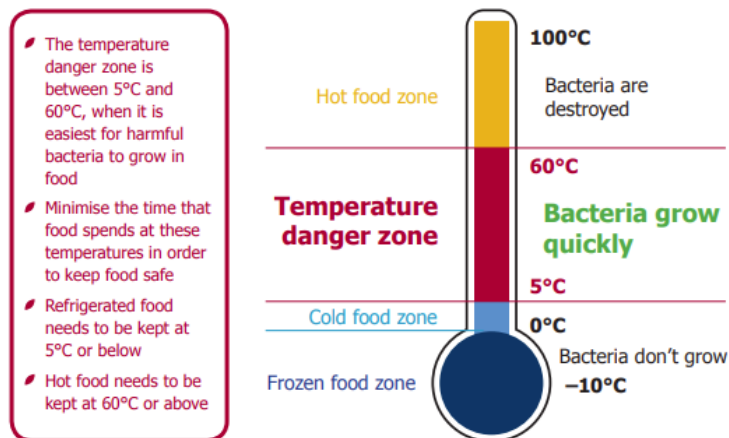


Figure 2: Temperature Danger Zone (Source: NSW Food Authority, 2020)

8. Any food left in the 'Temperature Danger Zone' for more than 4 hours should be disposed of promptly to prevent foodborne illness. It is essential to keep a close eye on the time and temperature of potentially hazardous foods to ensure they remain safe for consumption. Proper food handling and disposal can help prevent foodborne illnesses and keep our community healthy.

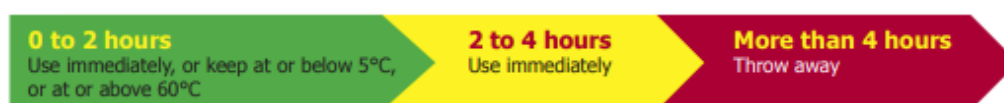


Figure 3: Food Safety Danger Zone (Source: NSW Food Authority, 2020)

See the next page for the [Food safety requirements for charitable, not-for-profit organisations](#).



# FOOD SAFETY REQUIREMENTS FOR CHARITABLE, NOT-FOR-PROFIT ORGANISATIONS

The *Food Act 2003* and Food Standards Code apply to any community group or individual who sells food for charity or charitable causes.

Charitable and not-for-profit organisations include:

- registered charities, hospitals, disability support groups, welfare groups
- local clubs, e.g. Lions, Rotary, Apex, Country Women's Association
- youth organisations, e.g. YMCA, YWCA, Scouts
- community schools, pre-schools and not-for-profit childcare centres.

## Groups considered to be a food businesses

A charitable or not-for-profit organisation that sells food for fundraising purposes is a 'food business' under the *Food Act 2003* (NSW).

The food safety requirements in the Food Standards Code applies to their food activities, including the

preparation and transport of food for sale.

## General requirements for selling food

Under the Food Standards Code and *Food Act 2003*, any group or individual that sells food (whether for charity or not) must follow good hygiene and food handling practices, including proper construction and maintenance of the food premises, so that food being served is as safe as possible.

The requirements include areas such as:

- temperature control
- protecting food from contaminants
- hand washing
- cleaning and sanitising
- pest control

Factsheets on these topics are available from the Authority's website at [www.foodauthority.nsw.gov.au/resource-centre?t=1&c=0.0.35ec00f1-d66b-4091-8919-b0cbae7e00f0&lang=0&](http://www.foodauthority.nsw.gov.au/resource-centre?t=1&c=0.0.35ec00f1-d66b-4091-8919-b0cbae7e00f0&lang=0&)

## Exemptions

While organisations that sell food for charity need to comply with the food safety requirements in the legislation, these organisations are **not** required to

1. appoint a Food Safety Supervisor or
2. notify their business/food activities to the relevant authorities provided the food:

- does not need to be kept hot or refrigerated to keep it safe (i.e. potentially hazardous foods)

OR

- would need to be kept under temperature control, but will be eaten immediately after thorough cooking, such as at a sausage sizzle.



Department of Primary Industries  
Food Authority

More resources at [foodauthority.nsw.gov.au](http://foodauthority.nsw.gov.au)



nswfoodauthority



nswfoodauth



Below are two common scenarios involving organisations that sell food for charitable purposes.

#### Scenario 1

**A local community group runs a small café to service a primary school and preschool. They sell tea, coffee, muffins, biscuits, cakes and toast. They only operate 3-4 hours each morning. Are they a food business and do they need to notify?**

Yes, they are a food business, even though they only sell smaller items. They **do not need to notify** because they are a not-for-profit organisation and the food is not potentially hazardous. However, they still need to follow basic hygiene and food safety requirements as outlined in the Food Standards Code.

#### Labelling requirements

Food sold to raise money for charity is generally exempt from labelling requirements (except for declaring the presence of royal jelly).

However, if asked, the person who provides the food must be able to give accurate advice about the presence of allergens, the directions

for storage and use, and the country of origin of the food (e.g. for seafood, pork products, and fresh fruit and vegetables).

Information about the eight common allergens that must be declared on labels can be found at [www.foodauthority.nsw.gov.au/foodsafetyandyou/life-events-and-food/allergy-and-intolerance](http://www.foodauthority.nsw.gov.au/foodsafetyandyou/life-events-and-food/allergy-and-intolerance)

#### Scenario 2

**A local community group runs a small canteen, including a barbeque at a children's sporting event. Parents cook sausages and chicken throughout the morning. Cooked food is kept warm in a covered tray, occasionally for more than two hours. Are they a food business and do they need to notify?**

Yes, they are a food business, even though they may not intend to make a profit, and may only operate for part of the year. They **do need to notify** because they are cooking potentially hazardous food which is not consumed immediately after cooking. They also need to follow the basic hygiene and food safety requirements outlined in the Food Standards Code.

#### Donating food

Charitable and not-for-profit organisations that donate food (i.e. don't raise money or receive a benefit in return for providing the food) are not considered a 'food business' so *Food Act 2003* does not apply to them. However, it is recommended that best practice food safety standards are met.

For more information, see our Donating food factsheet at: [www.foodauthority.nsw.gov.au/Documents/industry/donating\\_food.pdf](http://www.foodauthority.nsw.gov.au/Documents/industry/donating_food.pdf)

#### More information

- Visit the NSW Food Authority's website at [www.foodauthority.nsw.gov.au/industry](http://www.foodauthority.nsw.gov.au/industry)
- phone the helpline on 1300 552 406
- contact your local council.

About the NSW Food Authority: The NSW Food Authority is the government organisation that helps ensure NSW food is safe and correctly labelled. It works with consumers, industry and other government organisations to minimise food poisoning by providing information about and regulating the safe production, storage, transport, promotion and preparation of food.

Note: This information is a general summary and cannot cover all situations. Food businesses are required to comply with all of the provisions of the Food Standards Code and the *Food Act 2003* (NSW).



Department of  
Primary Industries  
Food Authority

6 Avenue of the Americas, Newington NSW 2127  
PO Box 6682, Silverwater NSW 1811  
T 1300 552 406  
[contact@foodauthority.nsw.gov.au](mailto:contact@foodauthority.nsw.gov.au)  
ABN 47 080 404 416

More resources at [foodauthority.nsw.gov.au](http://foodauthority.nsw.gov.au) [nswfoodauthority](https://www.facebook.com/nswfoodauthority) [nswfoodauth](https://twitter.com/nswfoodauth)

April 2017  
NSW/FA/F167/1704

For more info, see [A Guide to the Food Safety Standards](#).

## 7. Helpful Resources

CRJO Food Donation Toolkit – [link](#)

Foodbank Charities – [link](#)

Foodbank Hunger Report 2022 – [link](#)

NE Waste Food Donation ToolKit – [link](#)

OzHarvest Food Rescue for Charities – [link](#)

OzHarvest Wollongong – [link](#)

SecondBite Community Partners – [link](#)

Your business is Food – information guide – [link](#)

The Food Donation Tool Kit – [link](#)

## 8. Support

For more information regarding this guide or in need of support, feel free to reach out via [mail@foodfairnessillawarra.org.au](mailto:mail@foodfairnessillawarra.org.au) or 02 4283 8111.

# Appendix 1: Food Donor Outreach – Email Template

[Insert Logo]

[Insert the name of potential donor organisation]

[Insert address details]

Dear [Insert Donor Name],

## **RE: Together feeding people, fighting food waste**

Did you know that 1 in 5 Australian households (21%)<sup>3</sup> experienced severe food insecurity in 2021/22? This translates to 65,000 Illawarra households being unable to access food that meets their health and cultural needs. Meanwhile, a staggering amount of edible food ends up in landfill every week.

As a local non-profit organisation committed to [insert mission + food relief activity], we have witnessed a significant increase in the demand for food relief in our community [or insert specific community]. However, we need help to keep up with our current food donations.

We are contacting you because your business may be interested in supporting our efforts through food donations. Partnering with us as a food donor will help reduce your food waste while supporting our community's well-being.

### **Why donate surplus food:**

- **You're helping those in need**  
Donating food is the most direct way to support vulnerable community members.
- **It can save you money**  
Donating food can save you money on waste disposal costs as a business or an individual.
- **It's better for the environment**  
Reduce your food waste – donating surplus food combats climate change by reducing the greenhouse emissions associated with food waste rotting in landfill.
- **It can benefit your business**  
As a business or organisation, donating your surplus food can provide the added perk of an eligible tax deduction.
  - The donation is made to an organisation with deductible gift recipient (DGR) status.
  - It must be voluntary, meaning the business must not receive any material benefit or advantage in exchange for the donation.
  - The business donor keeps a record of the donation, generally a receipt from the gift recipient. For more information, visit the Australian Taxation Office website ([www.ato.gov.au](http://www.ato.gov.au)).

As a food donor, you would be protected under the Civil Liability Amendment (Food Donations) Act 2002. This act limits the liability of individuals and businesses that donate food, providing certain food safety conditions have been met<sup>4</sup>.

---

<sup>3</sup> Foodbank Hunger Report 2022, <https://reports.foodbank.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/Foodbank-Hunger-Report-2022.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> Food Donation Tool Kit 2012, <https://www.lovefoodhatewaste.nsw.gov.au/sites/default/files/2018-06/Food-Donation-Toolkit.pdf>

### What types of food you can donate:

- Surplus food from supermarkets, greengrocers, bakers, butchers, markets, cafes, catering etc.
- Blemished or imperfect produce
- Products close to their use by date
- Products close or past their best before date
- Excess and slow-moving stock or deleted lines
- Products that have incorrect, damaged or no labelling and damaged packaging
- Sample size and bulk products
- Leftover unused portions of food that have not been served to customers, e.g., salads, sandwiches, muffins, and cakes.
- Food grown at farms that do not meet the size or cosmetic criteria set by supermarkets.

We understand that you may already be working with other community organisations. If this is the case, we are only interested in partnering with you if you have additional capacity. We will work with you to develop a donation program that fits your business's needs, whether for one-time donations or regular pickups of surplus food.

We would be honoured to have your business as a partner in our mission to alleviate food insecurity in our community. Together, we can make a difference in the lives of those who need it most.

Thank you for your time, and we look forward to working with you towards a more sustainable and equitable food system.

Best regards,

[Your Name]

[Your Organisation Name]

# Appendix 2: SecondBite Coles Donation Guide

## Give food a second chance

How it works: Ask yourself – Would I eat it?



**SecondBite**  
Ending Waste. Ending Hunger.

FRESH	GROCERY	MEAT	BAKERY
<b>Items we CAN donate</b>	<b>Items we CAN donate</b>	<b>Items we CAN donate</b>	<b>Items we CAN donate</b>
 <p><b>Edible Fruit and Vegetables</b> It's still okay to donate if it's slightly discoloured, marked or wilted.</p>	 <p><b>Packaged Grocery</b> Grocery items where primary packaging is intact; eggs within use by date (remove broken), items up to 3 months beyond best before date.</p>	 <p><b>Edible Meat</b> Please freeze for 48 hours before donating.</p>	 <p><b>In store and Coles Brand Bread</b> Ambient in store and Coles Brand bakery products.</p>
<b>Items we CANNOT donate</b>	<b>Items we CANNOT donate</b>	<b>Items we CANNOT donate</b>	<b>Items we CANNOT donate</b>
<p><b>Spoiled Fruit and Vegetables. Pre-cut Fruit</b> e.g. broken skin, mouldy, slimy, or past use by date. Loose lettuce/cabbage leaves.</p> 	<p><b>Damaged Packaging</b> Grocery items with damaged primary packaging (e.g. open bag of flour, leaking bottle) or past use by date.</p> 	<p><b>Seafood, Deli, Precooked and Kangaroo meats</b> As well as slimy, discoloured and blown packaging.</p> 	<p><b>Bakery items with Meat, Dairy or Olives. Brand-name items that are returned for credit.</b></p> 

SEO 303670




# Appendix 3: Generic Food Donation Guide

Table 2: Adapted from OzHarvest's guidelines

<b>Fruit And Vegetables</b>	All <b>edible</b> fruit and vegetables.  We will not collect damaged products, e.g., mouldy, leaking, cuts and bruises.
<b>Meat</b>	<b>Up to Use By date or Best Before date</b> - Please remove unsold items from your shelves and store them in the cool room ready for collection).  The sealed inner packaging must be intact.
<b>Dairy, e.g., milk, yoghurt, cream, Cheese</b>	<b>Up to Use By date or seven days past Best Before date</b> - Please remove unsold items from your shelves and freeze them immediately in the cool room ready for collection.
<b>Eggs</b>	<b>Up to Use By date or seven days past Best Before</b> - Chilled or ambient only  Please do not freeze the eggs
<b>Prepared Meals, Packaged Deli Products</b>	<b>Up to Use By date or seven days past Best Before</b> - Please remove unsold items from your shelves and chill or freeze them immediately.  The sealed inner packaging must be intact.
<b>Dry Goods (Shelf-Stable Groceries)</b>	<b>Up to 3 months / 90 days past Best Before.</b>  Packaging can be battered, but the seal protecting the food must be protected.
<b>Baked Products</b>	Cakes, muffins, bread, pastries etc. Please remove unsold items from your shelves and store them in the cool room ready for collection.  Charities may only sometimes take all the fresh bread as they only take what they need.
<b>Drinks, e.g., water, dairy, soft drinks (no alcohol)</b>	<b>Up to 3 months past Best Before.</b> Chilled dairy drinks – Up to Use By date or seven days past Best Before
<b>Other Products in the Store</b>	<b>I.e., pans, socks, toiletries, nappies etc</b>  These items can also be taken, as long as there is room in the transport vehicle.



# Appendix 4: SecondBite Community Connect Collection Process



## COMMUNITY CONNECT Collection Process



### YOUR TEAM

Always wear closed shoes and SecondBite hi-visibility vests when collecting.

Always apply the correct manual handling methods when lifting or moving boxes. See [safeworkaustralia.gov.au](http://safeworkaustralia.gov.au) for further information.

Always observe strict adherence to food safety, food handling and safe transportation of food. See [foodstandards.gov.au](http://foodstandards.gov.au) for further information.

Be aware that you are representing both SecondBite and the Charity Partner organization, and present in a professional manner.

Ensure that your Australian Driver's Licence is valid, and that your collection vehicle is roadworthy



### YOUR PARTNER STORE & COLLECTION

Always visit the Coles store SecondBite has scheduled for your agency.

Always employ the following steps to ensure effective communication;

- Ring the buzzer at the rear of the Coles loading dock on your arrival.
- If a Coles staff member does not respond after two minutes, please buzz again.
- If, after a further two minutes there is no response, please ring the main phone number of the store and advise the customer service representative that you are at the rear loading dock ready for collection.



Willingly accept all fresh, edible produce the store would like to donate.

Clearly communicate your need and capacity for bread.

Under no circumstances are you obliged to accept mouldy or inedible food. Please take photos of any inedible food offered and forward them to your Agency Coordinator to follow up.



Changes to your collection schedule or cancellations should be communicated to your store and Agency Coordinator as soon as possible.



### THE SECONDBITE APP

The SecondBite App will automatically generate the runs on your scheduled collection days.

Please ensure the following steps are followed;

- Go to the SecondBite App at [app.secondbite.org](http://app.secondbite.org), login and Select the relevant run and enter data as follows 1. for food collected select "Complete" and ensure all collections and kilograms for each food type is entered daily 2. If there is no response at rear door select "No Collection/Delivery" and leave a comment. 3. If your collection was cancelled select "Skipped (Other)" and leave a comment.
- Ensure you record the name of the Coles representative you spoke with .

Accurately enter collection data into the App on the day of collection, using the correct status and ensuring there are no gaps in reports.



### WHEN MATTERS NEED TO BE RESOLVED

Remain open and flexible in resolving issues as they arise. In the first instance, please speak directly with your Store Manager, Store Support Manager or Fresh Produce Manager. Escalate your enquiry to your Agency Coordinator if the matter is not resolved within five business days.

VICTORIA  
Agency Coordinator  
DANIEL VLAHEK  
[daniel.v@secondbite.org](mailto:daniel.v@secondbite.org)  
03 9376 3800

NEW SOUTH WALES  
Agency Coordinator  
MICHELLE LEONARD  
[michelle.l@secondbite.org](mailto:michelle.l@secondbite.org) 0478  
414 869

QUEENSLAND  
Agency Coordinator  
ROBERT RIMMER  
[communityconnectqld@secondbite.org](mailto:communityconnectqld@secondbite.org)  
0475 555 637

WESTERN AUSTRALIA  
Community Connect Coordinator  
ZOE FULCHER  
[zoe.f@secondbite.org](mailto:zoe.f@secondbite.org)  
0475 555 233

SOUTH AUSTRALIA  
Agency Coordinator  
Sepideh Mobei (Sepi)  
[sepi.m@secondbite.org](mailto:sepi.m@secondbite.org)  
0475 555 711

# Appendix 5: Thank You Note — Template

\*\*Below template has been adjusted from the Thank Note, used by the Bulli Community Centre team.

## THANK YOU FROM (Insert Logo)

**(Insert Organisation) would like to send a BIG THANK YOU to (insert donor name) for providing essential food to community members that would have otherwise gone hungry.**

Our community members acknowledge the hard work done by your organisation to make this happen, and without the help from the helpful staff in the store, this wouldn't be possible.

Week after week, we are able to provide nourishment for approximately 375 local community members, taking into account the significant rise in demand since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic and the escalating cost of living.

We all encounter moments where a helping hand becomes indispensable during challenging times. Your generous food donations to our service ensure that countless families, hidden in the background, can express their heartfelt gratitude to you.

Real-life examples of the help our service provides:

- (Example 1)
- (Example 2)

There is a time in everyone's life when a helping hand is needed. Each time you donate food to our service, there is a family in the background thanking you from the bottom of their heart.

One meal can be the step a family needs to survive and live.

THANK YOU

(Insert signoff)