

Metro Solid Waste Advisory Committee
Food Rescue Infrastructure Policy Options
September 15, 2011

The information below reflects the findings from the two studies: *Strengthening Food Donation through Policies and Programs* and *Supporting the Food Donation Infrastructure* that were presented at the July 21, 2011 SWAC meeting.

What We Know
1. Many businesses state that they need more information in order to make decisions on donating excess edible food.
2. Preparation of food for donation is a barrier to participation.
3. Food rescue agencies do not have enough staffing to make their services as effective and efficient as possible.
4. There is a need for improved coordination between food rescue agencies and between agencies and donors.
5. Less food is going to donation than previously.
6. Demand for donated food remains high.
7. There is a minimal role for Metro to play with large food generators because they are targeted by the Oregon Food Bank for partnerships.

What We Don't Know
1. The amount of food waste generated from smaller businesses that is appropriate for donation.
2. The impact that food waste composting programs have on donation.

Ideas for potential Metro policies

1. Fund a position with an outside agency to provide better coordination among food rescue agencies in the transportation and volunteer services needed to effectively serve donating businesses.
Rough cost estimate: \$75,000 - \$100,000 per year
2. Provide funding to select food rescue agencies to increase their staffing to provide food pick-up services to donating businesses
Rough cost estimate: \$75,000 - \$150,000 or more per year
3. Enhance the Fork It Over! program tools and information and update them more frequently
Rough cost estimate: \$50,000 initially; \$30,000 annually
4. Other ideas from SWAC members?

Metro staff perspective

Staff's preliminary opinion is that there is inadequate justification for investment in the food rescue infrastructure at this time because:

- There is inadequate data on the amount of food generated that could be donated
- Anecdotal information from business and food rescue agencies suggests that there is less edible surplus food generated by businesses than previously
- There is a well-developed infrastructure for capturing edible food from large generators

The findings from the two studies do suggest that additional investment in the Fork It Over program would be beneficial, even with these uncertainties. Making Fork It Over more robust would be consistent with Objective 1 of the Commercial Organics focus area in the RSWMP: *Provide outreach and education programs for targeted businesses to support and increase organic waste prevention and diversion practices*. It would also leverage planned outreach work by local governments with food waste generators as these jurisdictions implement food waste recycling collection programs.