

COMMUNITY GRANTS PROGRAM



CASE STUDY

The 2nd Annual 'Feeding the Hudson Valley' Rescued 13,000 lbs. of Food Waste Resulting in 1,500 Meals to the Community

The Hudson Valley Regional Council (HVRC) is an intergovernmental forum with seven member counties (Dutchess, Orange, Putnam, Rockland, Sullivan, Ulster, and Westchester). The Council's mission is to foster cooperation in resolving problems of mutual concern and to pursue opportunities of mutual benefit across the region.

HVRC has an active Regional Material Management Working Group consisting of solid waste management professionals from the seven counties and New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) Region 3. With the upsurge of interest and the growing importance of reducing waste and better managing materials in the waste stream, this group meets regularly to share ideas, successes and challenges, and resources to address solid waste management and recycling on a regional basis.

HVRC also administers NYSERDA's Clean Energy Communities Program in the Hudson Valley as part of a statewide effort of the New York State Regional Councils.

Challenge

Food waste is a significant issue in the U.S., in New York and in the Hudson Valley. A recent report from the New York State Energy and Research Development Authority (March 2017) found that approximately 3.9 million tons of food waste is generated each year as municipal solid waste in New York State, with only 3% currently being diverted from the waste stream. According to the NYSDEC food waste in New York accounts for about 18% of the waste stream.

NYSDEC Commissioner Basil Seggos stated in the NYSERDA March 16, 2017 report press release that, "...diverting food waste from landfills stands to benefit all New Yorkers by putting good food to good use at area food banks, reducing the greenhouse gas emissions that contribute to climate change and saving resources."

On September 16, 2015, U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the US Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) accounted the United States' first-ever national food waste reduction goal, calling for a 50% reduction by 2030.

Solution

The HVRC held its 2nd Annual 'Feeding the Hudson Valley' to continue efforts to generate awareness about food waste and provide inspiration and tools to reduce food waste and feed people. This project decreased food waste in the Hudson Valley through increased awareness about food waste with focused attention on gleaning from local farms, food insecurity, and opportunities for food recovery. Ultimately this will reduce the amount of food waste going to disposal sites and will help provide food to those in need. Reducing food waste saves energy, water resources, reduces transportation and disposal costs, and reduces greenhouse gas emissions. At the event, free meals are provided to the public made entirely from recovered food that would otherwise go to waste,

CHALLENGE

- 3.9 million tons of food waste is generated each year as municipal solid waste in New York State
- According to the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, food waste in NY accounts for 18% of the waste stream

SOLUTION

- Increased awareness about food waste with focused attention on gleaning from local farms, food insecurity, and opportunities for food recovery
- Reducing the amount of food waste going to disposal sites and provide food to those in need
- Reducing food waste saves energy, water resources, reduces transportation and disposal costs and reduces greenhouse gas emissions

RESULTS

- HVRC worked with the DEC Region 3, Dutchess county Division of Solid Waste, and Hudson Valley Agribusiness Development Corp to organize meals prepared with recovered food and provided them for free to the public and local emergency food shelters
- Overall, they rescued 13,000 lbs of food! 928 meals fed people at the event and 560 went to local food pantries

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with a focus on gleaning from local farms. In addition, meals are prepared and supplied to local emergency food shelters.

Results

HVRC set up a steering committee and met with partners to divide tasks and schedule gleaning and food sourcing. Their major partners included DEC Region 3, Dutchess County Division of Solid Waste, and Hudson Valley Agribusiness Development Corp. They planned the location and secured the necessary permits. They developed an outreach plan mostly disseminated through digital means although posters and postcards were printed and distributed as well. HVRC coordinated places for food sourcing, pickup, and transport. A list of farms and restaurants were identified to recover food from. They also identified kitchens to store and prepare the food for the event.



Through gleaning events and other outreach activities the HVRC were able to generate food waste awareness. Including building alliances with various organizations concerned about food security and food justice. Overall, they rescued about 13,000 lbs of food –

- 5,398lbs rescued from Farmers' Market
- 7,373lbs gleaned from Hudson Valley Farms
- 5,647lbs (928 meals) went toward the event Feeding the Hudson Valley
- 7,720lbs (560 meals) went to local food pantries and meal centers (soup kitchens)

Online Media:

- [Website](#)
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TESTIMONIAL

“Feeding the Hudson Valley was a massive collaborative effort by agencies, businesses and volunteers from multiple counties. While most of the work happened in Dutchess County, this series of gleaning events highlighted the need to coordinate a regional effort. As a result, many new partnerships were created. One such partnership is FeedHV, an app which eases the delivery of small donations from restaurants, grocers and other food businesses to soup kitchens and food pantries right around the corner! By involving businesses, volunteers and not for profits, food rescue decreases food waste while increasing access to local foods in low income areas.”

– Stiles R. Najac

Food Security Community Liaison
Cornell Cooperative Extension Orange County

NYSP2I PARTNERS



New York Manufacturing Extension Partnership

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