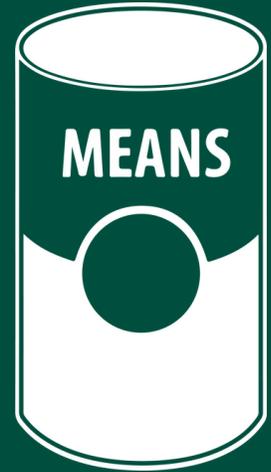


# MEANS DATABASE



ANNUAL REPORT 2023



# DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

---

Reflecting on the past year, I am thrilled to share the incredible impact we have made in our mission to combat food waste and hunger. The past 12 months have been marked by unprecedented success, and I am immensely proud to present our annual report.

This year, we achieved record-breaking results in food recovery, surpassing our goal of recovering 5 million pounds of food by 10x! Through strategic partnerships, tireless efforts from our dedicated team, and unwavering support from our community, we were able to rescue and redistribute more than 52 million pounds of food and supplies for our neighbors in need. The impact of these efforts is not just measured in numbers but in the countless lives touched by the nutritious food provided nationwide.

As we celebrate our accomplishments, we also look toward this next year with great anticipation. In the coming weeks, we are set to unveil a rebrand, with a new name that more clearly explains our mission, and a website to showcase our work. This rebrand represents a new chapter for MEANS Database, one that emphasizes our work now, which has significantly changed since starting in 2015. We believe this fresh identity will amplify our impact and resonate even more profoundly with current and new partners.

None of this would have been possible without the generosity of our donors, the commitment of our team and volunteers, and the collaborative spirit of our community partners. Thank you for taking part in food recovery this year!

Together, we can continue to make a meaningful difference in the lives of those we serve and contribute to a future where food is not wasted, but rather shared with our neighbors.



**SAMMIE PAUL**

Executive Director

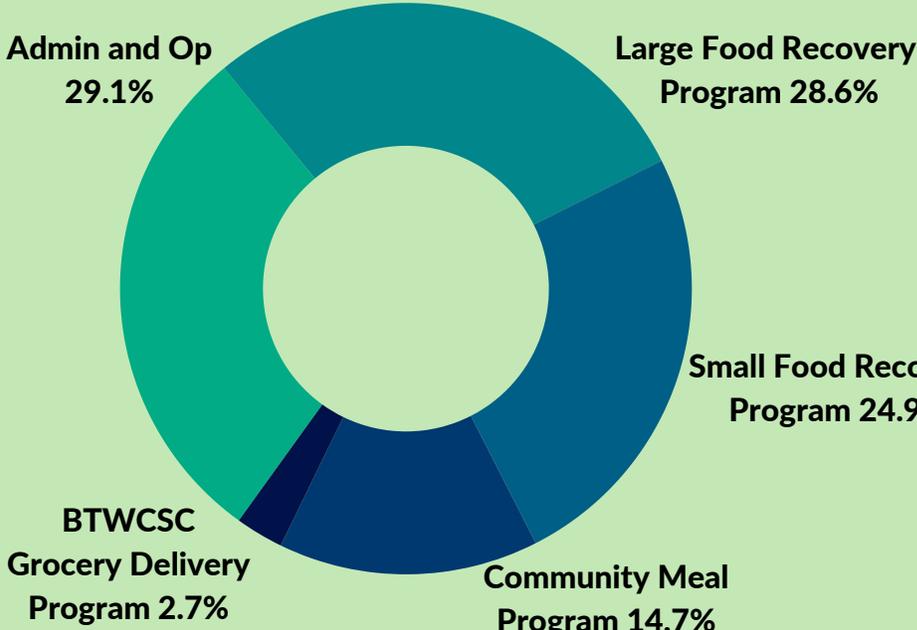
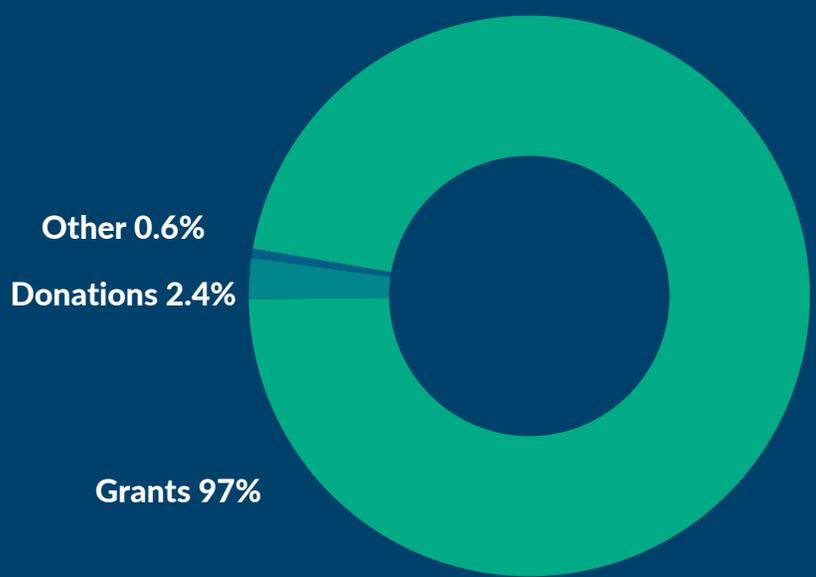


# FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

At MEANS, we strive to be as transparent as possible with our financial donations and expenses. We are so grateful to all our financial supporters who believe in our mission to assist nonprofits serving those facing food insecurity. See our income and expenses breakdown below.

## FIGURE 1.

*A breakdown of our income for 2023*



## FIGURE 2.

*A breakdown of our expenses for 2023*

# FOOD RECOVERY AT A GLANCE

This year, MEANS recovered **over 52 million pounds** of food and supplies, including over **18 million pounds** of bottled drinks, and over **2 million pounds** of non-food essentials throughout the country. The estimated value of all in-kind donations this year is over **\$100 million**. To say this was a record breaking year would be an understatement! This would not be possible without our incredible network of organizations and businesses that continue to donate their excess food and spread the word about MEANS Database.

In 2023, MEANS focused on large donations with the support and expertise of William Bell, our Director of Food Procurement. William's 20 years of experience launched us into the world of palletized food recovery from warehouses all over the nation. His nonstop commitment to food recovery and serving the community is something we all admire and are so glad to have him on the team.

We received grant funding from UNFI, Grubhub, Cargill, Irvin Stern, EPA Healthy Communities, Stop Waste, EcoLab, and Gulf Coast Community Foundation (to name a few) that allowed us to continue to provide transportation and delivery services all over the country, especially in Florida, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and California.

Our programming continued to expand in California with the passing of SB-1383, as well as Rhode Island, New Jersey, Massachusetts and beyond. It was a truly a year of magnitude, success and growth.



Donated watermelon that went to a local mutual aid group from the Jersey Shore



School food donation from Lake Gem Elementary school in Orlando, Florida

# DONATION DATA OVERVIEW

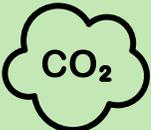
In 2023 our massive growth in donations helped fuel massive reductions in landfill emissions! Our estimates continue to improve through increased collaboration across the food production and distribution sectors. All donation weights are verified by our nonprofit partners. Emissions estimates are calculated by separating donations into one of sixteen categories, and using the guidelines set by [Food Loss and Waste Protocol \(FLWP\)](#), developed by the World Resources Institute, Food and Agriculture Association, and the United Nations Environment Programme. *Water Waste Prevented* is a simple conversion of pounds of bottled drinks to gallons of water. Finally, donation values are derived from the \$1.92 per pound standard set by Feeding America.

## THE NUMBERS



**52,517,293 pounds**

Gross Weight of Recovered  
Food and Supplies



**33,573,042 pounds of CO2e**

Est. Offset  
Landfill Emissions



**2,220,599 gallons**

Water Waste  
Prevented



**100,743,342 dollars**

Est. Value of  
Donations

## WHAT'S NEXT?

- Provide real-time donation data insights through a portal accessible by users across the food production and food recovery industries
- Better mapping data to improve the accuracy of our emissions due to transportation and the breadth of our distribution networks
- Cultivate more industry-wide support for emissions tracking, waste audits, and accountability

# CALIFORNIA

In 2023, we recovered and donated 93,824 pounds of food and supplies on our platform and through our programming in the state of California. Additionally, we recovered over 7 million pounds of large donations from California warehouses!

The food we recovered throughout the year ranged from 40 pounds of leftover catering to 42,000 pounds of milk. We even recovered 14,717 pounds of food from the PGA US Open Golf Tournament in Los Angeles! We are proud that we have expertise working with both small and large donations so we can help businesses of all sizes satisfy their SB-1383 requirements.

MEANS Database has two key transportation programs in California. In Oakland, thanks to our support from StopWaste and our Alameda County Food Waste Prevention and Recovery Grant, we cover the transportation costs of hundreds of pounds of donated produce each week. In San Francisco, we work with Food Connect to provide transportation for Booker T. Washington Community Service Center's meal and grocery delivery program called Service to Soul. Through this program, we helped deliver 51,025 pounds of food directly to community members' homes in 2023.

We love working directly in California communities. In 2024, all food-generating businesses will be required to donate their excess food in accordance with SB-1383 regulations. We can't wait to work with more businesses and recover even more food next year!

**39,519**

pounds of food and supplies  
donated in Oakland

**51,025**

pounds of food moved for the  
Service To Soul Program

**> 7,500,000**

pounds of food recovered in  
California in 2023



Produce recovered in Oakland and donated to Unity Within the Communities, Inc.

# FLORIDA

In 2023, Florida recovered **19,420,261 pounds of food and supplies!** By working with Farm Share and Palm Beach Food Bank, who received many loads and pallets of food, and the successful program with Orange County Public Schools, who recovered **80,522 pounds of food this year**, it was a record breaking year!

Notable projects that were accomplished this year:

- Presenting at ASNNA with UF/IFAS Extension on the Power of Connection
- Hosting events during Food Waste Prevention Week
- Presenting at the Legislative Food and Nutrition Conference in Tallahassee
- Meeting Congressman Darren Soto
- Successful food recovery from Four Seasons Hotel in Orlando and the Hyatt Bonita Springs
- Receiving the EcoLab grant for our program in Jacksonville
- Presenting at the Eco Summit in Sarasota, Florida
- Creating the Florida Food Recovery Coalition [website](#)
- Recovering 80,522 pounds of food from 32 schools with Orange County Public Schools

As we look into the new year, we continue to expand our work in central Florida and the Panhandle, hoping to reach more rural residents. Many other partners continue to make our Florida food recovery a success, including Flik Hospitality, Broward County Convention Center, St. Matthew's House, UF Gulf Coast Education and Research Center, Fellsmere Community Fridge, Vita Nova, Gulf Coast Community Foundation, Four Seasons Hotel, Hyatt Hotel, and many more.



Emily Grant presenting on a panel for the Eco Summit in Sarasota, Florida called "Reducing Personal Pollution: Don't Let Waste Go to Waste"

**19,946,900**

Total pounds recovered since 2021

**19,420,261**

pounds of food and supplies recovered in 2023

**4,100%**

increase in donations since last year

# NEW ENGLAND FOOD RECOVERY

In October, we received another EPA Healthy Communities Grant in partnership with Rescuing Leftover Cuisine (RLC) and the Rhode Island Department of Health (RIDOH) to expand food recovery in the area to Eastern Connecticut and more of Massachusetts! We're thrilled to work with more partners, expand food recovery, and continue offering biodegradable food and transportation containers.

In the New England, we've recovered 1.1 million pounds of food and supplies, surpassing last year by more than fivefold. We're excited to bring on new partners as donors and recipients and continue to build networks to fight food insecurity.

**1,170,623.2**

Pounds of food recovered in the New England in 2023

**618**

MEANS users in Rhode Island

**193**

Instances of claimed food!



15 Pallets of juice donated to Providence Rescue Mission!



Meals donated to Sunrise Forever by Hillel @ Brown University

# NEW JERSEY

This year we worked to expand our reach in New Jersey! Our existing corporate cafeteria recovery program in Jersey City continued to provide nutritious meals to the Jersey City and Hoboken communities, so we made efforts to bring our food recovery services to the Jersey Shore.

In May, we began collaborating with Emporio Restaurante e Cafe and Sabor do Brasil, two fantastic restaurants in Long Branch, NJ serving fresh, authentic, Brazilian cuisine. Over 12,000 meals have been donated from these restaurants to 5 nonprofits in Long Branch, Asbury Park, and Bradley Beach.

Food recovery is music to our ears, we recovered over 1,700 pounds of food from a festival in Asbury Park! In partnership with Musically Fed, MEANS helped recover food and drinks from the Sea Hear Now music festival in Asbury park. From fresh fruits and vegetables to water and juices, we were able to donate to 5 different nonprofit and mutual aid partners.

An additional partnership with a local mutual aid group to provide transportation for their large produce donations. They've had a relationship with this donor for years, but when distance became an issue, MEANS stepped in to offer assistance with transportation. Through this partnership, we've helped bring thousands of pounds of fresh produce to neighbors in Long Branch, NJ.

**737,399**

pounds of food moved in  
New Jersey in 2023



NJ drivers and Senior Program Manager Allie picking up food from the Sea Hear Now festival!



Donation of meals from Emporio Restaurante e Cafe in Long Branch, NJ

# COMMUNITY MEAL PROGRAM

This year we were thrilled to finish out the 2022-2023 cycle of our Community Meal Program, providing 19,304 meals to nonprofits in the following seven cities: Baltimore, Boston, Chicago, Denver, New York City, Philadelphia, and Portland!

The Community Meal Program granted us the opportunity to pay small, locally-owned restaurants to make meals for nonprofits serving those in need by providing the meals for special events that the nonprofits host. Through this program, the ability to build stronger relationships with local restaurants and nonprofits truly flourished, and as a result, aided in the expanding of a resilient food recovery network.

With continued Grubhub Community Fund grant funding, we have now be able to transition the program into focusing on overall Community Support with aims to execute ad-hoc meal purchasing, community fridge installations, pop-up food distributions, and other initiatives to support families across the country facing food insecurity.

Since November, we have already provided 600 meals to nonprofits in Philadelphia and Oakland, and are ecstatic to continue organizing monthly events through 2024!



Folks eating meals at a homeless assistance pop-up at Freedom Foursquare Church in Portland



Owner of Greek from Greece, Dimitri, excited to load up gyros to be donated to Prevention Point in Philadelphia!

# KEY PARTNERS

"This is such a treat for our clients. I'm grateful to all of you who make this happen. Not just Emporio, but everyone at MEANS who make sure the food gets to those in need, thus preventing good food going to waste, as is the case most of the time with restaurants. This "means" a lot to many people, including the volunteers who are happy to be able to pass on such amazing meals. We used to provide mostly can/dried goods and some government meat. We have evolved thanks to organizations like you. It really is a pleasure."- Shannon, volunteer at the Bradley Food Pantry, New Jersey

"I wanted to thank you so very much. You are amazing at what you do. I'm so happy the children are going to get these drinks this weekend at our school. It is a school that teaches ethnic minority children the English language, those who are coming from different countries and to teach special needs children. And [we] also educate their mothers who are coming from different countries, so I know it will be used. Thank you so much." - Karima, Istiqamah Foundation, Florida

## MEANS IN THE NEWS

Check out a few of our news features from 2023!

- [USDA Snap-Ed Connection](#)
- [MUSE: Members United for Sustainable Events](#)
- [The American Prospect](#)
- [Outfront](#)



***"Being able to work with MEANS this year is definitely my most meaningful moment. Being able to help redistribute thousands of meals from being thrown out was really gratifying but the fact that I got to work in my own community made it even better. I got the chance to not only get to know the restaurants that were donating but to support them and encourage local patronage outside of the donations. The same goes for the food pantries and the volunteers working within my community to feed our neighbors as well. I'm very grateful to be able to work for MEANS and through them also my own community.***

- Jess Fortunato, New Jersey Transportation Provider

# NEXT STEPS

2023 was a record breaking year. In this next year, we hope to maintain our growth, support our partners and improve our platform under our new name with a fresh website, but the same great team you've been working with!



## No. 01 — Rebrand & Refresh

MEANS Database is rebranding in a few weeks- the same great organization with a clear-cut name describing exactly what we do. We're trading in our can logo that represents our original concept which focused on small food donations from restaurants, cafeterias, and events, to a new logo that highlights one of our main components- transportation of recovered food. Stay tuned for more!



## No. 02 — Integrate Large Donations

Improve our platform's functionality to integrate large donations, which requires more logistics, coordination, and documentation.



## No. 03 — Increase Food Recovery

Increase our amount of food recovery and food sovereignty projects to better support under-resourced communities.

# SUPPORT OUR WORK

We want to thank everyone who has supported our work over the last year and has watched MEANS grow into a larger organization. We are looking forward to the new year and continuing to recover food across the country and assist nonprofits serving those facing food insecurity. Please consider supporting our work in any of the following ways:



## Donate:

You can support any of our fundraising campaigns [here!](#) If you'd like to make food deliveries or collaborate on outreach in your area, contact us.

## Engage:

Email us to be added to our newsletter and follow us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#), and [LinkedIn!](#)

## Contact:

Email us at [hello@meansdatabase.org](mailto:hello@meansdatabase.org)  
Call/text us at (202) 449-1507  
Send mail to 4410 Massachusetts Ave NW, #397,  
Washington, DC 20016



# THANK YOU!