




# **SB1383 Food Recovery Research**

*Key Findings of a Survey Conducted  
September 29-December 29, 2021*



OPINION  
RESEARCH  
& STRATEGY

# Survey Specifics and Methodology

<b>Dates</b>	September 29 - Present
<b>Survey Type</b>	Online survey <i>Organizations were contacted via email and follow-up telephone calls and emails were made by FM3 and StopWaste</i>
<b>Research Population</b>	Food Recovery Organizations in Alameda County
<b>Total Interviews</b>	46
<b>Data Collection Modes</b>	 Online Interviews

(Note: Not All Results Will Sum to 100% Due to Rounding)

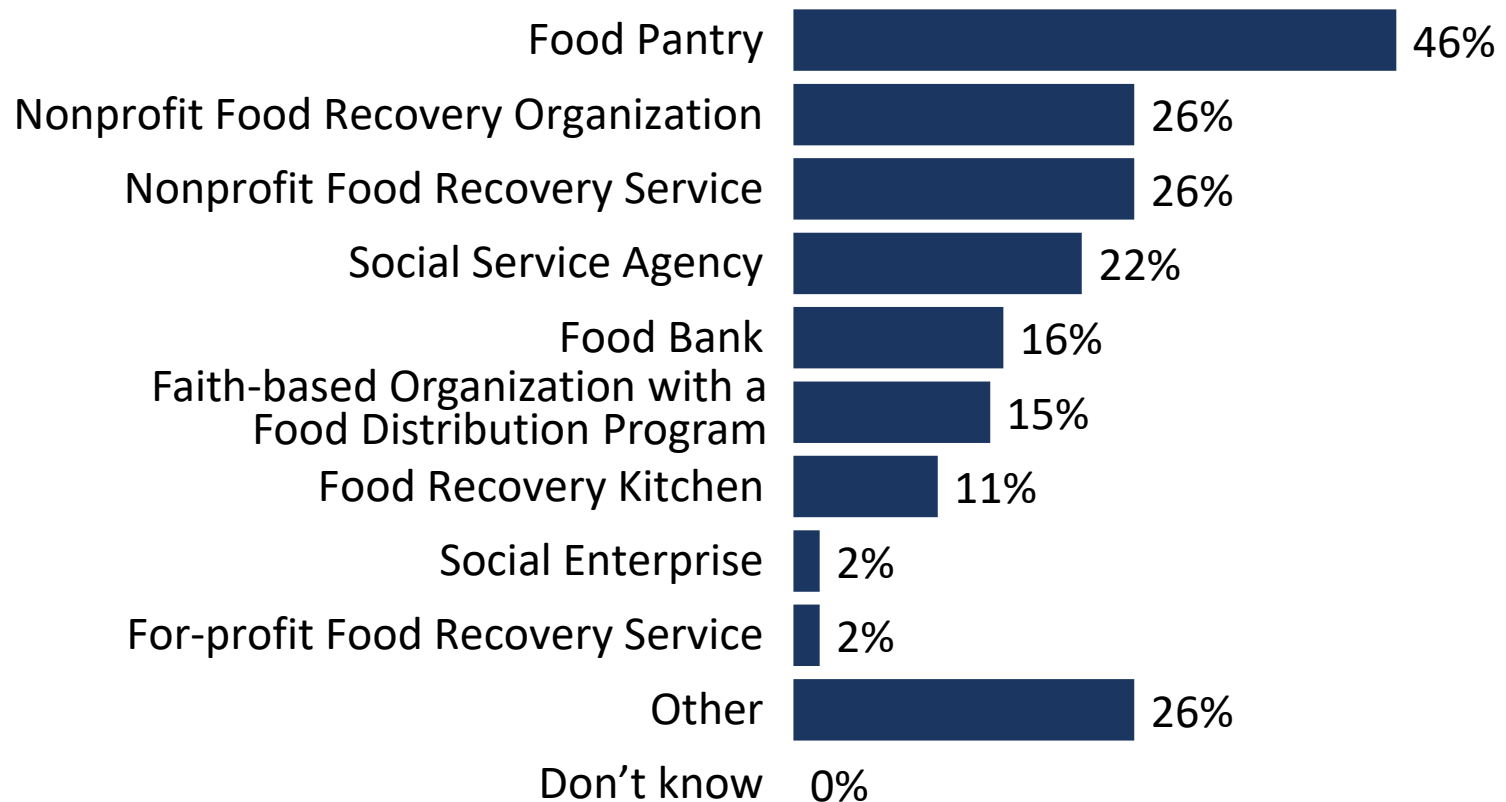


# **Background on the Organizations**

# Half of respondents were food pantries and two in five were a nonprofit food recovery organization or service.

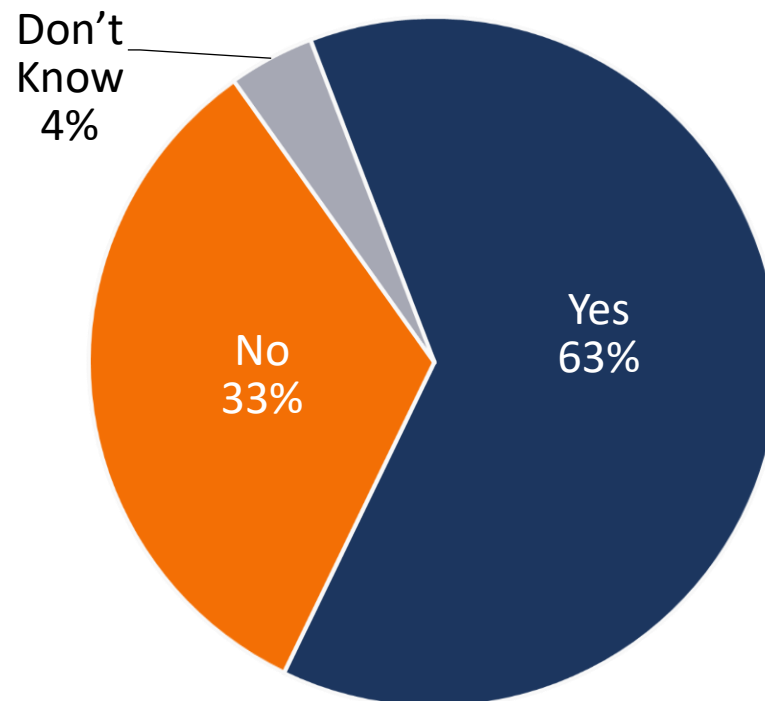
*Which of the following best describes your organization?*

*(Multiple Responses Accepted)*



# Nearly two-thirds were members of the ACCFB.

*Is your organization a member agency of the Alameda County Community Food Bank?*

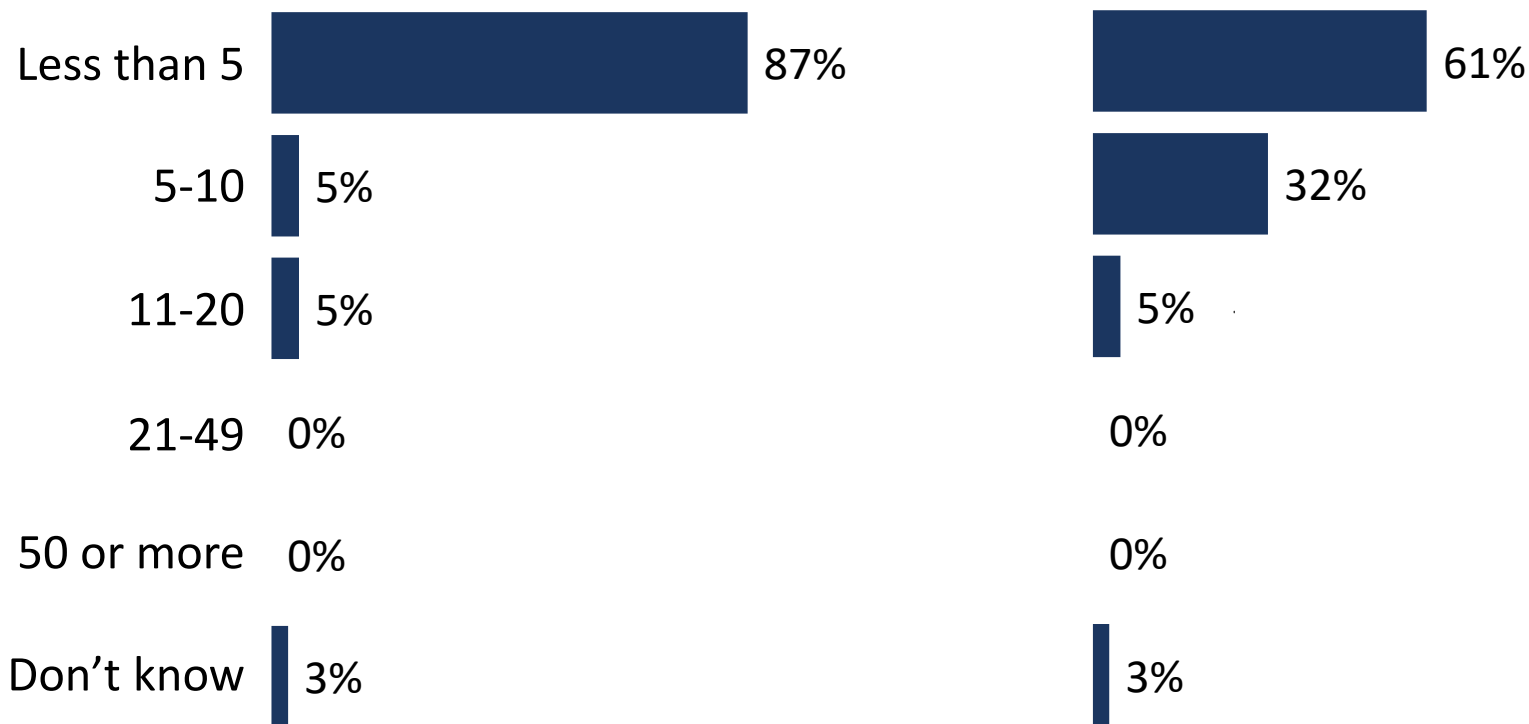


# Most organizations have few staff and few volunteers working on food recovery.

*How many paid staff members does your organization have that work on food recovery activities?*

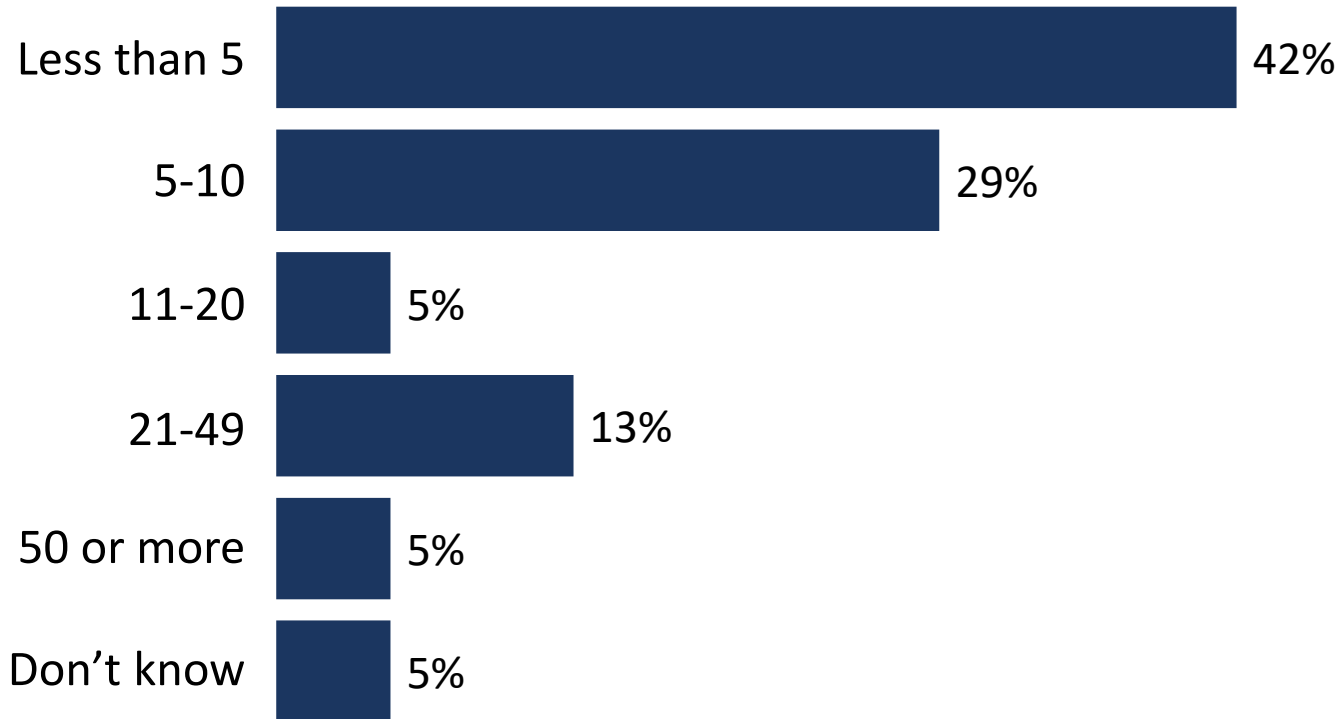
*(Asked if Engage in Food Recovery)*

*How many food recovery volunteers does your organization have on an average day?*



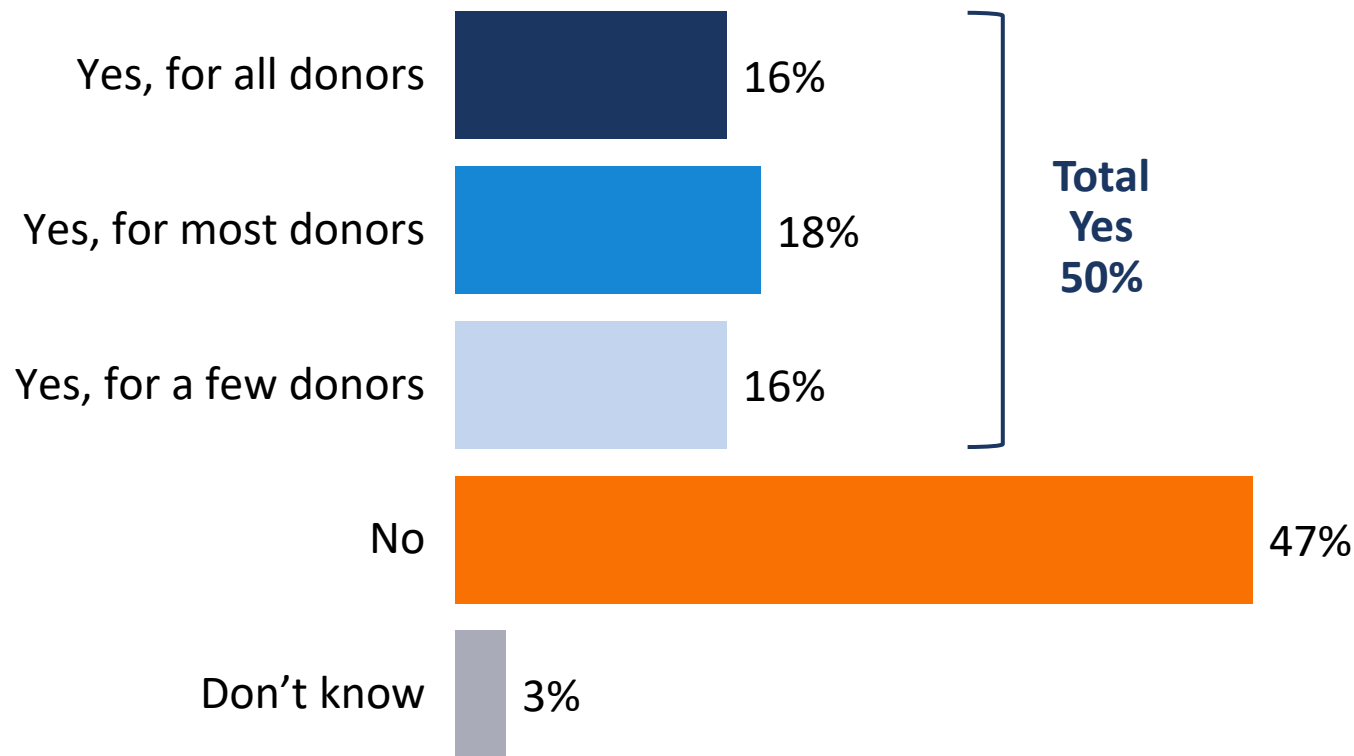
# Nearly half of those who do food recovery rescue food from fewer than 5 donors.

*Currently, how many food donors does your organization rescue food from directly?  
(Asked if Engage in Food Recovery)*



# Half of respondents have contracts for food recovery and half do not.

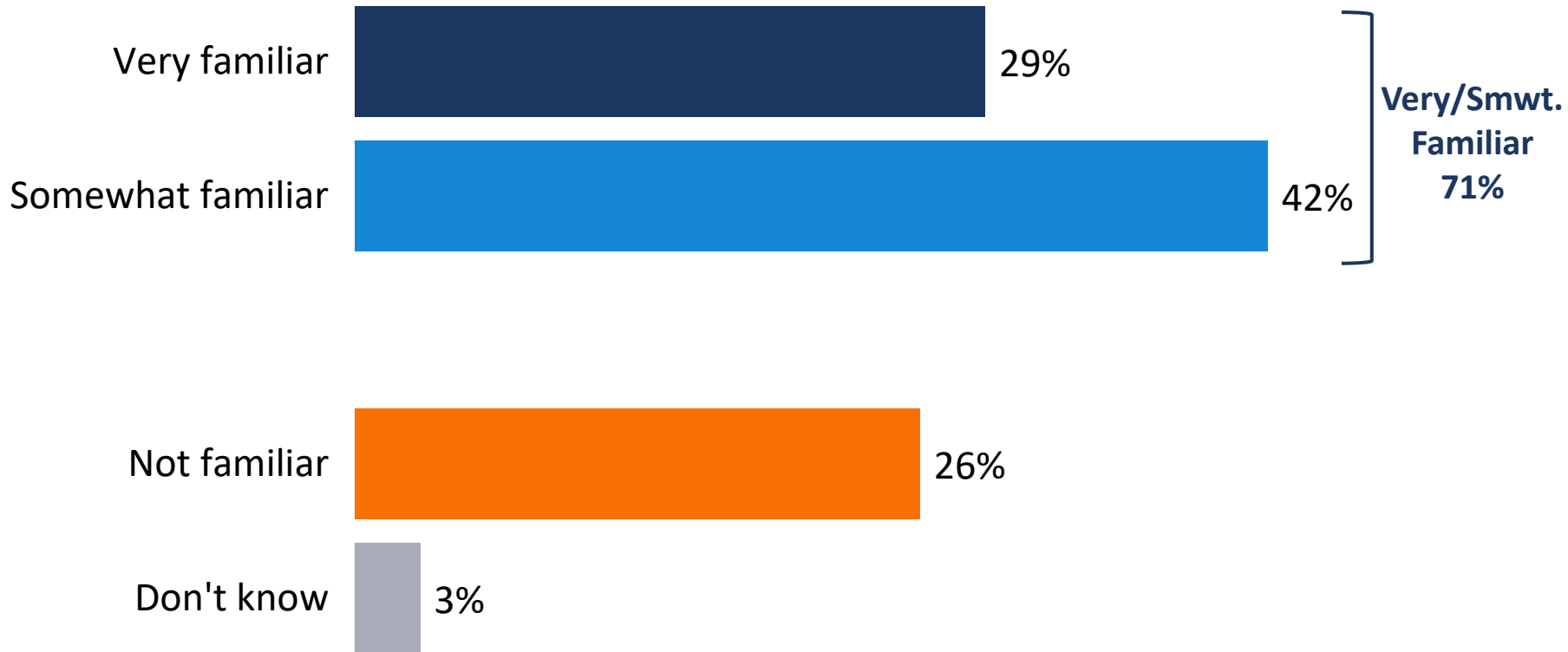
*Do you currently have food recovery contracts or written agreements that outline type of food accepted, donation pick-up schedule, and other requirements for donors?  
(Asked if Engage in Food Recovery)*





# Three-quarters are familiar with SB1383.

*Are you familiar with the SB1383 requirements for Food Recovery Organizations and Services that start January 1, 2022?  
(Asked if Engage in Food Recovery)*



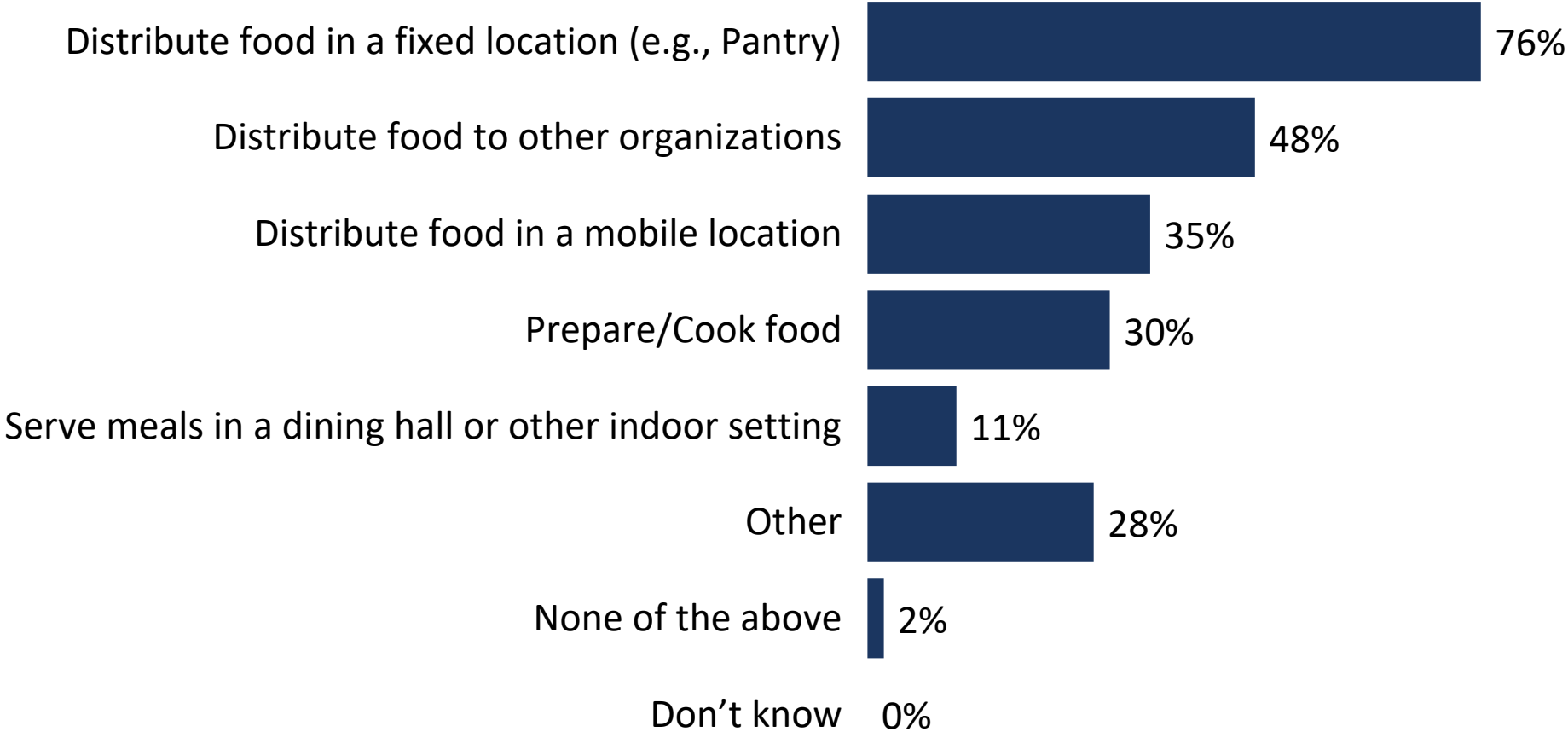


# **Food Recovery Activities**

# Food distribution in a fixed location is the most common type of activity.

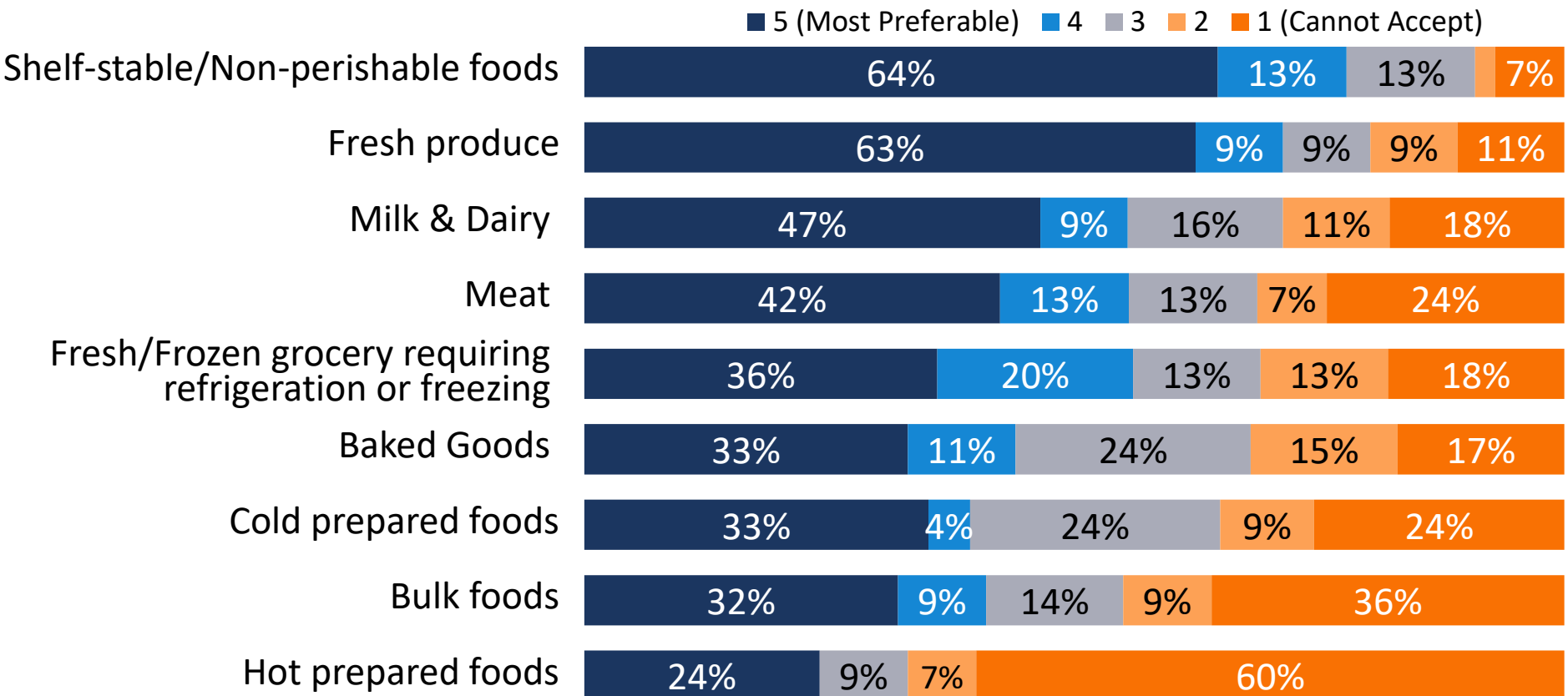
*What activities does your organization undertake on an on-going basis?*

*(Multiple Responses Accepted)*



# Shelf-stable foods and fresh produce are the most preferable foods; hot prepared foods are by far the least preferred.

Here is a list of categories of rescued food. Indicate on a scale of 1 to 5 whether you can accept this item or not, where a "1" indicates you cannot accept it and a "5" indicates it is the most preferable kind of food.



# Verbatim Comments Describing Food that Cannot be Accepted

*You indicated that your organization does not accept certain types of food, please describe the food types and the reasons why they are not accepted.  
(Open-ended; Asked if Food Item Cannot Be Accepted)*

We don't have enough refrigeration to accept dairy. We don't have enough storage to except large quantities of bulk foods.

We do not provide meat, because of our refrigeration capacity and also because we prefer to provide healthier more cruelty free options. Our community really looks to us for produce.

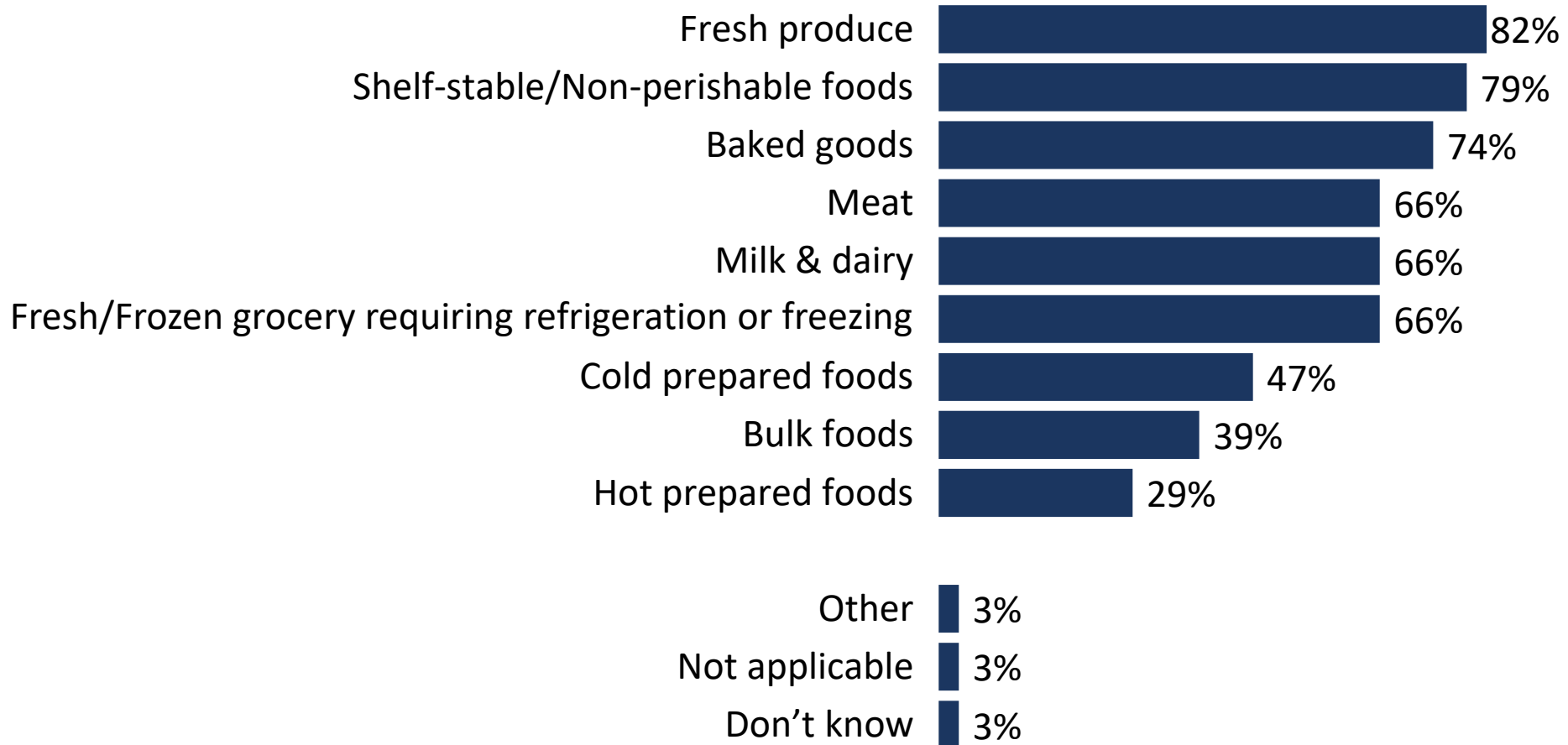
We prefer not to get hot foods. We do not have the capacity to properly verify the time and temperature history. We also have limited capacity to properly cool the foods efficiently.

We don't accept catered food - hot or cold. We provide groceries and ready to go, packaged, labeled meals.

Bulk foods are often too difficult for our recipients to use or distribute.

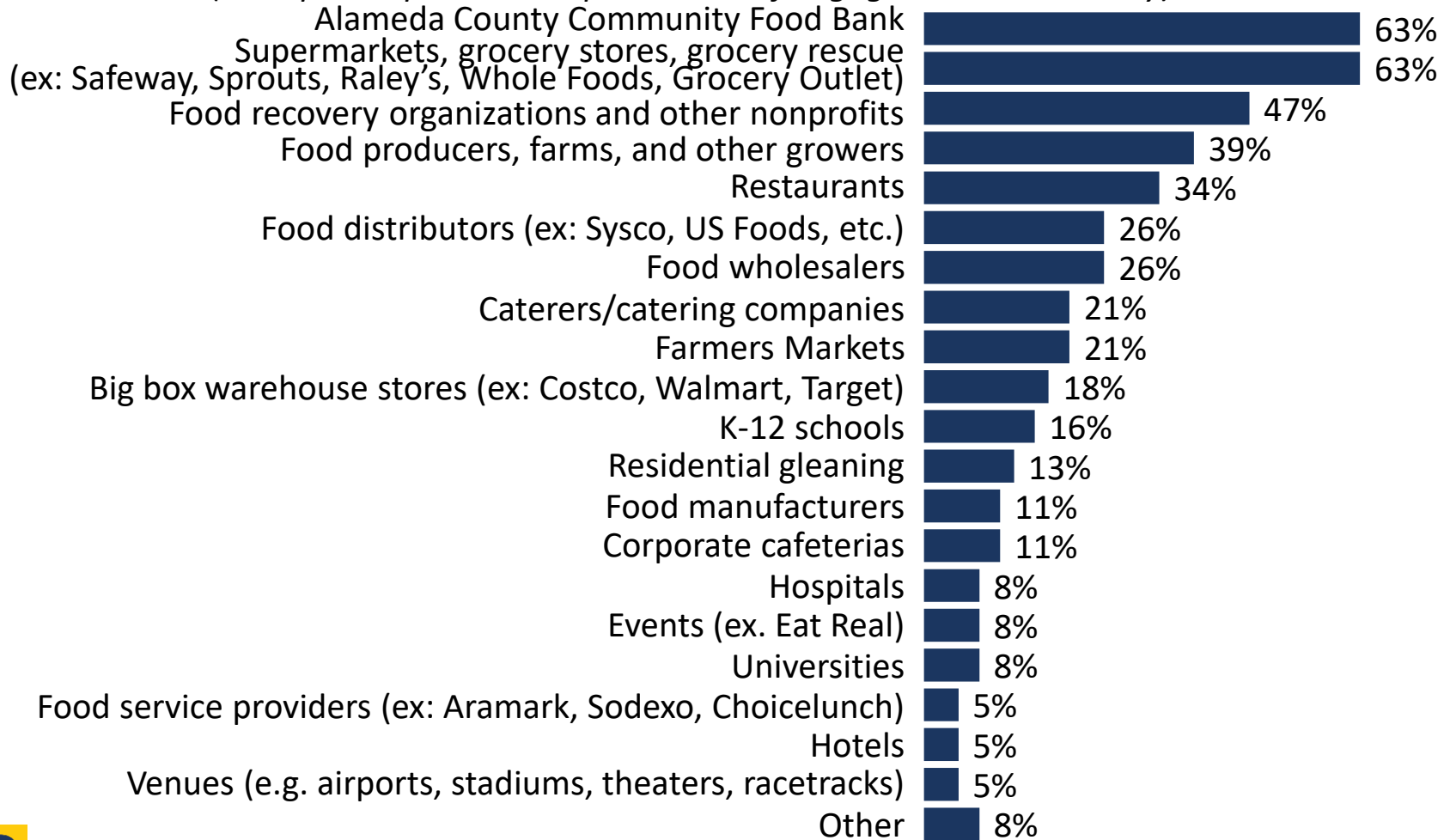
# Fresh produce, shelf-stable foods and baked goods are the most commonly rescued foods.

*What types of food does your organization rescue directly from food donors?  
(Multiple Responses Accepted; Asked if Engage in Food Recovery)*



# ACCFB and supermarkets are the most common sources of food.

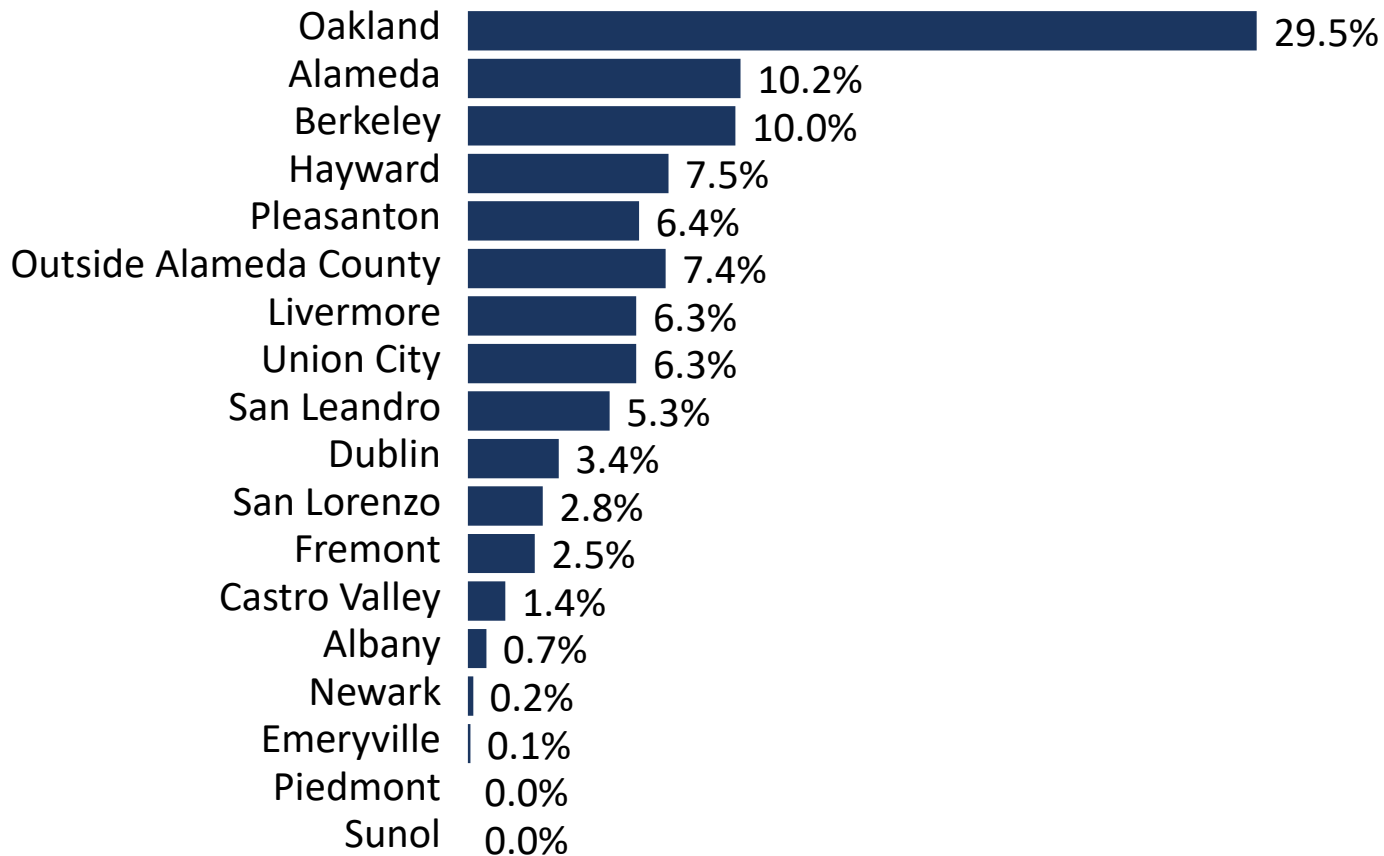
*What types of facilities does your organization receive recovered/rescued food from?  
(Multiple Responses Accepted; Asked if Engage in Food Recovery)*



# Oakland is the most common geographical source.

*Below is a list of locations that your organization may receive recovered food from. Please indicate the percentage of recovered food that your organization receives that comes from that area. If your organization does not receive food from donors in that area, please write "0%".*

*(Asked if Engage in Food Recovery)*

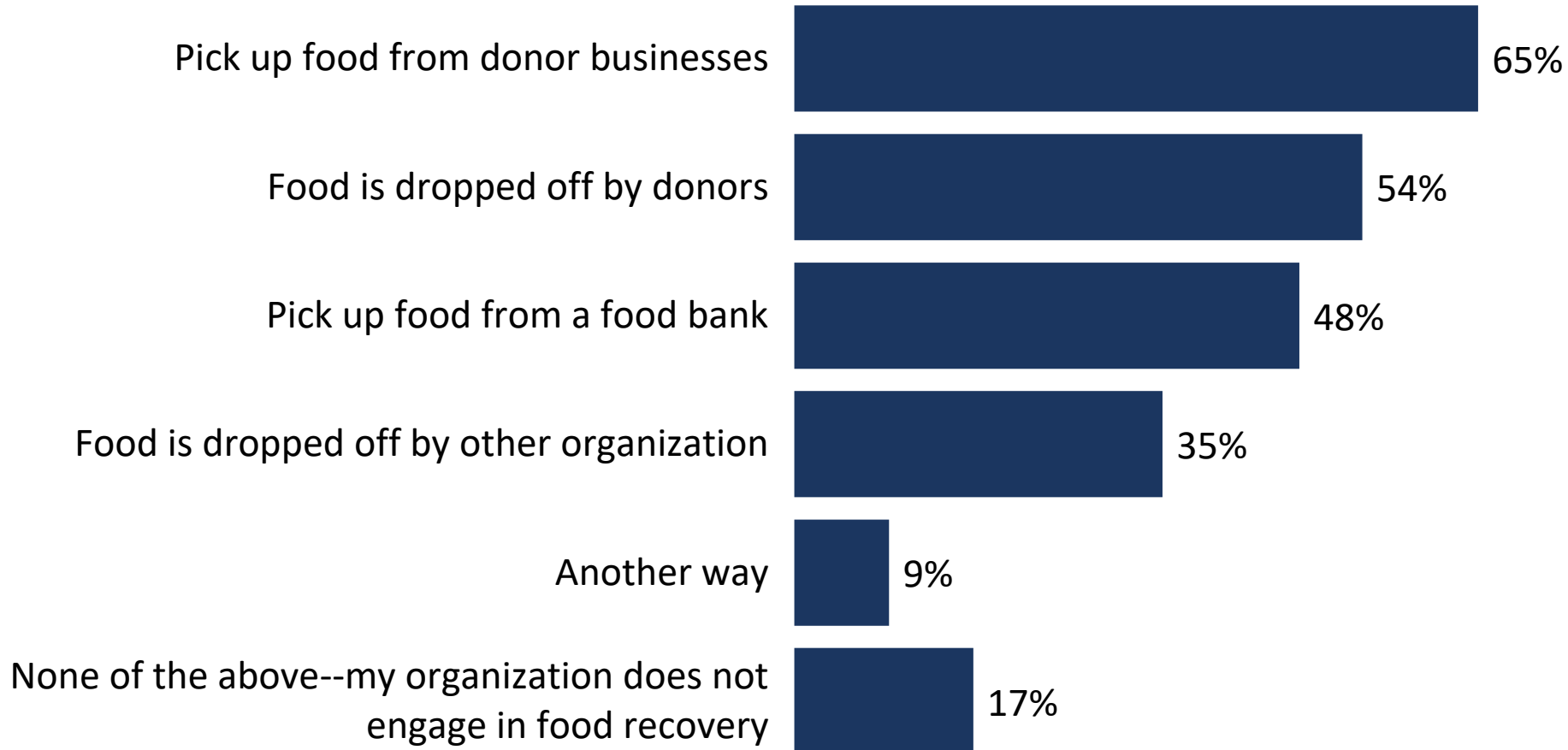




# Three in five pick up food from donor businesses while half say the food is dropped off by donors.

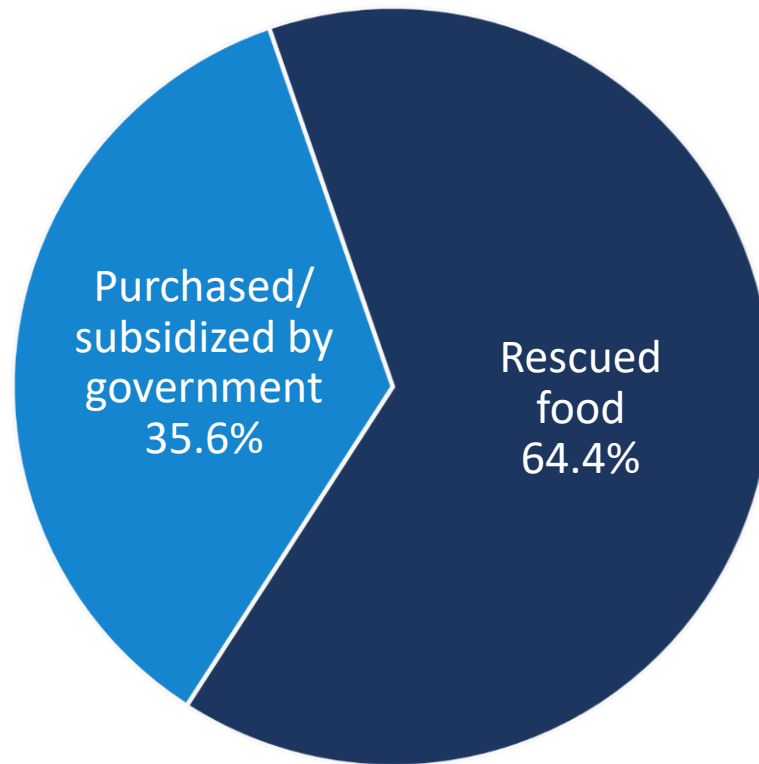
*How does your organization receive recovered food?*

*(Multiple Responses Accepted)*



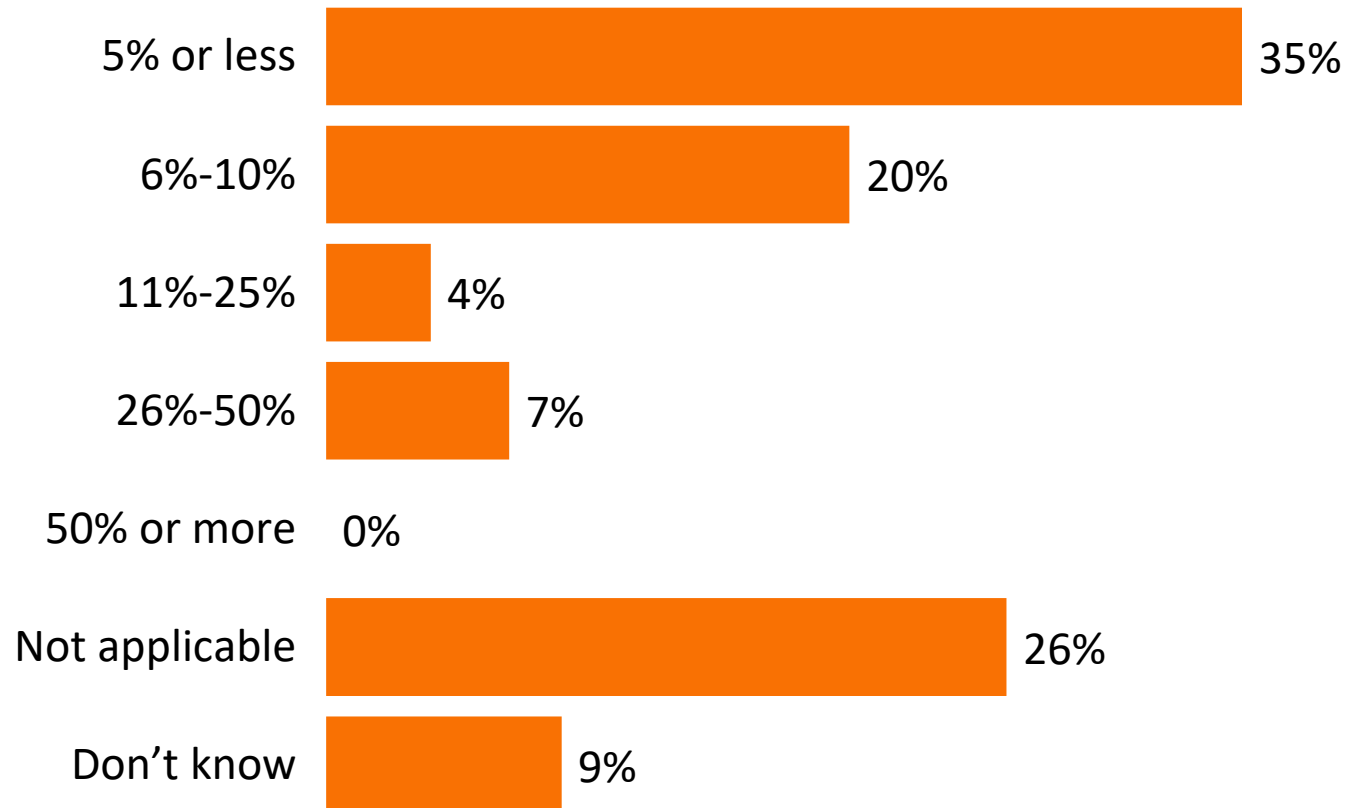
# On average, more than half of the food FRO's receive is rescued.

*What percentage of the food your organization receives come from the following sources?  
(Responses Must Add Up to 100%; Asked if Engage in Food Recovery)*



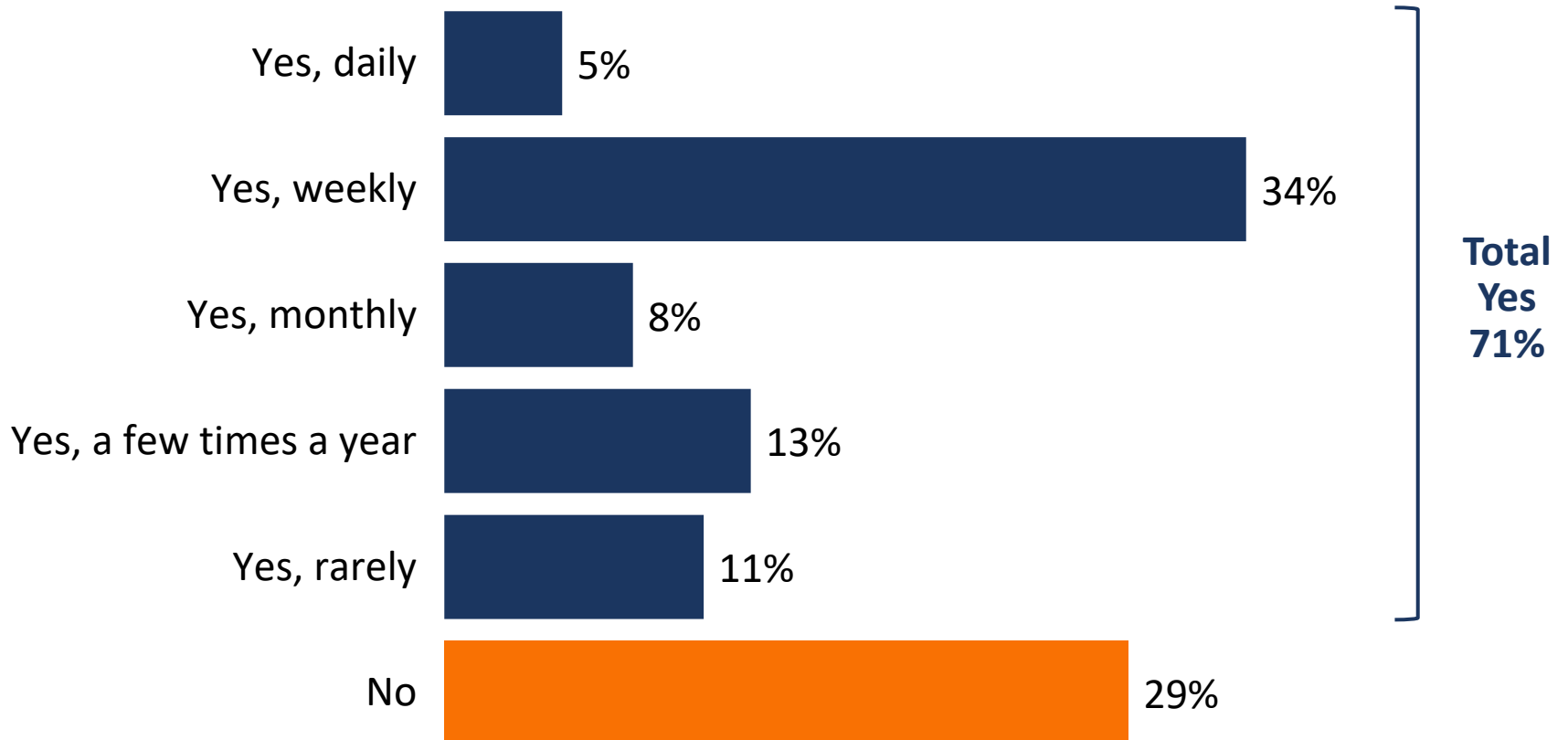
# Most said that 10% or less of food was not redistributed.

*What proportion of the recovered food your organization receives could not be redistributed in 2020 (e.g., for safety, quality, or logistics reasons)?*



# Two in five coordinate with other organizations at least weekly to share surpluses and delegate rescue.

*Do you currently coordinate with other food recovery organizations or services to share surpluses or collectively delegate the rescue of food? If yes, how often do you do so?  
(Asked if Engage in Food Recovery)*





# **Impacts of COVID-19 on Food Recovery**

# Verbatim Comment on Impacts of the COVID-19 Pandemic

*How did the COVID-19 pandemic impact your food recovery efforts? (Open-ended; Asked if Engage in Food Recovery)*

We didn't begin redistributing food until the pandemic started. We have been really grateful for all of the mutual aid efforts to make our pantry possible. We have heard there is less recovered food, perhaps because there are less people in hotels, restaurants, etc.

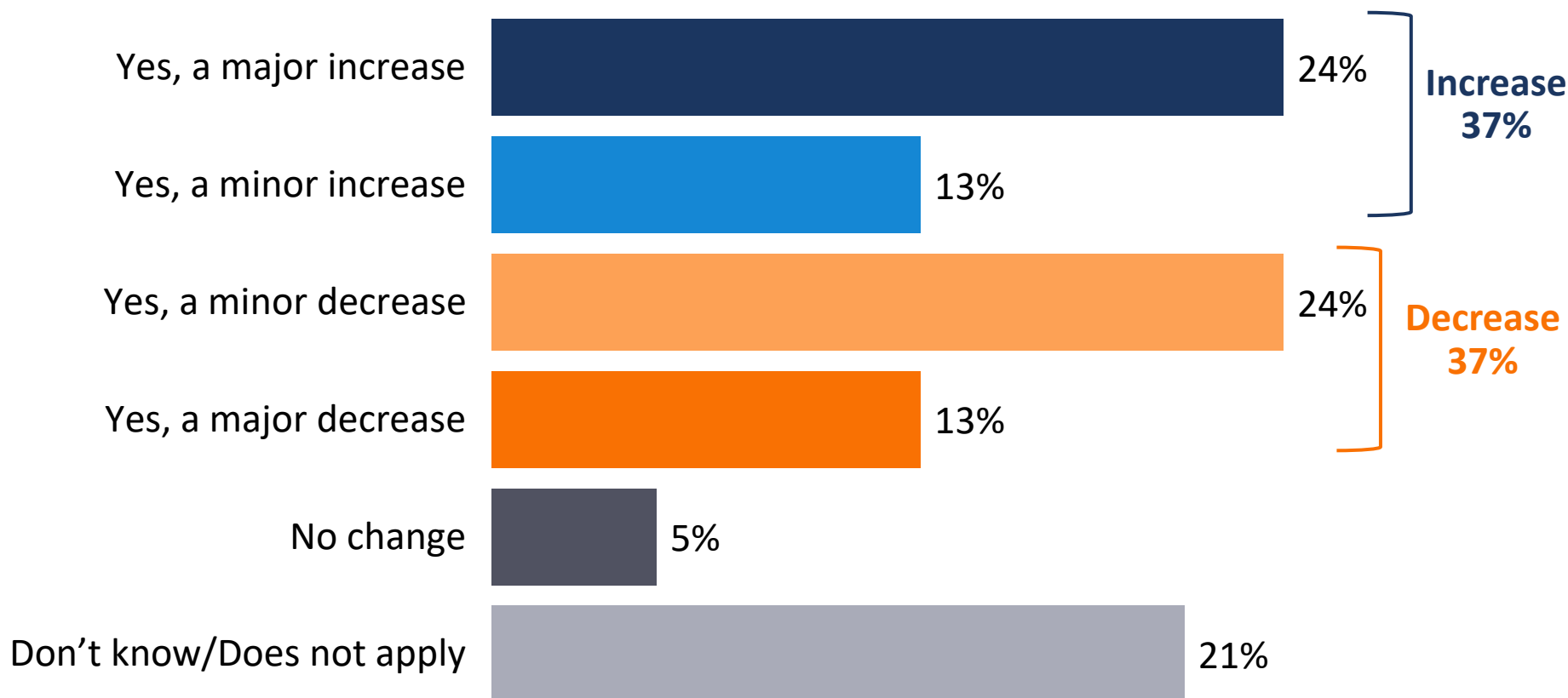
It dramatically expanded our food recovery program. We went from 5,000-10,000 pounds of food rescued each month pre-COVID to 50,000+ pounds/month now

COVID-19 actually really helped us grow in terms of volumes, and also in terms of building up partnerships. Because of the sudden influx of excess inventory, we had to adapt and grow rapidly, building up our network of donors and receiving agencies. We were able to match donations to agencies. We also participated in recovery efforts with the USDA Farmers to Families boxes.

It significantly impacted the amount of prepared food available. It also made it much harder to distribute food because many of our non-profits partners reduced their hours or shuttered completely. We had a significant decline in earned revenue since donors couldn't afford our fee for service.

# Among those who have experienced a change, approximately half have seen an increase and half have seen a decrease in food recovered.

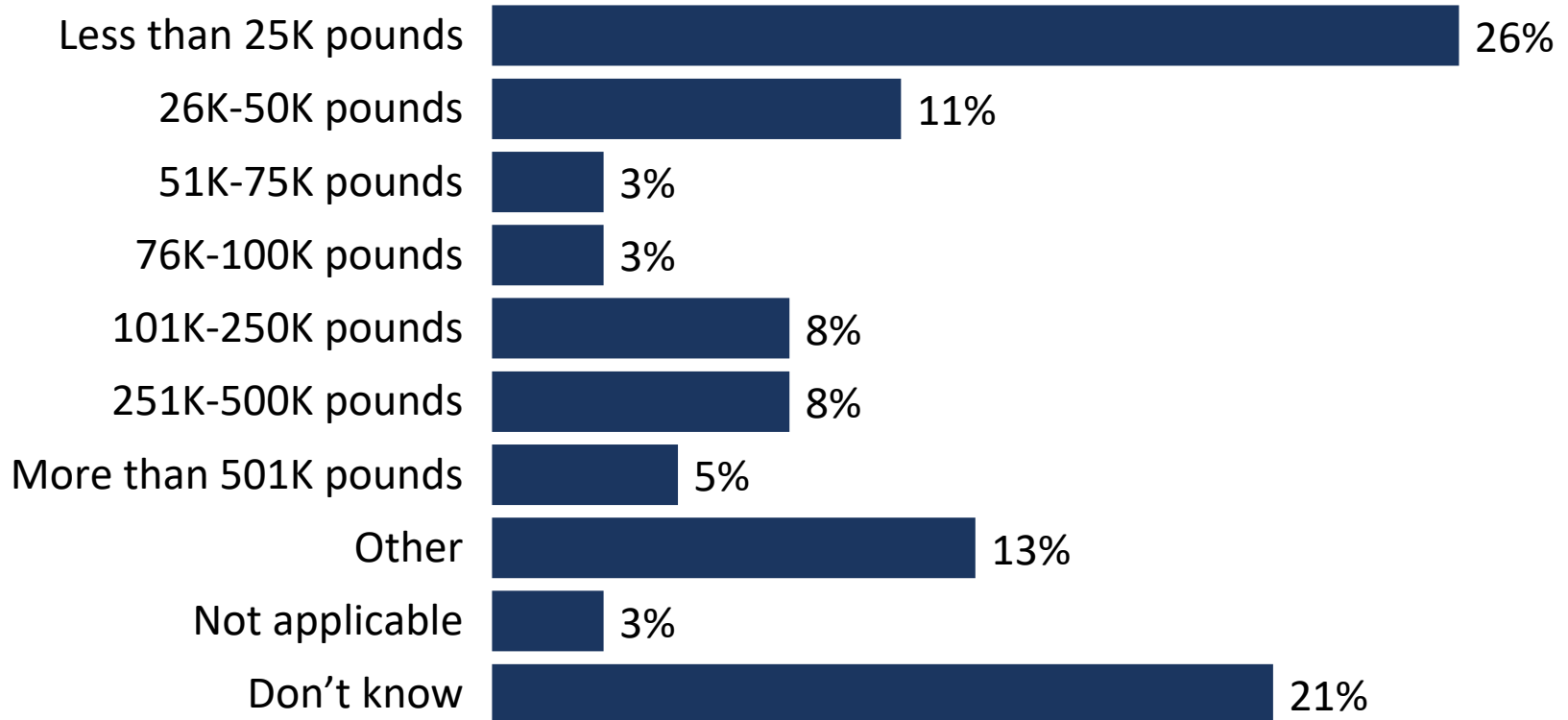
*Did you experience a change in the amount of recovered food donations in 2020 compared to 2019?  
(Asked if Engage in Food Recovery)*



# The amount of food rescued in 2020 varied by organization.

*How many pounds of recovered food did your organization rescue directly from food donors in 2020? You may select one of the ranges below, or if you know the exact number, you may enter it in the text box. If you are not certain of the number of pounds but have the amount in another measurement, please select other and specify.*

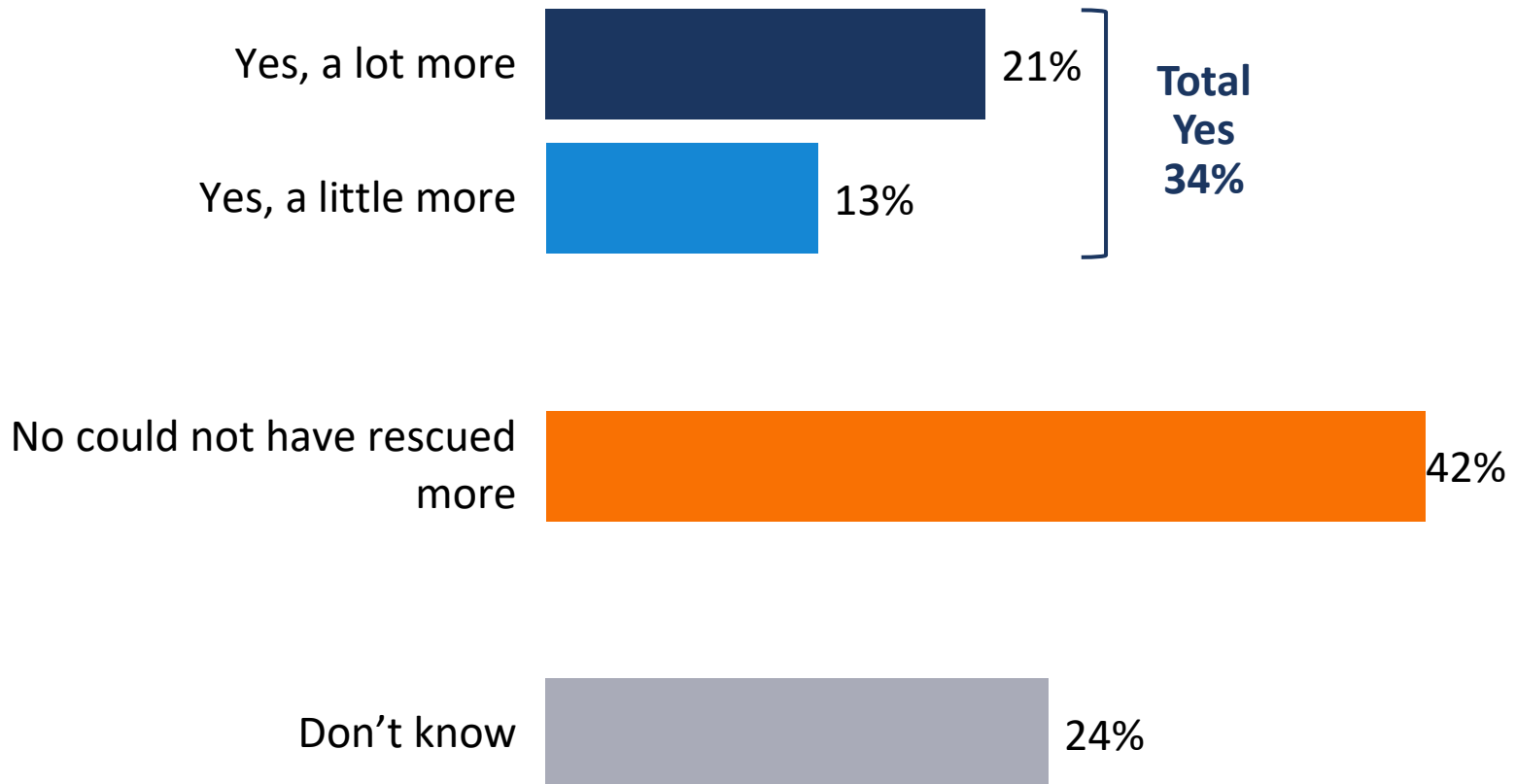
*(Asked if Engage in Food Recovery)*





# One-third say they have capacity to have rescued more in 2020.

*With the capacity you had at the time, could your organization have rescued more food directly from your active food donor accounts in 2020?  
(Asked if Engage in Food Recovery)*

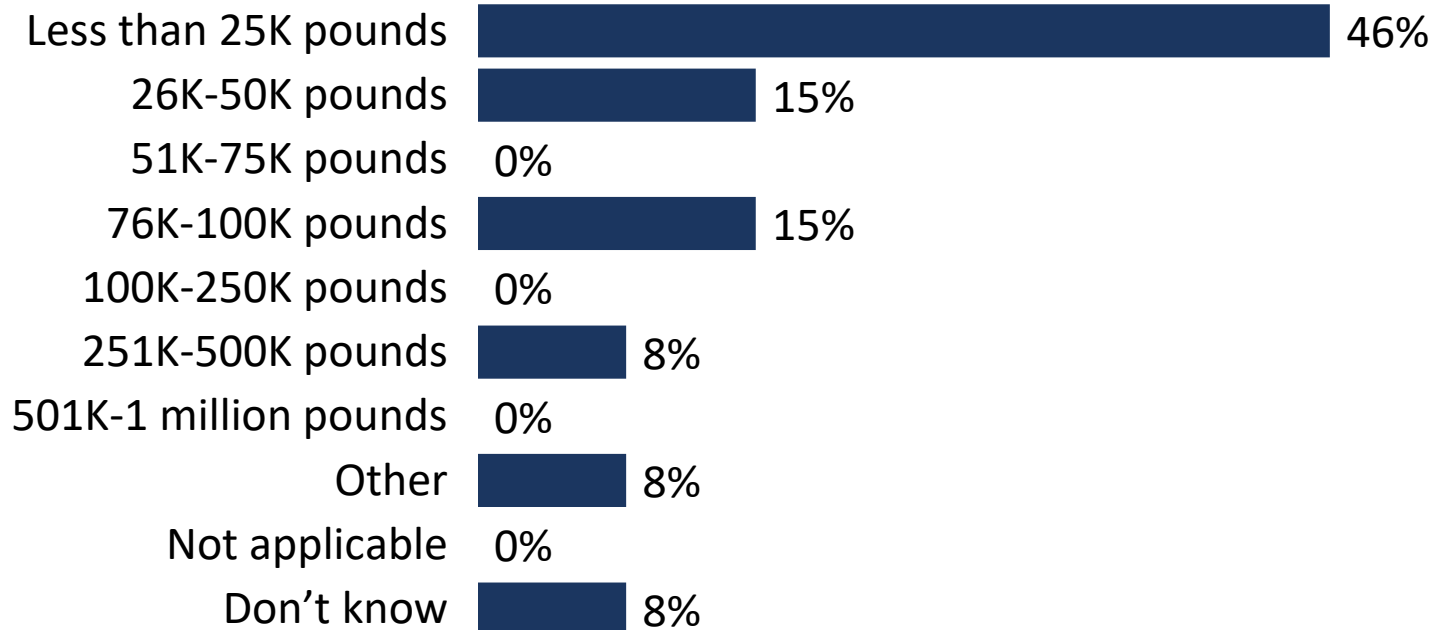


# Capacity varies, but a plurality say they could have rescued less than 25,000 pounds.

*If your organization could have rescued more food directly from your existing food donor accounts in 2020, approximately how many additional pounds could your organization have rescued from them?*

*You may select one of the ranges below, or if you know the exact number, you may enter it in the text box. If you are not certain of the number of pounds but have the amount in another measurement, please select other and specify.*

*(Asked if Could Have Rescued More Food)*



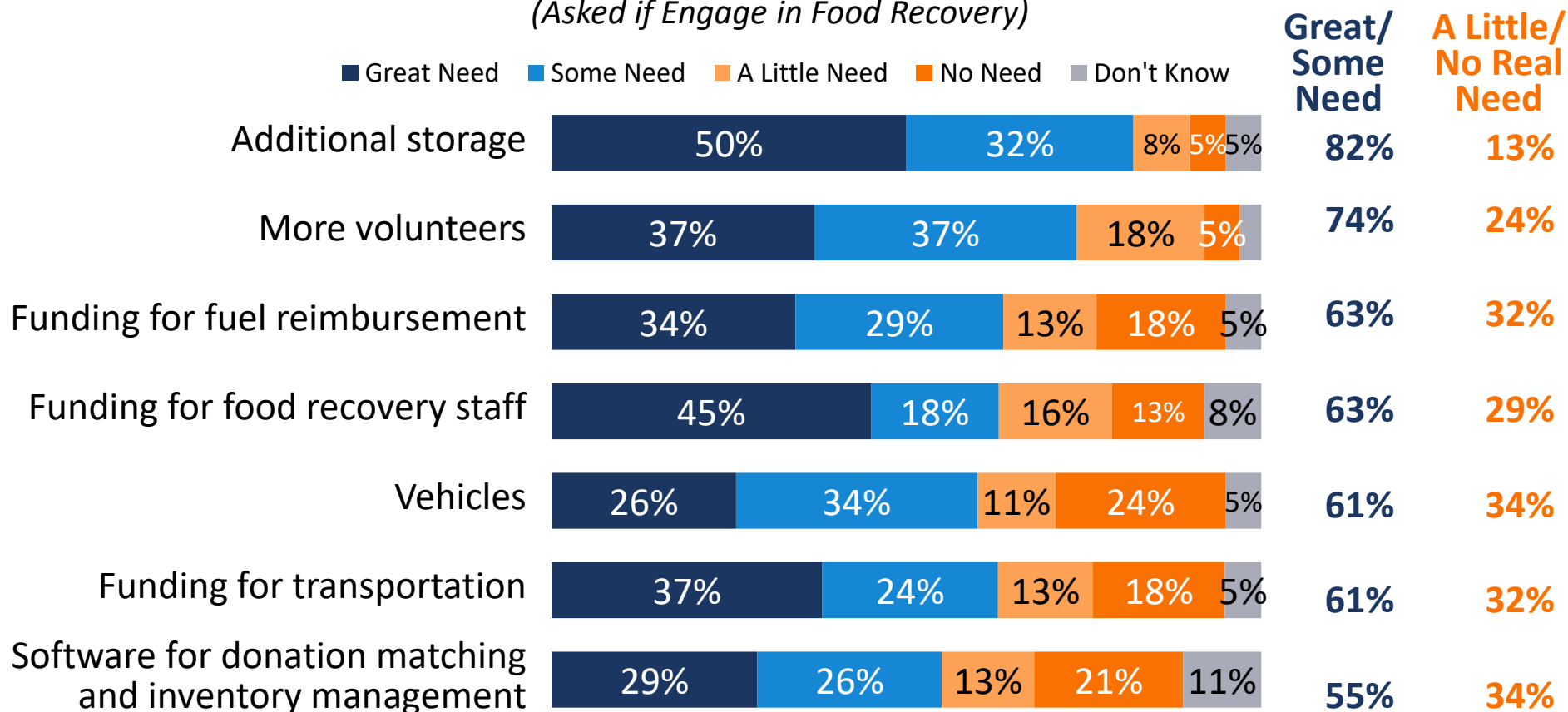


# **Increasing Organizations' Capacity to Recover More Food**

# Storage, volunteers, fuel reimbursement and staff were the greatest organizational needs.

*Below is a list of resources that may help you safely and effectively distribute more recovered food to help feed people in the next year or two. For each one, please indicate if you have a great need, some need, a little need, or no need for this resource to rescue and distribute more food.*

*(Asked if Engage in Food Recovery)*



# Verbatim Comment on Resources Needed for Food Distribution

*Are there any other resources that may help you safely and effectively distribute more recovered food? (Open-ended; Asked if Engage in Food Recovery)*

We are in need of a refrigerator and freezer to store the recovered food supplies.

Current resource needs: refrigerated box truck, increased community partners who cook and distribute meals.

More places that can accept donations when they must be picked up from the donor and then use or redistribute it. That is, the biggest constraint we have is too few places to bring food to when the donors require us to pick it up.

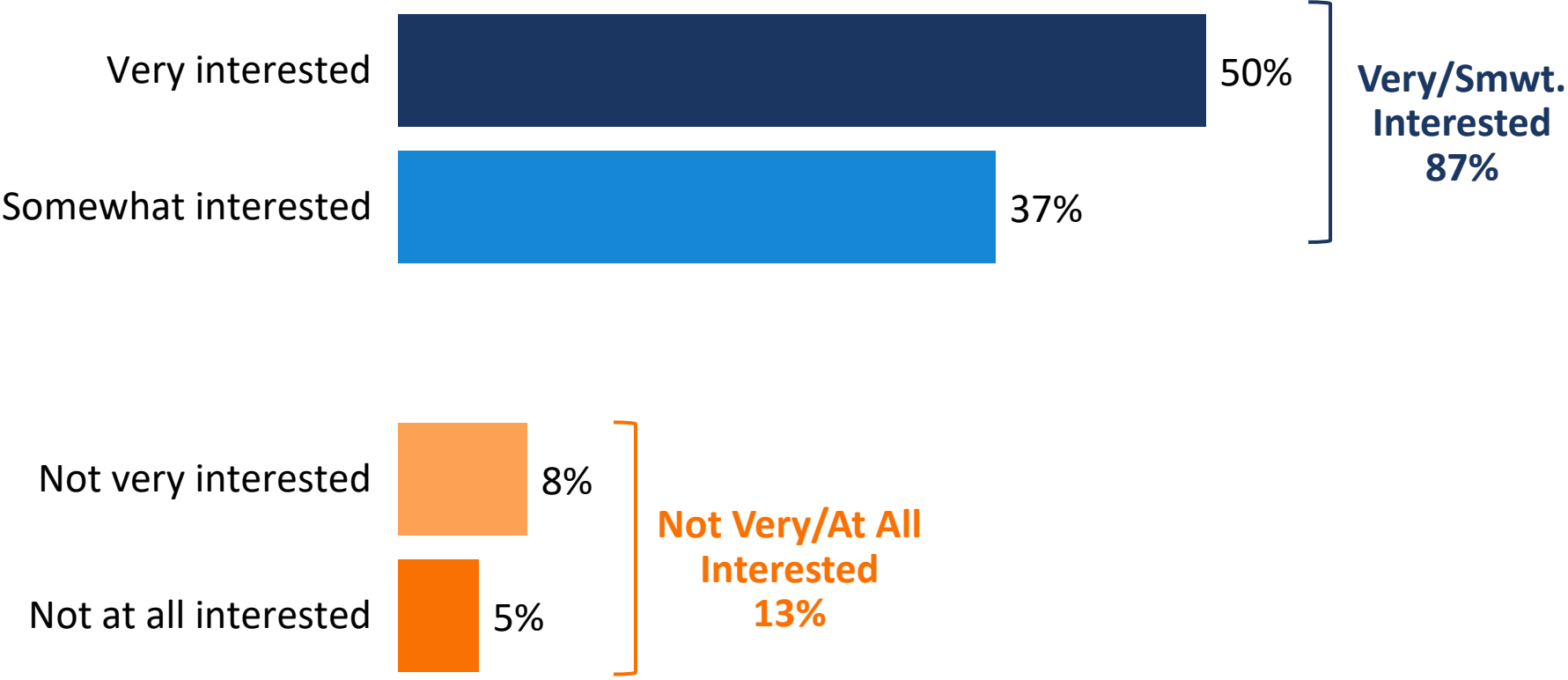
We wish there was a way to provide foods based on client choice, but due to COVID regulations, we've had to stop that and only do pre-packaged foods. To assist with this, we'd need a display case, an appropriate amount of volunteers, and a process of ways to provide more to certain families with certain needs.

We do not have a secure location to house our refrigerators.

I think this was an option, but commercial kitchen space so we can handle bulk foods in a safe and hygienic way.

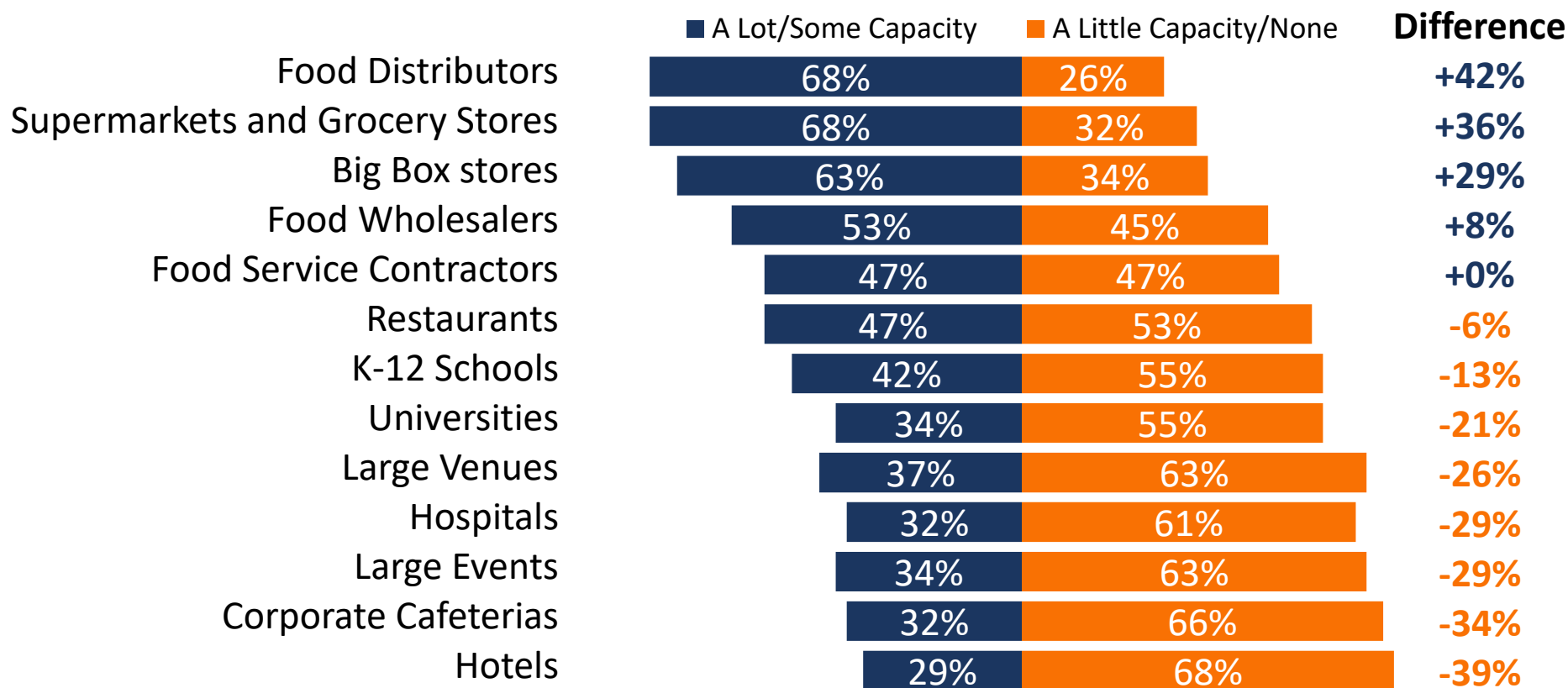
# Interest in rescuing food from new donors is very broad.

Currently, is your organization interested in rescuing food directly from potential new food donors?  
(Asked if Engage in Food Recovery)



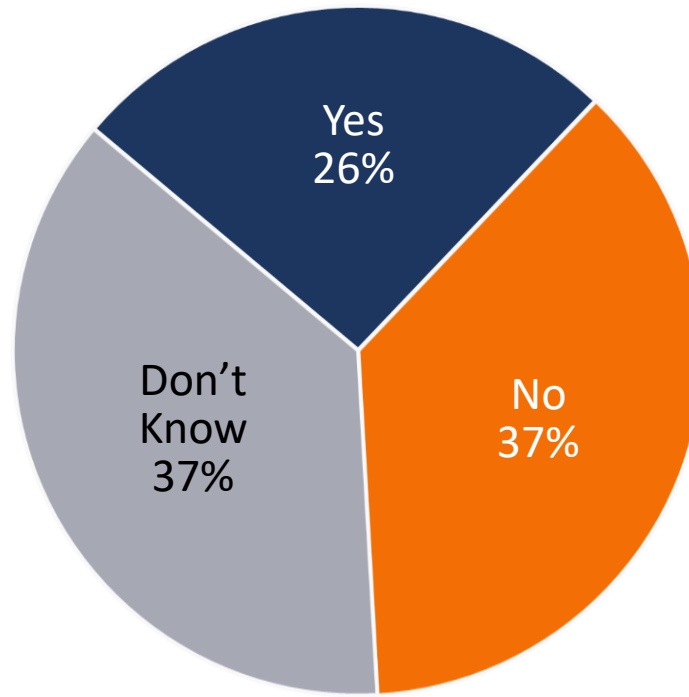
# Respondents have the most capacity to accept food from distributors, grocery stores and big box stores.

*Here is a list of food donor categories. Given your current resources, staffing, and funding, how much capacity do you have to work with new donors from each of these categories: a lot of capacity, some capacity, a little capacity or none?  
(Asked if Engage in Food Recovery)*



# They're divided on whether they want to charge donors a fee.

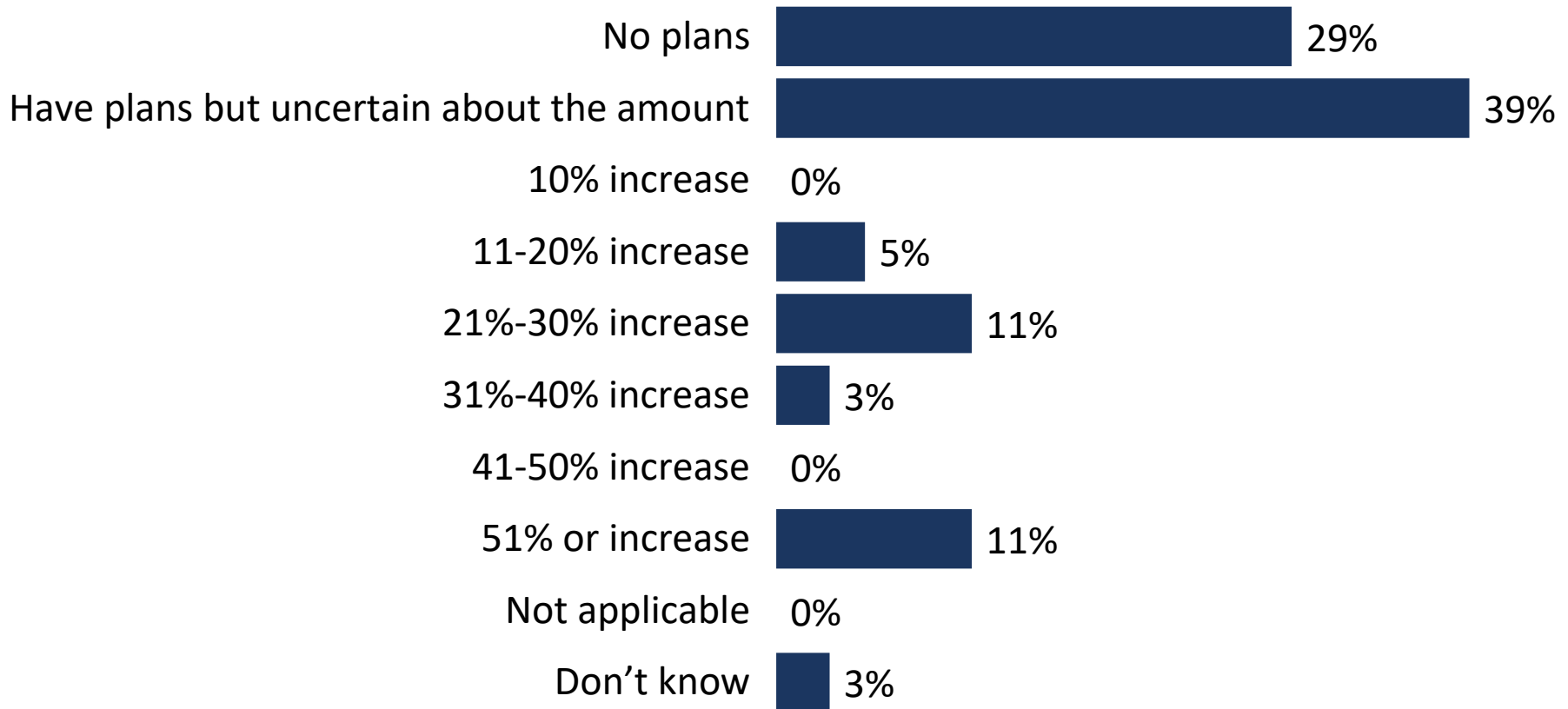
*Is your organization interested in charging donors a fee to cover the operating costs of picking up and distributing donated food?  
(Asked if Engage in Food Recovery)*





# Most plan to expand their food rescue capacity for 2022.

*Does your organization have any plans to create new or expand food rescue capacity in 2022? If yes, how much more capacity?  
(Asked if Engage in Food Recovery)*



# Verbatim Comments on Plans to Expand Capacity in 2022

*How do you plan to create or expand food rescue capacity in 2022? (Open-ended; Asked if Have Plans to Expand Food Recovery)*

We are actively looking to add additional food donors as well as sites to distribute food to feed families in need.

Explore our network for more large volume donors, build up relationships with more receiving agencies with adequate storage and refrigeration capacities, and start looking at a storage site with refrigeration capability, and work on staffing/volunteer programs.

We are building a facility that will allow us to prepare and preserve food that is rescued. We currently need to use our rescued food within a few days.

Based on needs of community expand to people choice pantry where the individuals can collect there needs.

Investing in BIPOC donors and trying to bring in culturally relevant foods.

Need to analyze staff capacity, community need, and number of food resources available in Union City.

# Verbatim Comments Describing Biggest Food Distribution Challenges

*What is the biggest challenge your organization faces with distributing food to agency partners or to the public that you need help with?*

*(Asked if Engage in Food Recovery)*

We receive too much in pastries/breads (fresh baked) so maybe the stores with in-store bakeries could bake a bit less? More education to the public about "ugly" products vs. "inedible" products especially produce...Better info from manufacturers about what their pull dates really mean.

Besides the food distribution, we provide other services such as legal aid, immigration services, translation, other emergency services, staff is limited, can't do it without the assistance of volunteers.

Support in building our capacity to serve the community. Technical assistance to develop and maintain a website and advertising on social media. Funding for transportation, staffing, and marketing resources.

Finding a steady stream of usable produce partners can and will use. Funding for programs

We can use a larger central kitchen with better commercial equipment to prepare foods efficiently in larger batches.



# Conclusions

# Key Takeaways

- Most food recovery organizations are small operations with 5 or fewer volunteers and/or staff.
- Fresh produce and shelf-stable foods are the most preferred foods and the most commonly rescued.
  - Bulk and hot prepared foods pose the biggest challenge.
- The pandemic had a varied effect – some said it led to an increase in their food recovery efforts while others said it led to a decrease.
- A broad majority are interested in expanding their capacity in 2022 and have plans to do so.
  - Food distributors, supermarkets and big box stores are the donors that FRO's have the most capacity to take on.
- Storage, volunteers, staff and fuel reimbursement are some of the greatest needs to allow organizations expand capacity.
- FRO's are widely aware of SB1383 and interested in having their contact information shared as an online resource.

**For more information,  
contact:**



**OPINION  
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