



The ReFED COVID-19 Food
Waste Solutions Fund
2020



The Food Waste Opportunity

In the U.S. today, 35% of all food goes unsold or uneaten. That's \$408 billion worth of food — roughly 2% of U.S. GDP — with a greenhouse gas footprint equivalent to 4% of total U.S. GHG emissions. This is equivalent to emissions from about 58.6M cars annually — all while food insecurity skyrocketed due to COVID-19.

The good news is that food waste is solvable. In a new analysis, ReFED analyzed what it would take to achieve national and international goals to reduce food waste by 50% by the year 2030. We found that an annual investment of \$14 billion over the next ten years can reduce food waste by 45 million tons each year — a five to one return.



\$73B NET FINANCIAL BENEFIT



4B MEALS FOR PEOPLE IN NEED



4T GALLONS IN WATER SAVINGS



51K JOBS CREATED THROUGH SOLUTION IMPLEMENTATION OVER 10 YEARS



75M TONS GHG EMISSION REDUCTION POTENTIAL (MT CO₂e)

OUR MISSION

ReFED is a U.S. based national nonprofit dedicated to ending food loss and waste across the food system by advancing data-driven solutions to the problem. We do this by:

- Leveraging data and insights to highlight supply chain inefficiencies and uncover economic opportunities
- Mobilizing and connecting critical food system players to take targeted action
- Catalyzing capital to spur innovation and scale high-impact initiatives

OUR VISION

A sustainable, resilient, and inclusive food system that optimizes environmental resources, minimizes climate impacts, and makes the best use of the food we grow.





Resilience

"This past year has been challenging for everyone, and it is unfortunate that people who are already faced with hunger are affected the most in emergency situations and times of uncertainty. Our work is critically important, now more than ever, as we move forward in our recovery from this pandemic. The simple act of rescuing excess food to feed our communities can help build a more efficient, equitable, resilient, and sustainable food system."

PHIL AUGUSTUS ACOSTA

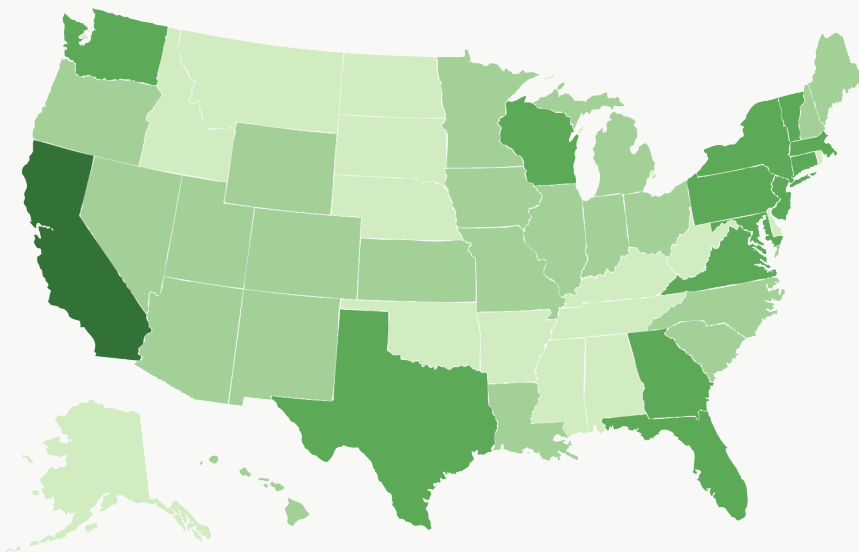
ALOHA HARVEST
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
ReFED COVID-19 FOOD WASTE SOLUTIONS FUND GRANTEE

The ReFED COVID-19 Food Waste Solutions Fund

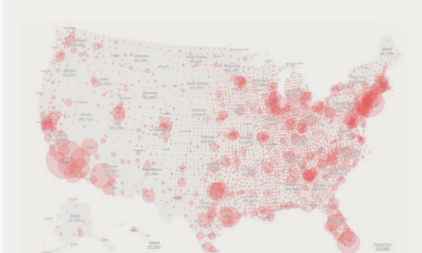
2020 was an extraordinary year fraught with momentous developments and uncertainty, and largely defined by the pandemic. In particular, COVID-19's spread across the U.S. completely disrupted the food supply chain — resulting in a surge of on-farm food loss, food business closures, and an increase in the number of Americans facing food insecurity to 50 million. In response to these challenges and leveraging our expertise on advancing data-driven solutions to food waste, we launched the ReFED COVID-19 Solutions Fund to quickly deliver more than \$3.5 million in vital funding to mid-sized, for-profit and nonprofit organizations across the U.S. that could rapidly scale food waste reduction and hunger relief efforts. A particular focus was placed on the rescuing of fresh, healthy food from farms; dignified, convenient last-mile delivery for those needing help; and reaching areas of the country hardest hit by the pandemic.

Geographical Reach of the 37 Grantees

ReFED leveraged its research and data to design a portfolio of organizations that is well-positioned to support the areas hardest hit by COVID-19



TOTAL COVID-19 CASES IN U.S.



Source: The New York Times

KEY BY STATE

- 8 Nationwide Organizations
- 9-10 Organizations
- 11-20 Organizations
- 20+ Organizations

Grantees

- 412 Food Rescue
- Aloha Harvest
- BlueCart
- Boston Area Gleaners
- Brighter Bites
- Central Pennsylvania Food Bank
- DC Central Kitchen
- Dreaming Out Loud
- FarmDrop
- FarmLink
- Food Connect
- Food Forward
- Food Rescue Alliance
- Food Rescue US
- Forager
- Full Harvest
- Goodr
- Harvard Food Law & Policy Clinic
- Harvest Against Hunger
- L&M Companies
- Lovin' Spoonfuls
- Move for Hunger
- Natural Upcycling
- Oceanside Unified School District
- Partnership for a Healthier America
- Plentiful (City Harvest)
- Replate
- Seashare
- Second Harvest Heartland
- Second Servings of Houston
- Table to Table
- Take Care (Bitwise Industries)
- Treasure8
- United Against Poverty
- Vermont Foodbank
- The Wave Foundation
- White Pony Express

Building Resilience, Nourishing Communities, Scaling Impact



91.6M
POUNDS OF FOOD RESCUED



8.1M
PEOPLE SERVED



92%
OF GRANTEES SERVING BLACK,
INDIGENOUS, AND PEOPLE OF
COLOR POPULATIONS



2.5K
JOBS CREATED OR RETAINED



95%
OF GRANTEES LED BY
DIVERSE TEAMS



Timeline of ReFED COVID-19 Food Waste Solutions Fund

May 01
LAUNCH OF OPEN CALL

July 30
GRANTEES RESCUE +28M LBS OF FOOD -
SURPASSING INITIAL GOAL OF 10M LBS

June 30
\$3.5M IN TOTAL FUNDS RAISED

November 30
GRANTEES RESCUE +80M
LBS OF FOOD SINCE MAY

*These metrics represent the total impact that the grantees have made since May.

The ReFED COVID-19 Food Waste Solutions Fund was able to provide highly catalytic funding to 37 grantees across the nation – helping them to overcome barriers in light of the pandemic and focus on recovering food and serving the growing number of food insecure individuals. As the fight against food waste and hunger continues, catalytic funding is even more crucial during these unprecedented times in order to close funding gaps, de-risk innovations, and scale impact.

The grants distributed through the Fund enabled the majority of the portfolio to raise additional funding – more than 13x the average grant size.

71%

of the grantees indicated that ReFED’s funding served as a catalyst for additional funding they’ve received and generated exposure to new funders

65%

of the grantees were able to serve new populations and geographies thanks to the Fund

86%

of the grantees developed critical new partnerships during their grant period



Donors reflect on why they supported the Fund

“The COVID-19 Solutions Fund was a true rapid response fund that turned a crisis into an opportunity. ReFED leveraged the infrastructure it had in place to direct funds where they were needed most, while engaging its network to share best practices and resources. Months after the initial grants were made, we are continuing to see new partnerships and opportunities emerge that might have otherwise taken years to realize.”



IDA POSNER
POSNER FOUNDATION OF PITTSBURGH
STRATEGIC ADVISOR

“In a swift response to issues caused by the pandemic, ReFED utilized their strengths to support the environment, food producers, restaurants, and the many who needed hunger relief. Relying on their expertise allowed us to deploy capital quickly both locally and nationally to some of the most impactful actors in the space and helped us give organizations the capital they needed to scale during a time when their innovations and services are critically needed.”



JACKIE HINDAWI
THE HINDAWI FOUNDATION
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

What the grantees have to say about working with ReFED

“With support from ReFED’s COVID-19 Fund, Dreaming Out Loud was able to build critical capacity and utilize key infrastructure to support our food recovery efforts. We are proud that our food recovery efforts were highly cooperative, involving nonprofit and community-based organizations, as well as food entrepreneurs from our DREAM Food Enterprise program. In total, we produced more than 70,000 meals and delivered groceries to 1,300 individuals and families weekly through November 2020 with resources provided by ReFED.”



CHRISTOPHER BRADSHAW
DREAMING OUT LOUD
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

“Take Care was created as an emergency response effort built specifically to eliminate food waste and serve the most marginalized populations affected by COVID in the Central Valley. The funding from the ReFED grant came at the most crucial moment for our program. Without the ReFED grant, we wouldn’t have been able to scale and eventually turn the program into a CARES-funded initiative that was able to serve more than one million meals over the course of 2020. Working with the ReFED team was one of the best experiences with funders we have ever had. They saw the need and met it head-on with urgency and great humanity.”



CHANNELLE A. CHAREST
BITWISE INDUSTRIES
CHIEF OPERATIONS OFFICER



[Learn more about the Fund and see the Grantees-in-action](#)



Catalyze

"ReFED's COVID-19 Food Waste Solutions Fund exemplified how philanthropic capital can be mobilized and deployed efficiently and effectively. The Fink Family Foundation was proud to seed-fund this initiative and thrilled to see the impact the Fund's grantees have made. ReFED plays a vital role in mobilizing the catalytic capital that is needed to unlock traditional capital for food waste solutions of all types. Whether funders measure their return on investment using financial, social, or environmental metrics, investing in food waste solutions has outsized returns."

JESSE FINK
FINK FAMILY FOUNDATION
TRUSTEE
ReFED FOUNDER

Our Funders

The movement for food waste reduction is at a tipping point. We are very grateful to the many funders and partners who have generously supported the implementation, advancement, and growth of our organization to be a galvanizing force for the sector and enable us to scale our impact.



The ReFED COVID-19 Food Waste Solutions Fund Donors:

We are very appreciative of the many donors who contributed the just-in-time capital needed during COVID-19. Through a generous gift from Betsy & Jesse Fink and an anonymous donor that covered the Fund’s administration costs, 100 percent of each donation went where it was needed most.

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