

The background of the entire page is a photograph showing several people's hands and arms as they handle a large cardboard box filled with fresh produce, including bunches of yellow and green bananas and some red apples. One person on the left is wearing an orange shirt, and another on the right is wearing a grey shirt and a green wristwatch. The scene is set in what appears to be a warehouse or a food processing area with a concrete floor and a metal wall in the background. The logo is overlaid on a dark teal, downward-pointing chevron shape at the top center.

FOOD
RECOVERY
NETWORK
FIGHTING WASTE. FEEDING PEOPLE.

2023
ANNUAL
REPORT

Food Recovery Network (FRN) seeks to recover surplus food to feed everyone who is hungry in the US. To that end, FRN mobilizes 4,000 college students, dining providers, food suppliers, and local businesses in the fight against hunger and the growing climate emergency by recovering perishable food from college campuses and neighboring communities that would otherwise go to waste and donating it to local nonprofits that help feed the 44 million people experiencing hunger across the U.S. Recovering food and donating food is the very essence of what we do at FRN. Since our founding in 2011, we have recovered more than 12 million pounds of food, and every single pound of food is converted into meals, more than 10 million meals in fact, and importantly, every single meal is converted into an offering across the U.S., an offering that says, I recognize and honor your humanity and you deserve food.

Our student leaders continue to show up for their communities. This program year saw an 18.5% increase in pounds of food recovered by our chapters from the previous program year, an early signal that our students are emerging out of the heart of the disarray we were all flung into during the height of COVID. Our student leaders recovered more than 444,990 pounds of surplus food. Excitingly, across the program year because of our chapters recoveries, Food Recovery Verified recoveries and our partnership with the Farmlink Project, more than 3,733,360 pounds of food was distributed in total.

Throughout the program year, one question centered our year of learning and activation: what current programs and new programs can we design to engage our students and alumni so FRN can feed more people, faster? What works and why does it work, or why doesn't it work? Throughout the year, FRN publicly offered our evolving approach to answer this question. We shared our groundbreaking mapping work which showed where the communities suffering from food insecurity were concentrated, and we showed that often, the locations with the most surplus food (including 4-year higher education institutions) were not near the communities of most need. Our work can now focus our resources within these communities to increase access to food in ways that are most easeful to the communities.

Our student leaders and alums know that to end hunger forever, we must recover food. And, we must do things like the 1,300 students did this year, who engaged in advocacy efforts that will move our state and federal systems away from programs that result in people being hungry year after year after year. Those efforts resulted in all of us celebrating Congress's passage of the Food Donation Improvement Act aimed at making the choice to recover food easier for businesses and farmers. We also pushed for initiatives that may not change in one year such as college debt cancellation to relieve the burden placed upon students seeking economic security through higher education and an increase in the federal minimum wage.

These next pages highlight what we accomplished this year, and we accomplished a lot. We highlight the beginnings of our data-driven focus on how to feed more people faster. FRN plays a critical role in ending hunger and our results-count framework produces outsized positive results. Our results-count framework, which we call FRN10X, is visualized below. It is a tall order to recover surplus food to feed everyone who is hungry. To accomplish this goal in our lifetimes, we must work together, which is why partnerships are a key strategy of FRN10X. We hope you will envision yourself as part of our mission and accept our invitation to join and support us in this work.

With respect,

Regina Anderson
FRN Executive Director



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Regina Anderson".

Tina Googh
FRN National Board
of Directors President



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "T Googh".

Hi everyone, Dheeraj Bandaru and Yash Valia here. We are the Executive Chair and Executive Vice Chair of FRN's [Student and Alumni Advisory Board](#), or SAAB. SAAB was first created around 2017 as a way to further develop leadership opportunities for students and alums interested in participating within FRN beyond our chapter responsibilities. For alums in particular, upon graduation, SAAB was an avenue to continue to participate in food recovery efforts and to strengthen FRN.

For the past six years, SAAB has evolved from creating our governing function (that was a heavy lift!) to understanding at what level of engagement is the best to support our students and alumni across FRN and to create the strongest connection with FRN National. Today, our purpose is to be a collective voice for the movement of 4,000 students, alumni, and other pioneers leading the fight against food waste and hunger across the U.S. We accomplish that by providing a space for members to share meaningful feedback and insight on FRN's programming, act as spokespeople and amplifiers of FRN's work and by forging connections with like-minded students and alumni who are driven to fight food waste and hunger in their communities across the U.S.

For the past two years we have engaged in newly created Town Hall meetings for students to share ideas and express details about roadblocks to recovering food. During these Town Halls, we also simply got to know one another. We live all across the U.S. and we're a very diverse group of people with a connecting spirit moving us to not let food go to waste when community members and the environment is suffering. We also participated in large-scale events across the U.S. and provide an on-the-ground feedback loop to the national office so FRN always has the pulse of the movement. The Executive Chair of SAAB has a seat at FRN's National Board of Directors table and in that role, I (Dheeraj) bring updates to the full Board as another activation to ensure the whole of FRN continues to keep the needs of our students and alums in mind, we can celebrate together, and be nimble to the changing dynamics of our work.

We hope to see you at an event, a Town Hall meeting, and be sure to check out FRN's social media platform for inspiration of the power of young people to change the world.

Go FRN!

Dheeraj Bandaru
SAAB Executive Chair



Yash Valia
SAAB Executive Vice Chair



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Food Recovery Network recognizes that food security, economic security, and climate justice are inextricably tied to racial equity, and achieving ground across any of these areas is dependent on addressing the root causes of these inequities. FRN is committed to racial equity and inclusion through all aspects of our organizational development and programming.

We would like to acknowledge that the land our headquarters office resides is land inhabited by the Kinwaw Paskestikweya Clan, English translation is the Piscataway Conoy Clan. Please join FRN in acknowledging the Kinwaw Paskestikweya Clan who were the traditional inhabitants of these lands and water well before we were here and continue to live here. To learn more about the tribal lands on which our chapters reside, please see <https://native-land.ca>

Food Recovery Network believes that Black Lives matter and we are devastated at the continued loss of Black lives.

FRN stands with our Asian Community to collectively stop Asian hate.

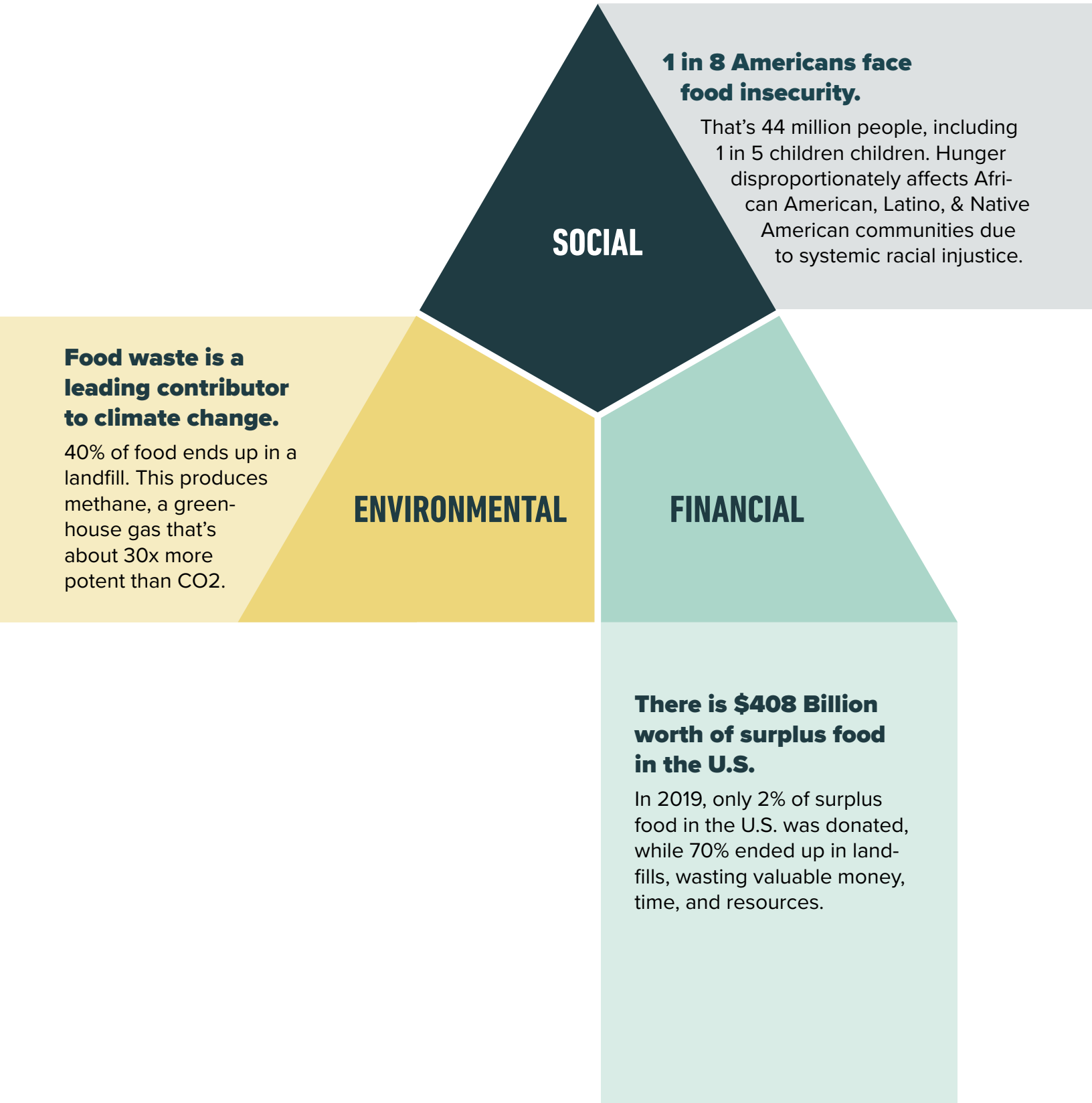
**We believe
no one should
be hungry.**

This annual report is a testament to the work we've accomplished to mitigate hunger.

We are constantly assessing the societal structures that are the root causes of hunger so that our unique contribution has the greatest impact to feed more people, faster.

TRIFECTA OF IMPACT

Hunger is perpetuated by social, environmental, and financial systems. FRN's model provides solutions for all three. By mobilizing college students, nutritious food is diverted from landfills to people who need it most in their communities, while saving money and reducing GHG emissions.



CHAPTERS

FRN chapters are composed of incredible people across the U.S. Thousands of students moved to action—to recover food at odd hours of the day and night, at campus dining halls, sporting events, or going on to farm fields to harvest the still perfectly good food left on the fields. Our students are a beacon to us all that we can, we should recover surplus food and bring it to those who are experiencing need. Food has value, and every human deserves food. Our student leaders accomplished so much during this program year and to them we extend our gratitude, our respect, many high fives, hugs and encouragement. Thank you for all you do.

Historic

Chapter Data

	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23
Pounds Recovered	637,064	272,711	375,628	444,993



FY21 was the height of the pandemic. FRN celebrates our chapters who are building back up to pre-pandemic levels of food recovery. During the hard time, chapters still did everything they could to ensure their neighbors had the food they deserved. They then came back to campus and immediately began to regroup and rebuild chapters. As many dining staff were laid off, students are rebuilding relationships with staff, as well as the nonprofits who faced turnover or even closures. We are inspired by our students who put forward such resiliency during this difficult time.

July '22–June '23 Overview

444,993 lbs	3,733,358 lbs	14,615,486 lbs
Chapter lbs recovered	Total lbs recovered	All time lbs recovered
SOCIAL IMPACT	ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT	FINANCIAL IMPACT
3,836,238	1,644 metric tons	\$1,318,953.80
Meal equivalent	CO ₂ emissions prevented	Resources back into the community
12,179,571	6436.7 metric tons	15,881 hrs = \$475,636
Meal equivalent (All time)	CO ₂ emissions prevented (All time)	Volunteer Hours Value

Welcoming 31 new chapters!

FRN combined various data sets including amounts of surplus food; rates of food insecurity; and race/ethnicity data to prioritize ten target states to focus our food recovery program expansion efforts: At that time, using our data sets showed specific target states where we believed our model could best leverage existing infrastructure of colleges, universities, and food businesses to recover surplus food and feed communities experiencing hunger while simultaneously addressing disparities in food access. This critical research and work continues to be refined. Our mapping work evolution is discussed at length across our Roundtable Talk discussions on our website.

Alaska

University of Alaska - Anchorage

Arizona

Arizona State University

California

Loyola Marymount University

University of California - Irvine

California Polytechnic State University

San Luis Obispo

District of Columbia

Georgetown University

George Washington University

Florida

Stetson University

Eckerd University

Georgia

University of West Georgia

Illinois

Northwestern University

Iowa

Morningside University

Louisiana

McNeese State University

Maryland

Frostburg State University

Massachusetts

Springfield College

New York

Utica University

SUNY Binghamton

North Carolina

Duke University

Warren Wilson College

High Point University

Pennsylvania

Allegheny College

Elizabethtown College

Penn State University

Villanova University

West Chester University

South Carolina

Furman University

Tennessee

Vanderbilt University

Christian Brothers University

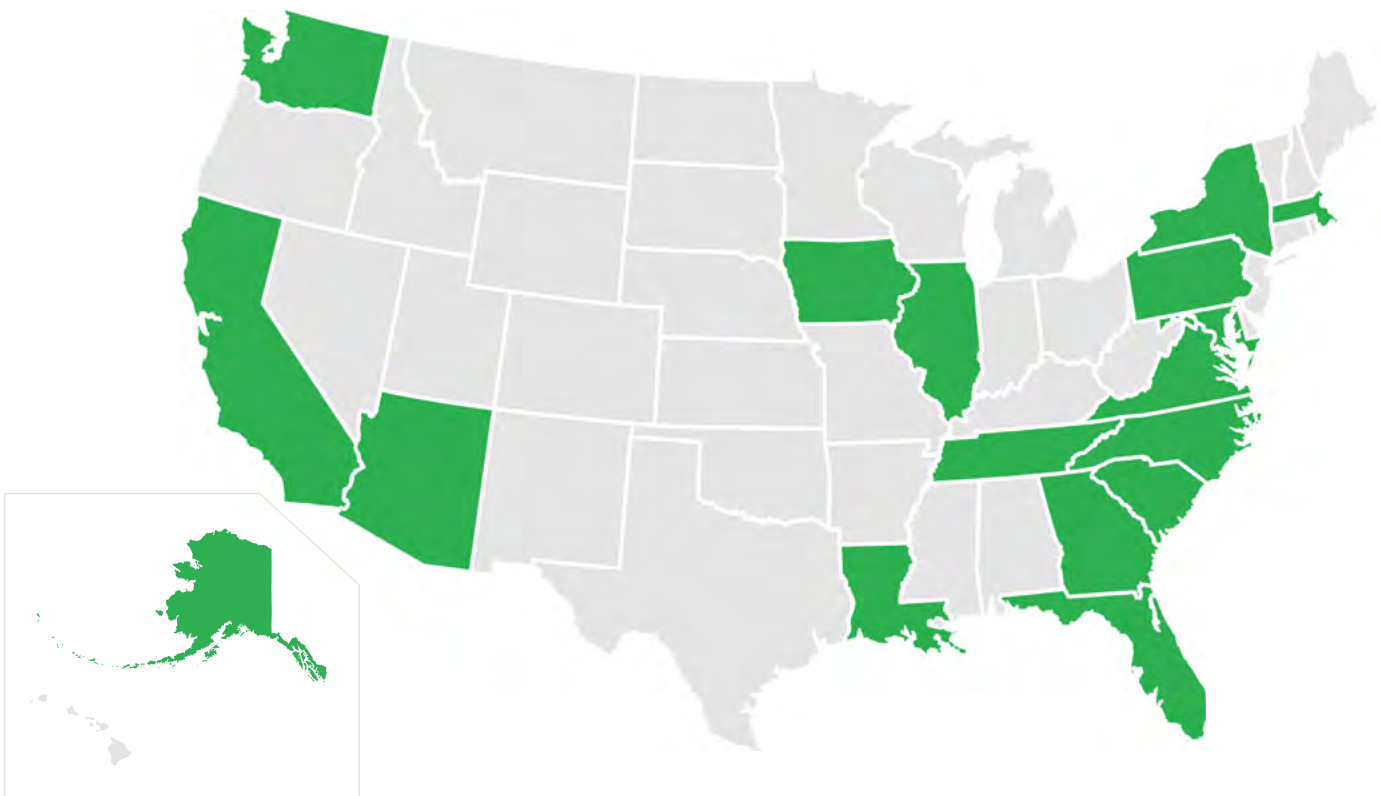
Virginia

Radford University

Washington

Western Washington University

 =New Chaper(s)



MAPPING

Food insecurity and hunger sadly is in every zip code across the U.S. For the past two years FRN has been engaged in work to support a key question for us: How can we feed more people, faster? When it comes to ensuring communities have access to fresh fruits and vegetables, from our research we found that often, produce gets redistributed to the areas of the greatest convenience, both in terms of location and infrastructure (think food pantries and food banks). Produce does not necessarily get routed to the areas of the greatest need for food access because of a number of structural factors. FRN has a role to play to dismantle and reconfigure many of those structural factors by working alongside communities who know exactly what they need. **This is why we launched our localized gleaning pilots in Atlanta, Georgia and Irvine, California, to keep produce in or bring it to the areas where it is needed most.**

By using disaggregated data, we developed a series of maps that show the locations across the country where there is the greatest opportunity to alleviate hunger. These are the locations in which FRN seeks to work alongside the community to widen and deepen channels of food access.

Why Atlanta?



1 in 3 people in Atlanta
experience food insecurity



~125k tons of food
is wasted each year in Atlanta



Why Irvine?



20.3% of CA residents
are food insecure



17.2 million tons
of edible food is wasted
each year in CA



Atlanta Pop-up Markets

September - December 2022

As a part of our commitment to equity and addressing food access disparities in areas of the greatest need, FRN identified Atlanta as our target geographic location for this gleaning project.

With a disproportionate amount of surplus food and number of people experiencing food insecurity, there is a key opportunity to reduce food waste, increase food access, and heal the local food system in and around Atlanta.

Outcomes

- ★ **9,000 lbs of fresh produce** routed to children and families
- ★ **115 unique families** served an average of **20lbs of fresh produce per market**
- ★ **5 markets** hosted at **1 elementary school** where families selected free produce

FRN staff had positive experiences interacting with young students and their families as they selected free produce. An FRN staff member recalls a young student grabbing a head of broccoli and exclaiming **“I’m gonna eat this and get big and strong!!!”**

Irvine Pop-up Markets

August 2022 - June 2023

We replicated our Atlanta gleaning pilots in Irvine to see if the three gleaning strategies would have the same outcome in a different location and community. From August 2022 to June 2023 we ran these gleaning strategies, determining that Strategy #1 was again the most effective at moving the most food for communities.

Outcomes

- ★ **19,800 lbs of fresh produce** recovered from local farms
- ★ **10+ unique community stakeholders** engaged including local city government officials, gleaning and hunger-fighting organizations, and students from local FRN chapters
- ★ **\$10,250 invested back to farming partners** by paying a living wage for the labor and time to transport surplus produce to priority areas of need

What’s next?

Our mapping work continues. With dedicated funding support from partners, FRN combined county-level data to create 50 digital state maps so county-level interventions could be identified for both FRN’s model replication as well as other community partners seeking to feed people and close access disparities. During our upcoming program year, we will release more information about how the maps are guiding us into communities to feed more people, faster.

ADVOCACY

Food Donation Improvement Act

In January 2023 the Food Donation Improvement Act (FDIA) was signed into law, which expanded the 1996 Bill Emerson Good Samaritan Act to help more businesses do the right thing and donate their surplus food. Leading to its passage, FRN lent our voice to encourage elected officials to support this bi-partisan piece of legislation and it worked!

The FDIA is important because it:

- Allows businesses and organizations to donate foods that are safe for consumption:
 - a. To recipients who are charged a price that is no more than the cost of handling, administering, and distributing the food, and
 - b. Directly to hungry individuals by a retail grocer, wholesaler, agricultural producer, restaurant, caterer, school-food authority, or institution of higher education.
- Calls on the USDA to provide clarity regarding quality and labeling standards for donated foods in order to meet eligibility for the liability protections.



Photo courtesy of Food Tank

Up next: Food Date Labeling Act

FRN is lending our voice to support the Food Date Labeling Act which will provide clarity and standardization of date labels on food. Consumers are confused as to what the dates on their food packaging actually means... resulting in millions of pounds of food being tossed out unnecessarily.

Zero Food Waste Coalition

In 2023, FRN joined the Zero Food Waste Coalition (ZFWC) to engage with and inform policymakers on opportunities to prevent and reduce food loss and waste. We also want to be an example of what any one nonprofit can do to promote better food recovery policies and practices. By engaging in coalition building, we are stronger together, as evidenced by the passage of the Food Donation Improvement Act!

Up next, within the ZFWC, FRN is using our voice to educate elected officials on the benefits of the Food Date Labeling Act, a zero cost update to food date labels that, according to research by the Coalition could mean *one billion pounds annually* of perfectly good food that would have been tossed away due to confusion of date labels, instead can be eaten by people.

PARTNERSHIPS

To feed more people faster, FRN works in partnership across the U.S. with groups with whom we are aligned in our efforts to feed people, fight waste and promote economic security.

A big thank you to all of the businesses who make the decision to get in touch with FRN to create a food recovery program through our Food Recovery Verified Program (FRV). FRV began as a pilot program of FRN's in early 2015 and became an established program in 2017. We provide technical assistance and support to businesses and events who seek to fight waste and feed people by recovering their surplus food. If there is surplus food from your corporate dining facility, conference, celebration or location, please do not throw that food away. [Get in touch with FRN instead.](#)



Food recovered at FRV Recovery Events*: 12,235 lbs

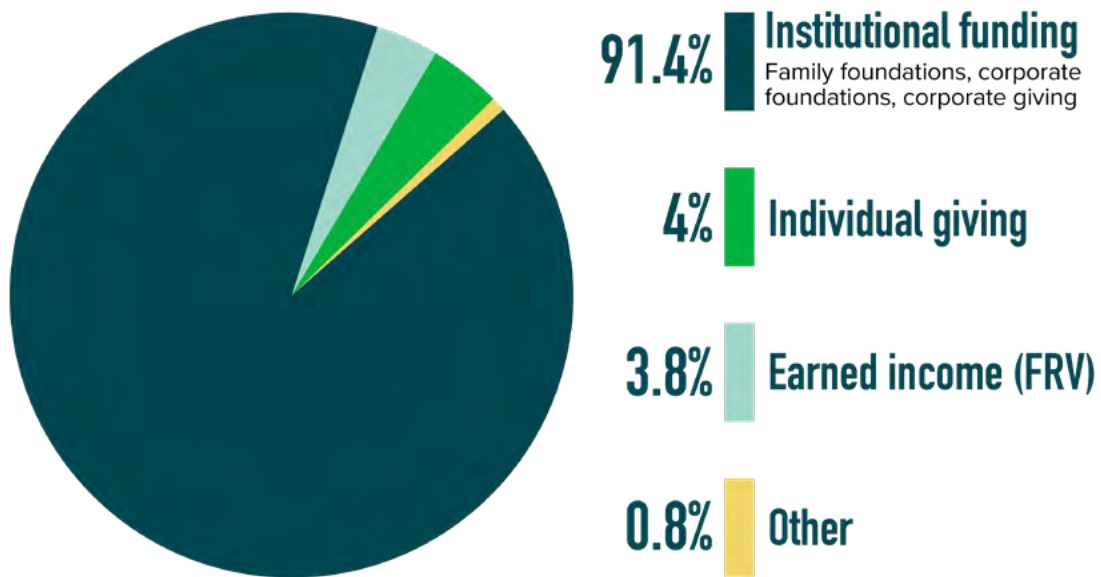
** since we've begun keeping track*



FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

Our work is possible because of our generous funders who believe that no one should be hungry. Thank you for your financial support.

- Andrew Family Foundation
- Aramark
- Clif Bar
- Clif Family Foundation
- Crawford Heritage Community Foundation
- Dr. Scholl Foundation
- fairlife
- General Mills
- Gerald L. Lennard Foundation
- Harbourton Foundation
- Homestead Foundation
- The J. Willard and Alice S. Marriott Foundation
- James C and Norma I Smith Foundation
- Kenneth Goldman Donor Fund
- The Kroger Co. Zero Hunger | Zero Waste Foundation
- Leo and Peggy Pierce Family Foundation
- Max and Victoria Dreyfus Foundation
- The Nancy Peery Marriott Foundation
- National Association of REALTORS®
- OXO
- Papa Johns Foundation
- Sodexo Stop Hunger Foundation
- Target
- Toast.org
- Washington Gas
- WW
- Whole Foods Market



“I did a lot of research to find organizations that worked on the two areas I care the most about: sustainable ways to ensure people have food, and helping the environment. I was so excited when I discovered FRN does both! I’m happy my monthly contribution supports what is most important to me.”

—Jen V., Minnesota

“Becoming a monthly donor gives me the peace of mind knowing that I’m always contributing towards the work of feeding people, and that my contribution will be there for FRN each month.”

Ken P., California

WHAT WE LEARNED

- **Our community is dedicated.** The COVID-19 pandemic has created life-altering changes for all of us. Despite the incredible hardship, our student leaders prove time and time again their tenacity and grit to change the norm from food waste, to food recovery. Our chapters have been able to increase the pounds of food recovered and participate in other areas of interest like advocacy, and this combination of efforts is how we will dismantle hunger, forever.
- **Cross-sector partnership is essential.** Partnerships are baked into our strategic framework, FRN10X. When we align with partners who are like-minded, we can dramatically increase and expedite our impact.
- **The toll of routine community disinvestment harms all of us.** Both human and financial capital investments are a requirement for communities to thrive. When we work alongside communities in need, they are crystal clear on what they need to support one another. FRN sees our role as being active champions to support the flow of resources to meet those needs and we bring our own unique supports to contribute to those communities.



FY24 GOALS

The continued support of our network will ensure we achieve our goals for this coming program year, getting us closer to our vision of recovering surplus food to feed everyone who is hungry in the U.S. Together, we can go farther than we can individually.

In the upcoming year we intend to:

- Continue recovering food across the U.S. with the support of our entire network
- Support our current and new FRN chapters to ensure they have everything they need to continue on the pathway to making food recovery the norm
- Create deeper connections with students leaders and stakeholders by making space for convenings and further conversations about our mapping work
- Strengthen FRN's impact by establishing new partnerships that further our work

Thank you for being part of this work in the ways, big or small, that make sense for you. We look forward to spending time with you this upcoming program year to share successes, inspiration and determination!

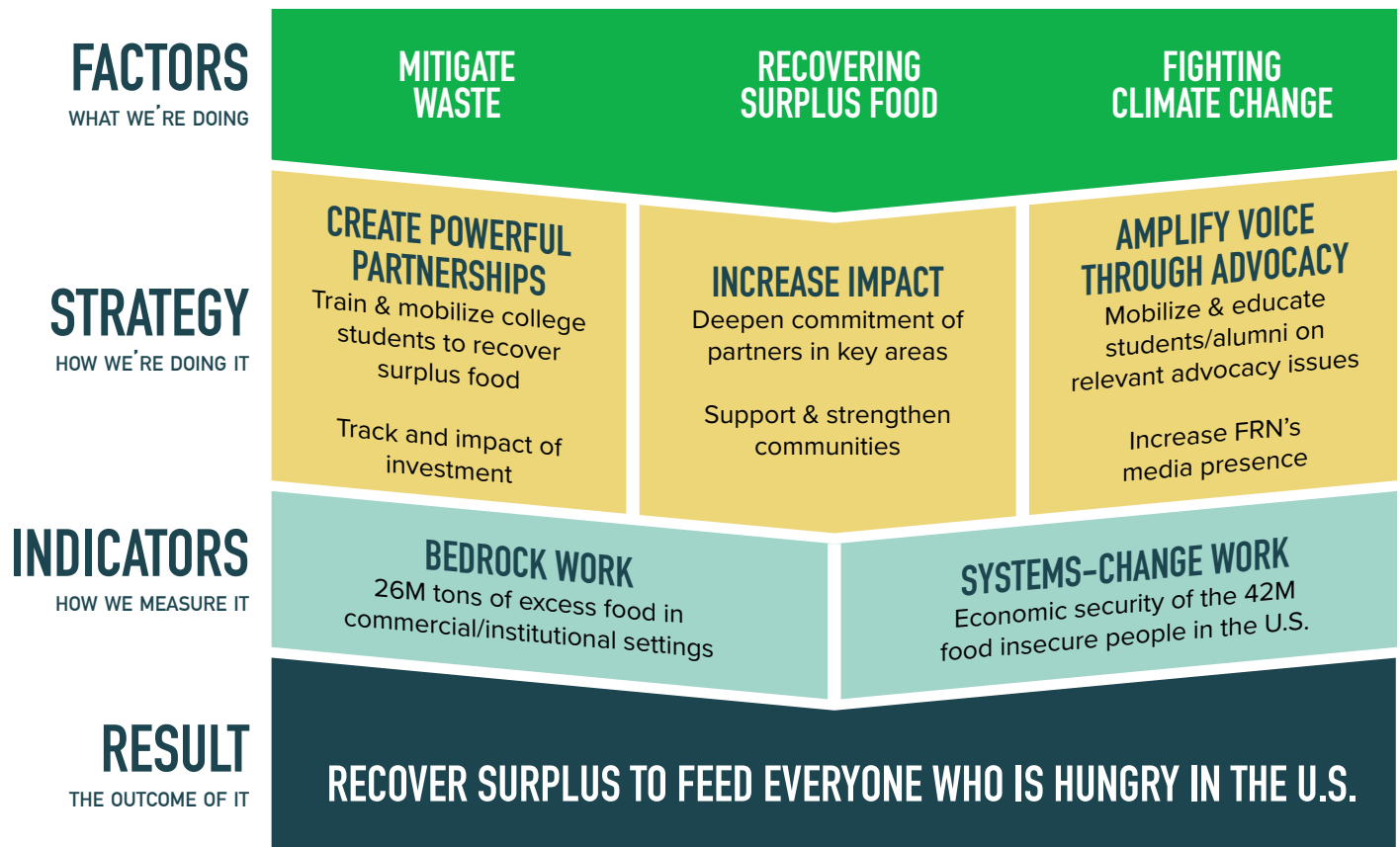
FRN STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK – FRN10X

In 2020, FRN launched our strategic framework, FRN10X. FRN10X is our blueprint, our vision to help us stay laser focused on the overall result we will achieve: To recover surplus food to feed everyone who is hungry in the U.S.

The **factors** are how FRN helps achieve the result. We have shorthanded how FRN helps to mitigate waste, recovering surplus food and climate change. When we “unpack” each of those terms, how we help achieve the larger result is we:

- **mitigate waste** in higher education, institutions and on small farms
- **recover surplus food** by providing training and technical assistance to students, faculty and local businesses on how to recover food safely and redistribute it within the community
- **fight climate change** by reducing carbon emissions generated from food rotting in landfills

We engage **3 strategies** to achieve our intended **result**. Over the course of developing FRN10X, taking into consideration our experiences, these 3 strategies are the most robust ones we can engage in to achieve our result.



**We seek to
recover surplus
food to feed
everyone who
is hungry in
the U.S.**

You with us?