Top Lessons from 20+ Years of Food Rescue
Hello!

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Hello!

I’m Emily Meister
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Wasted food is a wasted opportunity
What we've learned

1. Just pick up the first pound
2. Establish route-based rescue
3. Build relationships
4. Utilize volunteers
5. Prepare to grow
1. **Pick Up the First Pound**

Small starts lead to big outcomes
A Simple Idea

How watching CSPAN over lunch hour fed thousands of hungry people.
Getting Started

1. Establish partnerships
   - You can’t do this alone! Find recipient agencies first, then volunteers to do the work, donors will follow.

2. Plan for food safety
   - It would be better to let the food go to waste than to make already vulnerable people sick.

3. Prioritize Consistency
   - Reliability is the key to good partnerships, food safety, and consistent distribution.
2. Route Based Rescue

Moving beyond 1 to 1 distribution
What is a "route"?

- Store partners with table to table
- Volunteers transfer carts of food to table to table vans
- This process repeats 365 days a year
- Those partners donate wholesome food they can no longer sell
- These vans deliver the food to local agencies feeding the hungry

Table to Table
Why Routes?

- Reduces waste
- Better meets recipient needs
- Establishes consistency
- Increases donations
# Food Pantry at Iowa Case Study

(Recipient Improvements)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Weekly Average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Number of Pounds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-route</td>
<td>268</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-route</td>
<td>1236</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

+600%
## Kalona Dairy Case Study
(Increased Donations)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Weekly Average Number of Pounds</th>
<th>Annual Average Number of Pounds</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre-route</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-route</td>
<td>723</td>
<td>37,500</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Save the largest recipient for last

The truck comes back empty and this simplifies logistics
Assess and Communicate

★ Old fashioned face-to-face is best!
★ Bi-monthly recipient meetings
3. No Relationships, No Rescue

Relationship building in the world of food rescue
Success breeds success. Once a relationship develops between food donors and food recipients, a bridge has been built. We're on our way!

-Frank Lalor, founder
Collaboration is key!

- Food Donors
- Client Distributors
- Community Support
Communicate to donor motivations

- The “give-back”
- The bottom-line
- Beware the de-motivator
Share the road, know your lane

Client Distributors

Food Donors
Community Support

Food Pantries
Crisis Services
Youth Programs
Shelters
Meal Sites

= 19,000 hungry people
Good relationships build more support

- Food Donors
- Client Distributors
- Community Support
4. Volunteers

Successes, Challenges, and Remedies
There is much repetition in food rescue. A person or group needs to see each day, each food rescue as a life-engaging process benefiting humanity.

-Frank Lalor, founder
Volunteer Values

We as volunteers of Table to Table are food rescue ambassadors. Volunteers will endeavor to be compassionate and responsible with donor and recipient agencies alike. Volunteers are empowered to make good decisions concerning health and welfare of volunteer, equipment, and distribution of collected donations. The ideas and motivation of Table to Table volunteers are its greatest assets.”
Get out of the recruitment rut
★ Sell your volunteer opportunities
★ Target volunteer ability & availability
5. Growing Pains
Grow into regulation

★ Ease donor concerns
★ Protect vulnerable populations
More documentation $\Rightarrow$ opportunities $\Rightarrow$ more staff time $\Rightarrow$ less food waste and more people fed!
Expand volunteer positions

★ Define all possible volunteer roles
★ Deepen your pool with a broad-minded view
★ Target professional skills
12 community leaders with a simple idea

6 volunteers in their own vehicles

55,000 pounds of food for hungry neighbors in year one
4 staff managing operations

240 volunteers in food rescue wagons

2.2 million pounds of food for hungry neighbors this year
18,000,000 pounds of food rescued since 1996
I happen to like three meals a day and I assume most people do.

I hope what we do helps people arrive at that. That everyone, well off or less fortunate, can have three meals a day, everyday.

-Frank Lalor, founder
Thanks!

Have Questions? Need Resources?

You can find us at:
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