



DATE: November 17, 2021

TO: Waste Management Authority Board
Recycling Board

FROM: Cassie Bartholomew, Program Manager

SUBJECT: Alameda County Food Recovery Network Overview

SUMMARY

StopWaste convenes the Alameda County Food Recovery Network, which is comprised of diverse food recovery organizations that operate throughout the county. Network participants support the rescue of edible surplus food in Alameda County and nourish communities. At the November 17 joint meeting, staff will provide an overview of the network and highlight one of the participating organizations, the Alameda County Community Food Bank.

DISCUSSION

For the past decade, StopWaste has been strengthening our partnerships with food recovery organizations to better understand their needs. The Alameda County Food Recovery Network includes a wide range of food recovery organizations, grantees and other community groups (faith-based organizations, housing agencies, etc.), all working to help facilitate the rescue and/or redistribution of edible surplus food. They are united by a common goal to ensure that surplus edible food is put to its highest and best use—to feed people. The network provides a space for collaboration, connection, relationship building, and learning to strengthen the county’s food recovery landscape.

In 2019, we expanded our work with the network to provide information and gather feedback on the food donation aspects of SB 1383 regulations during the rule making process. As a result, the network now provides a platform for planning and implementation of the state’s first food donation law. The network will help to coordinate our countywide activities required under SB 1383 such as edible food recovery capacity planning, identifying gaps and opportunities for food donation through mapping activities, building trust and transparency between organizations and new relationships with donor businesses and jurisdictions. In addition, the network provides an opportunity to recognize and uplift the vital work that our food recovery partners are doing in the

county to address growing rates of food insecurity and how collectively, organizations can work together to build a resilient, sustainable and inclusive regional food system.

Through our Edible Food Recovery Capacity survey, we are currently working with the network to better understand their existing organizational capacity and to assess what infrastructure, funding or other support these organizations will need to enable them to collect, transport, store and/or distribute more food as we increase donations from large commercial edible food generators in the county. Our Organics Reduction Recycling Ordinance education and outreach work supports the network by providing resources to communicate with donors about food donation requirements, safe food handling guidance for donors, and a food donation contract template that organizations can use with their existing or new donors to meet SB 1383 requirements.

Staff will provide additional information about the network and introduce a guest presenter from the Alameda County Community Food Bank to share more about their work on grocery rescue, SB 1383 planning and implementation.

RECOMMENDATION

This item is for information only.