



BUILDING STRONG RETAIL PARTNERSHIPS



BEST PRACTICES FOR BOOSTING HEALTHY RETAIL DONATIONS



SET YOUR FOUNDATION

- Identify primary contact and check in regularly. This person is often the ICC (Inventory Control Clerk).
- Store directors can help with store-level policy questions or ongoing issues.
- Work with your store contact and your food bank distributor to establish a process for how to manage donation issues like moldy and rotten foods.



SHARE NUTRITION GOALS

- Share your nutrition policy, outlining foods you can best use and foods you can't accept (e.g., favoring fresh produce and whole grains while limiting high-sugar items).
- Offer a wish list - Include top requested healthy items; update seasonally.
- Express gratitude to the store, highlighting the number of households served and sharing stories of the positive impact of their donations.



SHARE DATA

- Use data to show the amounts, types, or frequency of store donations to highlight the store's impact on community health.
- Use the [Healthy Eating Research Nutrition Guidelines](#) and [Washington Food Coalition Resources](#) to analyze donations and report on how much produce, protein, or other nutrient dense foods have been donated.



STRATEGIZE HOW TO INCREASE DONATIONS

- Ask store staff what days are best to pick up certain foods (e.g., meat or cut fruit may only be available certain days of the week).
- Highlight benefits to the store - Reduced waste, tax incentives, stronger public image, and alignment with corporate social responsibility goals.



ENGAGE COMMUNITY

- Host food drives in the store's parking lot to encourage shoppers to buy high-need items for your program.
- Share success stories - Highlight what is going well and how the donations help.
- Offer store recognition opportunities (e.g., promote on social media or other channels). Good publicity is good for business!



REGULARLY REVISIT FOOD SOURCING PLANS

- Evaluate if the partnership aligns with your food sourcing plan and nutrition goals; if not, seek a better fit.
- Use the [WA State Dept of Ecology map](#) to find partners, expand your network, and reduce dependence on a single grocery store.



HEALTHY RETAIL DONATIONS PROJECT



WSU EXTENSION SNAP-ED AND WASHINGTON FOOD COALITION (APRIL - SEPT 2025)



Nutrition Policy Technical Support for 3 Washington State Food Pantries: Sky Valley Food Bank (Monroe, WA), Toppenish Community Chest (Toppenish, WA), Concern for Neighbors (Mountlake Terrace, WA)

- Resource development and advocacy with donors and partners
- Equipment for SNAP-Ed policy, systems, environment in the food pantry
- Stipends for food pantry time for consulting and donor engagement activities



Retail Donors and Statewide Coordination

- Corporate & Local Store Partners: Safeway, Town and Country, Grocery Outlet, QFC, Fred Meyer, Costco
- Food Bank Store Matching Partners: Second Harvest, Food Lifeline
- Government Partners: City of Seattle, Washington Dept. of Ecology
- Workgroups: SNAP-Ed Healthy Retail Donations, Ecology Food Donations

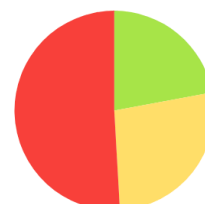


Point in Time Typical Day Retail Donation Inventory Snapshot June 2025 Healthy Eating Research Nutrition Guidelines System Food Ranking

Retail Store A
Green 42%
Yellow 18%
Red 40%



Retail Store B
Green 22%
Yellow 27%
Red 51%



Resources & Capacity Building

- Donor Engagement Letter Template
- Nutrition Report Template
- Retail Donation Support 1-Pager
- Nutrition Analysis and Inventory Tracking Support
- Localized support through WFC and WSU SNAP-Ed



Next Steps:

- Build further relationships with more partners across the food rescue landscape, including food rescue hubs, independent grocers, and farm vendors.
- Explore technology solutions for food bank inventory nutrition analysis and nutritious food rescue brokering solutions.
- Offer quality food metrics for data sharing between partners that shift from pounds to more meaningful metrics.
- Develop case studies of successful healthy retail donation programs.