FDWG Research Memo #3

**Project Title:** Food Center Food Donation Work Group Research

**Summary/Scope:** This workgroup formed according to Washington’s Organics Management Law (OML) 2.0, passed by the 2024 Legislature as [HB2301](https://app.leg.wa.gov/billsummary?BillNumber=2301&Initiative=false&Year=2023). The goal is to develop recommendations for increased food donation from commercial generators in Washington State. The Food Center at the Department of Ecology (“Ecology”) facilitates the workgroup and will pass their recommendations to the legislature in a report by Sep. 1, 2025.

The work group will address:

* Logistics to phase in edible food donation programs, including incentives;
* The food recovery network system necessary to support increased donation of edible food by commercial generators;
* Assess asset gaps and food infrastructure development needs.
* How to facilitate the creation of networks and partnership to address gaps and needs;
* Develop innovative partnership and models where appropriate;
* Actions taken, costs, and lessons learned by other jurisdictions in the United States that have enacted policies focused on reducing edible commercially generated food waste, including studying voluntary pilot projects carried out by commercial generators.

Ecology will submit a report to the legislature by September 1, 2025, with recommendations from this work group, which will make recommendations based on consensus.

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**Project dates:** June 1, 2024 – Sept. 1, 2025

# Upcoming Tasks and Action Items

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| **Please complete the following tasks (Outlook reminder attached in email)** |
| * All members - Complete the [recommendation worksheets](https://www.ezview.wa.gov/Portals/_1962/Documents/food-donation/FDWG_Rec_Worksheet.docx). Worksheets can also be found on the [EZ View webpage](https://www.ezview.wa.gov/DesktopDefault.aspx?alias=1962&PageID=39940). Please send finished worksheets to [FoodCenter@ecy.wa.gov](mailto:FoodCenter@ecy.wa.gov). |

# Project Status Since Last Update

**Project status:** On track

**Accomplishments/Milestones:**

* We had a **56%** response rate to Survey #3 **(we need more!)**
* The third meeting had **50** responses to the sticky note question “Incentives and Funding”
* Ecology analyzed the third survey looking at metrics, direct recommendations and incentives to create a frequency analysis to further research on gaps in information and data that will help us to draft our recommendations.
* Ecology further refined the data of the sticky notes through the lens of the six grouped themes: Logistics and Transportation, Partnerships, Infrastructure, Policies and Incentives, Technology and Metrics, Best Practices and Pilots.
  + **Logistics and Transportation**:Logistics to connect idle trucks
  + **Partnerships:** Support and build collaboration across agencies and stakeholders
  + **Infrastructure:** Increase access to cold storage and transportation
  + **Policies and Incentives:** Funding for staff and operations, food safety
  + **Technology and Metrics**:Open-source data across platforms sharing metrics and org chart
  + **Best Practices and Pilots**: Standardization of Food Safety and training
* Throughout the survey prevention was called out as a common thread that people are focusing on and aware of. This falls inline with actions from the Use Food Well Washington Plan recommendations, and the current projects and work the Food Center is engaging in.
  + - Recommendation frequency
      * Standardized guidelines
      * Centralized database
      * Technical training
    - Incentive frequency
      * Technology solutions
      * Tax incentives
    - Metric frequency
      * Food wasted by generator type
      * Food waste prevention
* Detailed responses, including survey and stickies data, can be found on the [EZ View webpage](https://www.ezview.wa.gov/DesktopDefault.aspx?alias=1962&PageID=39940).

**Risks/Issues:**

* This project is on a tight timeline to get all the recommendations done by May 1, 2025, to allow for the report to be drafted and submitted by September 1, 2025. We are optimistic that through these updates, surveys, recommendation worksheets, and monthly meetings, the Food Team will be able to write a report representative of the diverse perspectives and recommendations from all of you.

# Notes from the Facilitator

* Contact us at [FoodCenter@ecy.wa.gov](mailto:FoodCenter@ecy.wa.gov) with any questions, concerns, comments, etc. We know the turnaround is tight and you all have a lot going on. Please let us know if there is anything we can do to help in the process.
* We look forward to seeing you at future Food Donation Work Group meetings. Thank you for your contributions to this critical work.