

**Important Note:** This activity was developed for the original Green Lunchroom Challenge program, a voluntary pledge program for K-12 schools to improve the sustainability of their food service



operations. The project was coordinated by the [Illinois Sustainable Technology Center Technical Assistance Program](#) with funding from US EPA Region 5.

The following page(s) represent the content of this activity as it appeared on the original project web site, complete with available points and instructions for submitting documentation. **The project is no longer funded and as of June 2018 schools may no longer submit activity documentation to earn points and recognition as described.** The activity is presented for your information to guide your organization's sustainability efforts.

If your school or district implements the suggested activity and wishes to share its experiences, please email [Joy Scrogum](#). Your story may be incorporated into a blog post on this web site, the main ISTC site, or shared on social media to foster networking and inspiration among peer institutions.

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# Establish a policy to donate unused edible food to a local food bank, shelter, or charity.

**Activity Category:** Diverting Food for Human Consumption

**Activity:** Establish a policy to donate unused edible food to a local food bank, shelter, or charity

**Rationale:** After source reduction, diverting food from the landfill in order to feed hungry people is the second most desirable category of actions on the US EPA's Food Recovery Hierarchy. The hunger-relief organization Feeding America has reported that in 2013, 49.1 million Americans lived in food insecure households, including 33.3 million adults and 15.8 million children. Meanwhile, according to the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC), 40 percent of food in the US goes uneaten. It only makes sense to divert as much of that uneaten food to the people who need it as



Photo from USDA

possible, rather than allowing it to go to the landfill. By establishing a policy to donate the unused edible food from your school or district to a local food bank, shelter, or charity, you'll be fighting waste, fighting hunger, and setting an example of social responsibility for students. Furthermore, federal law (the Bill Emerson Good Samaritan Food Donation Act) protects individuals and organizations (including schools) which donate food in good faith from criminal and civil liability.

**Activity Description:** Establish a new policy at your school or school district within after signing up for the Challenge to ensure that unused, edible food from school food service is donated to a local food bank, food pantry, shelter, or other relevant charity.

**Earn Challenge Points (200 points):** Submit a copy of the food donation policy in PDF or Word format, clearly indicating the date upon which the policy was adopted. This file should be emailed to Joy Scrogum at [jscrogum@illinois.edu](mailto:jscrogum@illinois.edu).

**Resources:**

 [US EPA Food Recovery Hierarchy](#)

 [Feeding America: Hunger and Poverty Fact Sheet](#)

 [Feeding America: The Federal Bill Emerson Good Samaritan Food Donation Act](#)

-  [IL Public Act 099-0552 \(HB5530 Enrolled\)](#) [Amends IL Procurement Code by prohibiting schools or public entities from entering into contracts that prohibit food donation.] 
-  [Focus on Food Waste: Donations Encouraged by New IL Law](#) 
-  [Los Angeles Unified School District Reference Guide: Food Donation Process](#) 
-  [Food Bus, Inc](#) (facilitates donations of food from K-12 schools) 
-  [MealConnect](#) (Feeding America's food donation matching platform) 
-  [Waste No Food](#) (donation matching platform) 
-  [ChowMatch](#) (donation matching platform) 
-  [Ample Harvest: Find a Food Pantry Near You](#) 
-  [West Clay Students Embrace Food Rescue](#) 
-  [Food Donation for Schools Webinar on "Archived Webinars" page of this site](#) 
-  [Vermont: Guidance for Food Donation: Businesses and Institutions](#) 

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