



PEI Food Recovery Network Final Report

“Through the support from the Second Harvest Food Rescue App, the PEI Community Fridge has been a community hub where anyone and everyone can access the food they need. The support of the app and food donors has really increased people's access to food, increased a sense of community, and reduced the stigmatization of food aid. The app has been a great resource and tool for redistributing surplus food throughout the community to those that need it.” - Sandra Sunil, President and Founder of 4 Love 4 Care



Chef Paul from PEI School Foods with rescued tomatoes from Atlantic Grown Organics

In September of 2021, Second Harvest submitted a proposal to the City of Charlottetown and Farm & Food Care PEI to support the establishment of a PEI Food Recovery Network. This project, funded by the Government of Prince Edward Island’s Climate Challenge Fund, aimed to reduce the amount of food produced and sold on PEI that is unnecessarily wasted by utilizing the Second Harvest Food Rescue App that redirects surplus food from producers, wholesalers, and retailers to organizations that can put it to use. Outside of recruiting users to the free-to-use Second Harvest Food Rescue app, this project also worked to educate potential users and the general public on the importance of reducing food waste and its contribution to climate change. By diverting food waste, this project reduced the wasted resources and greenhouse gas emissions that are associated with the problem, all while providing food to those who need it. For over a year, our team has worked with the City of Charlottetown and Farm & Food Care PEI staff, local food businesses, and nonprofit agency partners in pursuit of this goal, and we are very proud of all that we have accomplished together.

We have made significant progress in the pursuit of increasing app users and reducing food waste and the subsequent greenhouse gas emissions on Prince Edward Island (see **Table 1**). We have surpassed our goal of new Food Rescue App locations, ending with a total of 103 new partners between November 2021 through January 31, 2023, against a goal of 40. This is the start of a successful food rescue network that spans the province of Prince Edward Island and will only continue to grow in the future. Our team has established important relationships and coordinated successful surplus food rescues with donors like Amalgamated Dairies Limited (ADL), Cavendish Farms, Murphy Hospitality Group, and the Culinary Institute of Canada, as well as nonprofits such as PEI School Food’s five kitchens and the Great Enlightenment Buddhist Institute Society. Through news media, workshops, and marketing campaigns, we have also increased awareness around the human and environmental toll of unnecessary food waste (see **Appendix A for project budget**).

Table 1 Key Performance Indicators from the PEI Food Recovery Network Project

	Goal	Actual	Notes
Meals Rescued	350,000	over 147,000	Excludes PEI potato project
Greenhouse Gases Averted (in lbs of CO ² equivalent)	1,316,096	over 552,960	-
New Users	40	103	81 food donors and 22 non-profits (NFPs)



We are incredibly pleased with the work we have done to build up the network of food donors and nonprofits on Prince Edward Island over the past year. While we were not able to meet our goals for meals rescued and greenhouse gases averted, we were able to lay a solid foundation in growing our network of food rescue partners, so that in the years to come, we will be able to reach and exceed these targets. These donors are now equipped with the tools to efficiently redirect their surplus away from landfill and into the hands of Island nonprofits. Prince Edward Island offered its own unique advantages and challenges through the duration of this project.

As Canada's Food Island, Prince Edward Island is full of a tightknit community of food focused enterprises, and as such, word-of-mouth had a large influence on the success of this project. It was imperative that Second Harvest connect early on with influential members of the food community through direct outreach, association presentations, and steering committees. Alongside networking, Second Harvest's pre-established reputation from helping redirect millions of pounds of potatoes away from landfill during the 2021 Potato Export Crisis, aided in giving Second Harvest credibility amongst Island businesses and nonprofits.



Gifts From the Heart with tomatoes from Atlantic Grown Organics

In beginning of this project, we were also aware of a few potential hurdles we had to overcome in order to create a long-term solution to reducing food waste. Outside of the major hubs on the Island, there are limited nonprofits with food programming, making it a challenge to rescue good surplus food in and for rural communities. Additionally, on the flip side of Second Harvest's work on the Potato Export Crisis, many sectors were resistant to discussions of surplus food. 2022 was also the first year that the tourism industry on the Island really saw an influx of activity since the start of the pandemic; this left businesses and events occupied with catering to the recent return of tourists and with limited capacity to take on new projects regarding their food waste practices.

Additionally, there were two unexpected challenges to our work on the PEI Food Recovery Network. First, Hurricane Fiona caused considerable hardship for much of the Island for a prolonged period, with power and telecoms down, roads impassable, and general property damage. For almost a month, there was very little to be done in terms of food rescue. In the aftermath of the hurricane, businesses were focused on rebuilding and restocking. Even if we had significant amounts of food rescued immediately prior to Hurricane Fiona, most, if not all, of our nonprofit agency partners lost power for a significant amount of time so any perishable food would likely have gone to waste anyway. Despite the challenges during and post Hurricane Fiona, we were able to help successfully rescue over 2,400 pounds of cheese and frozen haddock from ADL to aid the Salvation Army Summerside Community Food Bank's ongoing efforts to alleviate food insecurity in the area (see page 5 for more details).

Despite the devastation caused by Hurricane Fiona, we were able to learn from this experience. There are a lack of emergency food storage options available in the event of extended power outages on Prince Edward Island for businesses and nonprofits, as well as individual households; this has led to much discussion within our own organization about how best to prepare to reduce food waste in advance of major weather events, as well as discussions about potential solutions to safe food storage that is not



reliant on the electricity grid. Hurricane Fiona also shed light on some volunteer opportunities we may be able to help facilitate in the future, such as gleaning opportunities to harvest fallen fruit or ravaged fields after an extreme weather event, as well as proactive education opportunities regarding food waste and safe storage before a large storm is expected. We also learned valuable lessons about being proactive about rescuing food before a weather incident likely to result in power outages and wasted food.

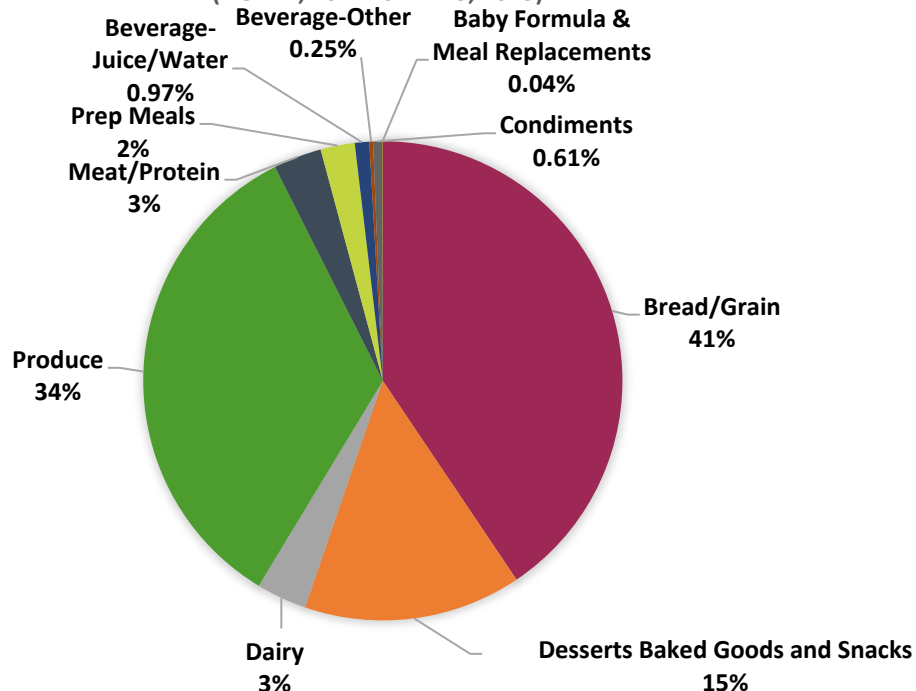
The second unexpected challenge was the delayed rollout of corporate donors Atlantic Superstore and Shoppers Drug Mart. When we set the goals regarding meals provided and greenhouse gases emitted, we were including an estimate of the contribution from these Loblaws locations. However, due to several delays, these locations were only activated and consistently rescuing surplus food on the Second Harvest Food Rescue App by mid-December. All Atlantic Superstore and Shoppers Drug Mart locations are now on the app, and consistently donating, so we expect that 2023 would see our food rescue and greenhouse gases averted goal surpassed.

Despite the delayed success in reaching out targeted meals rescued and GHGs averted, we are still pleased with saving over 147,000 lbs meals from landfill and averting just under half a million pounds of greenhouse gases from being emitted directly from this project. **Chart 1** is the percentage breakdown of food categories for the pounds of food rescued on Prince Edward Island from the start of the project in November 2021 until January 13, 2023. We have continued our emphasis on healthy, nutritious food, by providing partners with the resources they need to donate protein, produce, and dairy safely, and thus giving people in our community living with food insecurity what they need to grow, succeed, and belong.

Chart 1

FOOD CATEGORIES FOR POUNDS OF FOOD RESCUED DURING THE PEI FOOD RECOVERY NETWORK PROJECT

(NOV. 1, 2021 - JAN. 13, 2023)





Engagement

An early effort of the PEI Food Recovery Network was getting an accurate picture of the surplus food landscape on PEI from local food businesses; we developed a survey (see [Appendix B](#)) and used the results of this survey to guide our efforts in both food recovery and our marketing and engagement efforts. As you can see in [Table 2](#), we have had tremendous success engaging new food donors and agency partners, as well as educating people about the realities of food waste and the toll it takes not only on people in our community but also the environment.

Table 2 Engagement Timeline and Tracker

Date	Event	Target	Engagement (# of people)
Feb 2022	Food Waste Assessment Survey	Donor	27
08-Mar	Hotel Association Presentation	Donor	12
16-Mar	Nonprofit Presentation	Nonprofit	14
21-Apr	Farm & Food Care Steering Committee Presentation	Donor	10
03-May	Chef's Association Presentation	Donor	18
17-May	How to Reduce Food Waste at Home Presentation	General Education	2
June-July	Radio Campaign with CFCY	Nonprofit/Donor	No direct numbers
09-Jul	Downtown Charlottetown Market Pop Up	General Education	35
Sept	Ad in <i>The Rural Delivery</i>	Donor	N/A
27-Oct	Waste Week Event (Your Business and Surplus Food)	General Education/Donor	9
03-Dec	Summerside Chamber of Commerce Event	Donor	200
Jan 2023	Ad in Charlottetown Chamber of Commerce <i>Connections</i>	Donor	N/A

Our two major spends of the allocated marketing budget included a radio campaign and a Meta Suite social media campaign. The radio campaign with 95.1 CFCY ran for a total of 30 days between June and July 2022. Two scripted radio ads highlighting the Food Recovery Network and the crisis of unnecessary food waste were taped by Operations Program Coordinator Emily Browning with Executive Chef Andrew Smith from donor partner Red Shores, Top of the Track. While we cannot tally the exact number of listens, 123,729 people listen to CFCY every week.

Social media engagement has also been very successful (see [Table 3](#)). As a first campaign, a 0.62% clickthrough rate compares favourably to the average rate for nonprofit organizations with long established social media presences, which is around 2%. This should be regarded as a solid first effort and should the PEI Food Recovery Network continue social media engagement, greater success is anticipated.



Table 3 Social Media Campaign Breakdown

Campaign	Impressions	Link clicks	Click Through Rate	Cost per Click	Cost
Facebook	331,076	2,148	0.65%	\$0.61	\$1,299.99
Instagram	121,524	645	0.53%	\$1.09	\$699.99
Grand Total	452,600	2,793	0.62%	\$0.39	\$1,999.98

Small Infrastructure Fund

The Small Infrastructure Fund, with a total budget of \$15,000 was created with the goal of helping Prince Edward Island nonprofits increase their capacity to safely rescue surplus food. PEI nonprofits were able to apply for up to \$5,000 of funding in order to purchase infrastructure that would enable them to better rescue and redistribute surplus food. For example, fridges and freezers. Funding was awarded based on a short application in which nonprofits were asked to detail the infrastructure needed and how it would help their organization better distribute surplus food to those who need it. Recipients and final funding amounts were determined by the City of Charlottetown and Farm & Food Care PEI. We were able to help provide five Prince Edward Island nonprofit agencies with funding for necessary small infrastructure project (see [Table 4](#)). The \$15,000 budget was slightly exceeded with the excess being covered between the City of Charlottetown and Farm & Food Care PEI’s budgets.

Table 4 Small Infrastructure Fund Recipients

Applicant	Project	Awarded Funds
CHANCES	one fridge, one freezer	\$3,000.00
Gifts from the Heart	display cooler	\$3,800
Native Council of PEI	one fridge, one freezer	\$3,400
The Salvation Army Summerside Community Food Bank	cooler	\$3,722.50
West Prince Caring Cupboard	one fridge, one freezer	\$1,800.00
Total		\$15,722.50

A week after Hurricane Fiona hit PEI, over 2,400 pounds of assorted cheese and frozen haddock were rescued from ADL by The Salvation Army Summerside Community Food Bank thanks to their new cooler and expanded capacity. This food not only aided The Salvation Army Summerside Community Food Bank’s usual programming, but also in their ongoing efforts to help relieve some of the food insecurity caused by the devastation of Fiona.

Impact Stories

Cavendish Beach Music Festival’s return to Prince Edward Island for the first time since the beginning of the COVID-19 Pandemic did more than just boost tourism. After the three-day event was over, Murphy Hospitality Group compiled all of the surplus food from the festival and rescued it through the Second Harvest Food Rescue App. 550 pounds of fresh produce, dairy products, and baked goods, were rescued by Charlottetown agency, 4 Love 4 Care. 4 Love 4 Care runs the PEI Community Fridge in Charlottetown—a hub where anyone can access the food they need. Murphy Hospitality Group’s Executive Chef Adam Loo had this to say: “Big thank you to the hardworking people of the PEI Community Fridge and Second



Harvest Canada for doing some of the most important work out there. [We're] proud to be a part of such an amazing community here in Canada's Food Island." Thanks to the success of the Cavendish Beach Music Festival 2022, Murphy Hospitality Group has also pledged to use the Second Harvest Food Rescue App to rescue surplus food from all of their restaurants not just on PEI, but across Atlantic Canada.

The weeks prior to Christmas have most nonprofits run off their feet and looking for more ways to help families during a financially straining time of the year, and the Great Enlightenment Buddhist Institute Society (GEBIS) was no exception. GEBIS was able to rescue 2,000 pounds of potatoes from Cavendish Farms through the Second Harvest Food Rescue App in the weeks just before Christmas. GEBIS used these potatoes in 358 Holiday Food Hampers and distributed the remainder of the potatoes to different nonprofits across the Island.



GEBIS delivering rescued potatoes to 4 Love 4 Care's free Christmas meal

When asked about the rescue, GEBIS had this to say: "We distributed the potatoes to 358 families, community fridges, a local food bank, and for a Christmas meal program. Everybody is feeling the inflation, so any bit of relief means a lot. Keep up the great work. This is a wonderful platform to reduce food waste and share excess resources with people who don't have the means or just need an extra bit of support during a difficult time."

The Future of Food Rescue

"I really can't say enough how much I love your Food Rescue App, it just makes everything so much easier for us. We don't have to worry about making too many sandwiches or bread or anything anymore, because we know that at the end of the day, someone will eat it. I love how simple and easy it makes the donation process and I love that it keeps good food from going to waste." - Axel Leonhard, Owner, Leonhard's Café & Restaurant

The future of food rescue in PEI is bright. Utilizing the network of nonprofits created during the PEI Food Recovery Network project, the 2023 Canada Winter Games, one of the biggest events of the year, is set up to successfully rescue their surplus food at their event locations across the province. Murphy Hospitality Group has also pledged to continue adding their remaining locations across the province and the rest of Atlantic Canada to our network. Corporate food donor partners Atlantic Superstores and Shoppers Drug Marts are also now active on the food rescue app and regularly donating food on Prince Edward Island. Thanks to the PEI Food Recovery Network, we have been able to educate businesses and nonprofits on how they can reduce their unnecessary food waste, and the Second Harvest Food Rescue App has been recognized as an effective tool to do this by influential members of the PEI food community; we expect current donors to continue to advocate for this vital work to continue among their colleagues. Together, we have created a food rescue network that has proven successful and will continue keeping surplus food from going to waste.



Conclusion

“If we can make any difference, big or small, for people by rescuing our extra food and donating it to our community, we want to do it-- that’s why we’re working with Second Harvest. The Food Rescue App gives us the opportunity to keep good food from going to waste, which makes our community and environment a better place.” -- Andrew Smith, Executive Chef, Red Shores Racetrack & Casino, Charlottetown



Murphy Hospitality Group Team unloading surplus food from Cavendish Beach Music Festival for 4 Love 4 Care

When this project began, Second Harvest, the City of Charlottetown, and Farm & Food Care PEI had a goal of forming the basis of a strategy to confront the toll of food waste in our community and on our environment. The PEI Food Recovery Network initiative in PEI is truly creating meaningful impact for our social service agency partners serving people experiencing food insecurity. It will also continue to have tremendous impact on our shared environment by preventing harmful greenhouse gases from entering the atmosphere.

The entire Second Harvest team is honoured to have accomplished so much with the City of Charlottetown and Farm & Food Care PEI. A special thank you goes to the Government of Prince Edward Island for supporting this project through their Climate Challenge Fund. In the year ahead, we will work to ensure that the tangible, meaningful results of your investment continue to grow!

THANK YOU!

Appendix A - Budget

Budget Item	Budget	Notes
Consulting Fees	\$25,000.00	This expense line covered the salary for our part time Operations Program Coordinator.
Marketing Fees	\$10,000.00	Encompassing traditional print marketing efforts, social media campaign, radio campaign, materials for events, and graphic design work for any visual marketing materials. Specific publications and campaigns can be found in the Final Report.
Small Infrastructure Fund	\$15,000.00	Successful applicants and funds distributed by the City of Charlottetown and Farm & Food Care PEI.
TOTAL	\$50,000.00	Full financial report submitted to Farm & Food Care by Second Harvest Finance Department.



Appendix B - Food Waste Assessment Survey Conducted from January 13, 2022 – February 18, 2022

Introduction

Second Harvest, along with partners **Farm & Food Care PEI** and the **City of Charlottetown**, have developed and launched the **PEI Food Recovery Network**. Funded by the Government of Prince Edward Island’s Climate Challenge Fund, this project aims to engage Island businesses and support them in donating any good surplus food to not-for-profit organizations. The project will also have educational opportunities for the public. As part of this project, an initial assessment of the current practices of businesses in dealing with surplus food was conducted. To determine this, a survey was developed to gather information from Island businesses about their surplus, how they manage it, and why. The survey was sent to

Methodology

The survey consisted of 24 questions in total, however, respondents did not answer all of them. The questions that each business was asked to answer depended on responses to previous questions to ensure that all questions were as relevant to their business as possible.

The survey was promoted on social media, the project landing page and shared via direct email and telephone engagement with Island businesses. Respondent businesses were also entered into a draw for a \$100 Canada’s Food Island Gift Card to help encourage participation. *Note:* No potato producers were contacted to participate in this survey out of respect for the current economic situation they are facing due to the Export Crisis.

Results

In total, 27 businesses responded to the survey. Most responses came from restaurants and retail locations with farms and greenhouses also making up a sizable portion of responses (*Table 1*). Though there were respondents from across the province, most businesses were in Charlottetown and Summerside.

Table 1: Breakdown of respondent businesses by sector.

Business Sector	Number of Responses by Sector
Restaurant	8
Retail	7
Farm/Greenhouse	4
Hotel/Motel	3
Processing/Distribution	3
Institutional Food Service	1
Catering	1
	N = 27

Businesses were not asked directly if they had surplus food but provided with sample situations cited as the most common reasons for having surplus food with businesses across the supply chain in Canada. These sample situations were selected based on years of working with businesses across the supply chain in Canada. All responding businesses answered that they, at least on occasion, experienced at least one of the sample situations, with food close to, or past code being the most common (*Chart 1*).

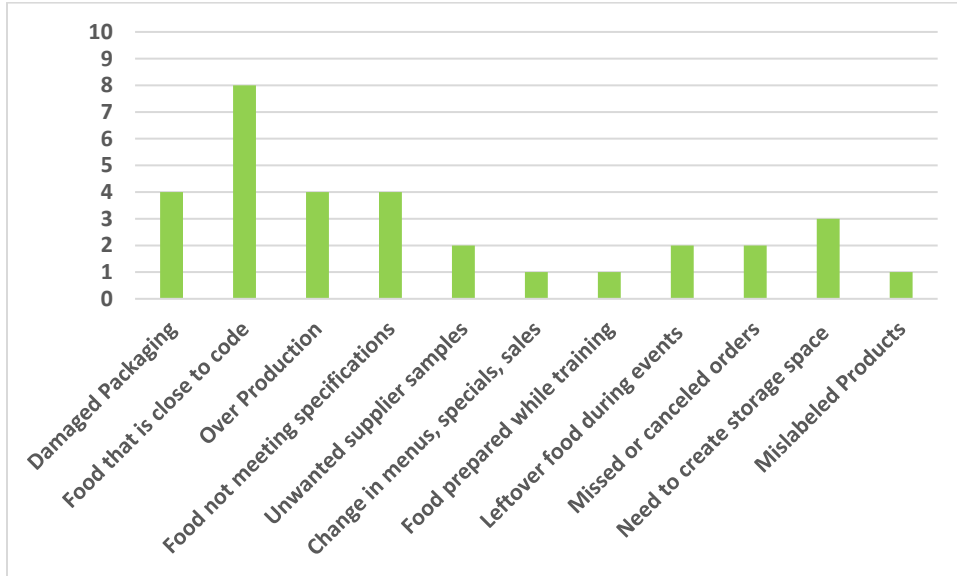


Chart 1: Responses regarding the situations that lead to businesses having surplus food.

Attempts to quantify the amount of surplus food that is available on an annual basis were unsuccessful. However, we were able to gather information both on types of food available and when this food is most frequently available. The most common types of surplus available to be donated was found to be Prepared Food followed by Produce and Meat & Fish (*Chart 2*). The months identified when the majority of surplus is available were identified to be between June and November.

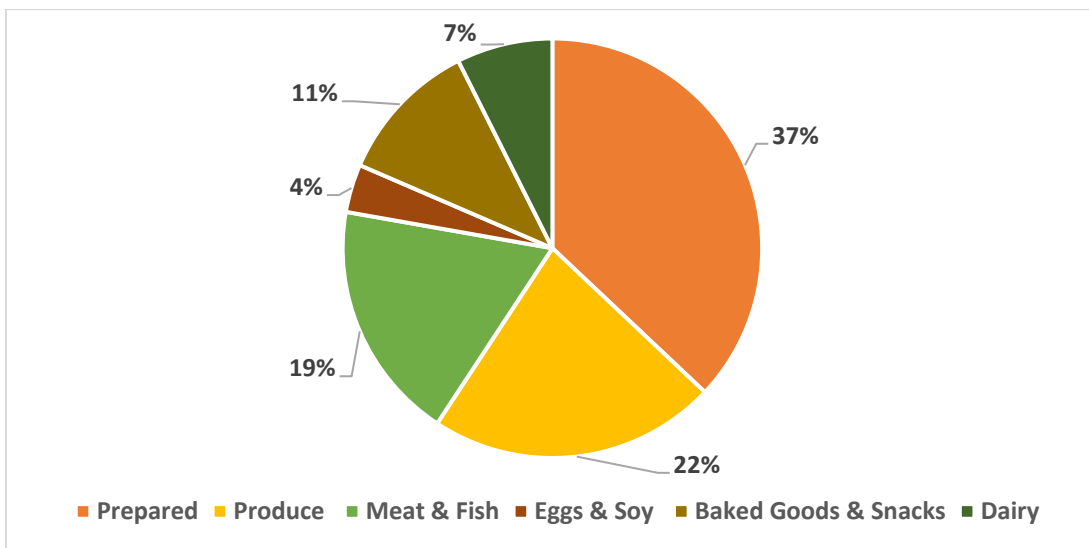


Chart 2: Most common surplus at respondent businesses by percentage.

Despite all the businesses identifying that they, at least periodically, experienced donatable surplus food in their regular operations, the vast majority do not currently donate this food. Of the 27 respondents, only five currently donate their surplus back to the community.

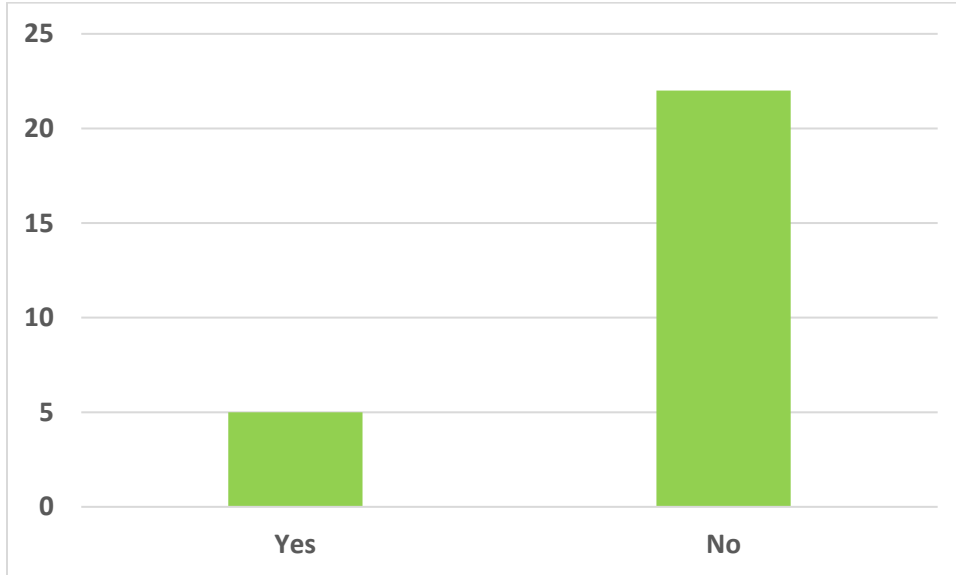


Chart 3: Response to whether businesses currently donate surplus food.

If the respondent selected “No” to the previous question about donating surplus, they were asked further about what barriers prevent them from doing so. Respondents were offered some common examples that we have heard from food businesses in the past, as well as a write-in option if their specific concern was not listed. Though many different barriers were identified, the most common was concerns about liability. Businesses also identified ineffective communication with community partners and impact on their brand image as barriers.

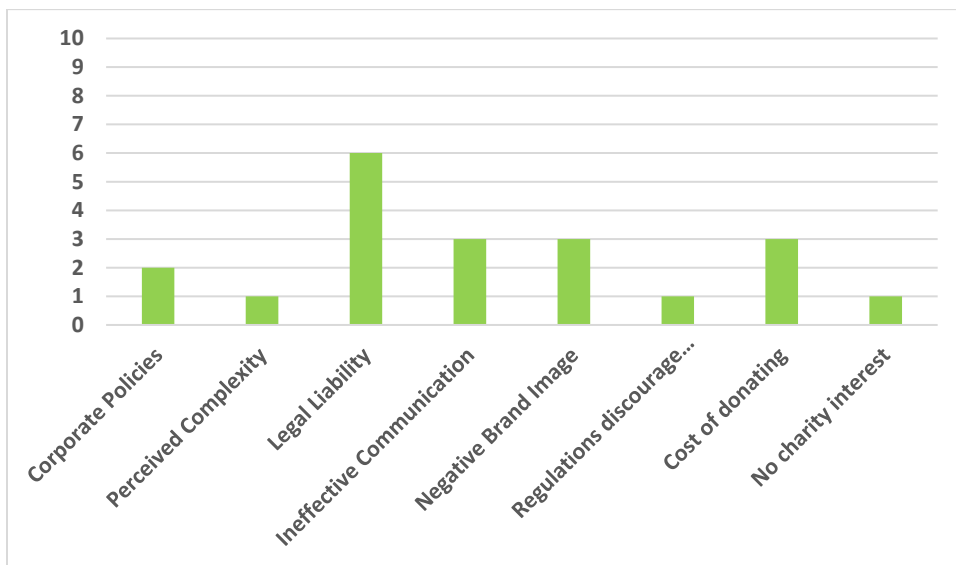


Chart 4: Barriers identified by businesses regarding why they do not donate surplus food.

Discussion

The responding businesses represented a good cross-section of food businesses in Prince Edward Island with most key sectors represented. As mentioned above, potato producers were not contacted to participate but will be engaged later in the project once the situation improves in the sector.

The responses we received through the survey support the anecdotal information we gathered through general email and telephone outreach with businesses. There are existing connections between businesses and not-for-profit organizations, and some businesses do donate surplus food on occasion. However, the responses show that there is still work to be done both in creating connections between these groups and working with them to rescue additional food where connections exist.

The categories of food identified by the businesses as their most common surplus items are very encouraging. Not only are these items extremely important to rescue due to the resources that went into their creation, but they are also highly sought after by our not-for-profit organizations. Nutrient dense foods like produce, meats, and dairy are also typically more expensive than other food categories. This makes it more difficult for food charities to provide them to their client base.

Next Steps

This information will be a valuable part of our engagement with businesses throughout the project. Hearing from businesses about the reasons why they do not donate surplus food will allow us to provide the appropriate resources to help eliminate these barriers.

Many of the categories identified are great fits for traditional food charities. However, certain foods, especially prepared foods, must be distributed and consumed much sooner than these charities would be able to distribute it to their clients. To ensure that these types of foods can be rescued, we will identify and onboard new not-for-profit organizations, such as shelters, who are more equipped to distribute prepared foods more quickly.

Several businesses also expressed interest in collaborating with Second Harvest to conduct waste audits of their businesses to help reduce food waste. These audits will be conducted throughout March with up to five businesses. Following the completion of data collection over a two-week period, the businesses will meet with Second Harvest to identify strategies for waste reduction.