



RI Hunger Elimination Task Force 2023 Q2 Meeting Breakout Room Discussion Key Takeaways May 2, 2023 | 2:00-3:30 pm

The primary discussion among the breakout groups centered on capacity limitations to furthering food recovery for donation.

Themes that emerged from breakout room discussions are as follows:

- Institutions, such as hospitals and schools, and other businesses lack the capacity and training to know how to divert food from the wastestream in order to support food access. *Institutions purchase and waste large amounts of food due to lack of knowledge and training. There is a need for more business-focused educational opportunities that address key questions such as liability and food safety requirements.*
- Community Health Workers (CHWs) and other food access supporters have limited knowledge of the organizations/resources available to provide in-need Rhode Islanders with rescued and diverted food. *Training and resources to support food recovery are difficult for food access workers to access and can fall out of date quickly due to constantly changing food recovery landscapes. Finding ways to keep this information up to date and ensuring that food access providers are connected to rescuing organizations can move more food out of the wastestream and onto the tables of food insecure Rhode Islanders.*
- There are limited opportunities and resources to support food waste reduction at the residential or household level. *Households are the largest contributors of food to the wastestream.¹ More targeted solutions addressing consumers' cultural bias to*

¹ ReFED, "Where Does Surplus Food Occur?", *What is Food Waste*, (last accessed: May 26, 2023), https://refed.org/food-waste/the-problem/#where_does_food_waste_occur.

purchase in excess and then waste must be resolved alongside developing affordable solutions to rescue and divert this food waste.

Suggested Next Steps:

- Create educational opportunities for businesses and large institutions to learn more about how to divert food from the wastestream and prepare that food for rescue and donation.
- Connect Community Health Workers and other food access supporters with organizations that rescue food to redistribute what would otherwise be wasted.
- Identify opportunities to address residential food waste that rescues viable foods and diverts remaining materials to environmentally-friendly disposal.

Resources:

- RI Community Food Bank - [Retail Rescue: Reducing Food Waste](#)
- ReFED - [What is Food Waste?](#)