

Food Waste Prevention for Commercial Kitchens

Before utilizing edible food recovery and organic recycling as a means to divert organic materials from the landfill, commercial kitchens should prioritize the first line of defense against food waste: prevention. Food waste prevention can take shape in many forms. Use the tips below to start preventing food waste before it happens!

Purchasing:

- Work with suppliers to enable flexibility for adjustments to purchase based on demand.
- Manage inventory with consistent procedures to streamline flow of items.
- Purchase seasonal and local foods and buy in bulk when possible.
- Buy produce with imperfections at a reduced cost - tastes just as good!

Storing:

- Learn best storage and handling techniques for all inventory and implement techniques to maximize the life of foods (e.g., freezing, dehydrating).
- Train staff on “first expired, first out” storage practices.
- Implement a labeling system that is thorough, descriptive, and visible.

Preparing:

- Reduce trim waste by refining knife skills.
- Use all parts of an ingredient with the ‘root to stalk’ and ‘nose to tail’ methods.
- Practice a just-in-time system to reduce overproduction and serve fresh.

Serving:

- Identify less popular items and drop poor performers.
- Cross-utilize ingredients, revamp leftovers, and offer seasonal options across menu items to minimize waste and spoilage.
- Adjust and reduce portion sizes and garnishes. On average, plate waste accounts for 70% of food waste in a restaurant.
- Offer before serving. Inquire if customers want complimentary sides before automatically serving them.

Food Donation for Businesses

While 1 in 3 San Diegans are food insecure, 500,000 tons of food is wasted in San Diego every year. In order to address inequity, **SB 1383 requires edible food recovery from businesses identified as Tier One and Tier Two generators.** All food generating businesses are also encouraged to participate in food donation programs. Establishing a food recovery program, which donates edible food to food recovery organizations and services, is an important way to keep food out of the landfill and feed people in need.

To support you, resource guides on the following topics are available:

- SB 1383 Food Recovery Requirements Overview
- Food Donation Liability Protections and Food Safety
- A Guide to Food Donation Tax Deductions
- Food Recovery Agreement Template
- Steps for Setting Up and Maintaining a Food Recovery Program

Visit the City of San Marcos' website to access the guides and for more information.



Requirements & Record-Keeping

To comply with edible food recovery requirements, Tier One and Tier Two generators must implement a food recovery program through the following actions:

- **Establish a contract** or written agreement with a food recovery entity.
- **Donate the maximum** amount of edible food that would otherwise be disposed.
- **Maintain records** of food donation activities and submit records to the City annually:
 - Copies of contracts or written agreements with all food recovery organizations and services
 - For each contract or written agreement with a food recovery organization or service, maintain records of:
 - Name, address, and contact information of the organization or service
 - Schedules for food donation deliveries or collections
 - Quantity of food donated in pounds per month
 - Types of food each food recovery organization receives or collects

The City will conduct inspections of businesses beginning January 2022, focusing on the largest food-generators first. These inspections aim to ensure food generating businesses are complying with program requirements and maintaining sufficient records of their donations. Food recovery program records will be reviewed during City inspections.



Contact a local food bank to get connected with a food recovery organization:

Feeding San Diego - fooddonation@feedingsandiego.org - (858) 452-3663

San Diego Food Bank - acarson@sandiegofoodbank.org - (858) 527-1419

The food recovery services and organizations that you contract with have similar record-keeping requirements under SB 1383. These services/organizations must maintain records of food they receive through food donation programs and must annually report the total pounds of edible food recovered to the city in which their primary address is located. **Work together to ensure all food donations are consistently tracked and recorded.**