

Learn about food recovery alternatives in the San Diego area. EPA's Food Recovery Hierarchy prioritizes these food waste strategies from most to least preferable.

1. Source Reduction

Source reduction is the strategy of preventing food from becoming waste in the first place. There are many resources able to tackle source reduction:

- **U.S. EPA Food Recovery Website:**

<https://www.epa.gov/sustainable-management-food>

Toolkits and resources on this site include:

- Food and Packaging Waste Prevention Tool - <https://www.epa.gov/sustainable-management-food/tools-assessing-wasted-food#packaging> Excel spreadsheet to identify patterns of waste.
- Reducing Wasted Food & Packaging: A Guide for Food Services - <https://www.epa.gov/sustainable-management-food/resources-assessing-wasted-food> Provides guidelines on using the prevention tool for tracking results to save money and reduce waste.
- Food Waste Assessment Guidebook - <https://www.epa.gov/sustainable-management-food/resources-assessing-wasted-food> Shows how to do a one-time snapshot wasted food assessment.



- **National Restaurant Association Conserve Program's** Best Food Waste Reduction Practices, connects restaurant owners or managers to tools and information to reduce food waste. <http://conserve.restaurant.org/Best-Practices/Reducing-Food-Waste>
- **LeanPath** Assists foodservice operations in reducing food waste. The website provides many free tools, videos and case studies. www.leanpath.com
- **Save the Food** Provides food storage tips and other waste reduction strategies for households, as part of a national campaign. www.savethefood.com

[The Good Samaritan Act](#) was created to prevent good surplus food from going to waste by protecting donor companies from liability when donating to charitable organizations.

Highlights:

- Encourages the donation of surplus food.
- Protects all food and grocery donors who donate in good faith to a non-profit organization.
- Exceptions are noted for gross negligence.
- Provides protection for food and grocery products that meet all quality labeling standards imposed by federal, state and local laws and regulations

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San Diego Resources

- **City of San Diego** has a Zero Waste resolution, and is working toward diverting more and more waste from the landfill. The zero waste plan can be found: <http://www.sandiego.gov/mayor/pdf/2015/ZeroWastePlan.pdf>
The City offers information on food waste diversion and a commercial food scrap composting program: <https://www.sandiego.gov/environmental-services/miramar/greenery/foodwaste>
- **The County of San Diego** website provides ways to minimize food waste and maximize source reduction. The County also offers technical assistance to businesses and schools in the unincorporated areas of the county that want to reduce, donate or divert organics, including food waste. For more information visit: <http://www.sandiegocounty.gov/content/sdc/dpw/recycling/Food.html>
- **The City of Chula Vista** offers tips for shopping and food storage to help households minimize food waste. For more information please visit: <http://www.chulavistaca.gov/departments/public-works/environmental-fiscal-sustainability/environmental-services/food-waste>
- **The City of Oceanside** is on the Road to Zero Waste with a goal is of reaching a 75-90% diversion/recycling rate by 2020. The City offers technical assistance to businesses within their jurisdiction. For more information please visit: www.greenoceanside.org

2. Feed Hungry People (Donations)

Help curb hunger in our region. Businesses and others can help by donating surplus food. Below are organizations that help fight hunger in San Diego.

Ways to Donate

- **Food Banks** - Food banks collect, store, and distribute food to networks of food pantries, homeless shelters, and other charities that rely on donations. Some provide food directly to the families in need. The larger food banks can help donors to find local charities that accept their food donations.
- **County of San Diego - Soup Kitchens List** - The County of San Diego's Health and Human Services website provides a list of soup kitchens as a resource for veterans, military service members and their families. <http://sandiego.networkofcare.org/veterans/services/subcategory.aspx?tax=BD-5000.8300>
- **Gleaning** - Gleaning is the act of picking the excess fruit or vegetables that are left on trees or plants after the owners or farmers have harvested what they want to eat, or what they can sell. San Diego gleaning groups organize volunteers to harvest produce from backyards, orchards, and farms. Donors may claim tax deductions. For more info on gleaning visit www.sandiegogleaners.org
- **Organizations Accepting Food Donations** - The food banks in San Diego County are listed in the table below, along with other organizations able to accept large donations of food. If you are looking to donate to any of these organizations please contact them using the information listed on the next page.

San Diego Area Food Recovery: Links and Resources

Donation Center	Location	Website/Contact
Feeding San Diego	9445 Waples St. Suite 135 San Diego, CA 92121	http://feedingsandiego.org/ (858) 452-3663
San Diego Food Bank	9850 Distribution Avenue San Diego, CA 92121	http://sandiegofoodbank.org/ (858) 527-1419 452-3663
San Diego Food Bank - North County	680 Rancheros Road Suite 100 San Marcos, CA 92069	http://SanDiegoFoodBank.org (760) 761-1140
Catholic Charities: Food Resource Centers		https://www.ccdsd.org/programs/emergency-services/
FRC- Downtown	349 Cedar Street, Room 102 San Diego, CA 92101	Downtown (619) 231-2828 x102
FRC – College Area	6360 El Cajon Blvd, Suite B San Diego, CA 92115 250 West Orange Avenue El Centro, CA 92243	College Area (619) 286-1100
FRC – El Centro	917 East Vista Way Vista, CA 92084	El Centro (760) 353-6823
FRC – Vista		Vista (760) 631-4792
Community Resource Center North County	650 Second Street Encinitas, CA 92024	http://crencc.org/ (760) 753-2200
Interfaith Services		http://www.interfaithservices.org/contact/
Inland	550 W. Washington Ave. Escondido, CA 92025 4700 North River Road Oceanside, CA 92057	Inland (760) 489-6380
Coastal	1617 Mission Ave. Oceanside, CA 92058	Coastal (760) 721-2117
Veterans		Veterans (760) 529-9979

San Diego Area Food Recovery: Links and Resources

Donation Center	Location	Website/Contact
San Diego Rescue Mission	5150 University Ave. San Diego, CA 92105	http://www.sdrescue.org/our-programs/hunger-relief/partners-for-hunger-relief/ (888) SDRESCUE
Kitchens for Good	404 Euclid Ave San Diego, CA 92114	http://kitchensforgood.org/ (619) 450-4040
United Services Organization (USO) San Diego	3350 E Street San Diego, CA 92102	https://www.uso.org/ (619) 296 3192
Father Joe’s Villages	3350 E Street San Diego, CA 92102 (619) 446-2100	http://my.neighbor.org/ (619) 446-2100
Got Your Back San Diego	4061 Oceanside Blvd. Ste E Oceanside, CA 92056	http://www.gybsd.org/ (760) 575-4571
Southwestern College “Jag” Kitchen	Room 554, 900 Otay Lakes Road, Street, Chula Vista, Ca. 91910	http://www.swccd.edu/index.aspx?page=3653 (619) 421-6700 x5878
St. Rose of Lima, Sister Delores Social Outreach	278 Alvarado Street, Chula Vista, Ca. 91910	http://www.strosecv.com/socialoutreach.html (619) 427-7637
Life Christian Center (Life Acts)	1664 Industrial Boulevard, 1664 Industrial Boulevard, Chula Vista, Ca. 91911	http://www.lcccv.org/ (619) 585-3638

LIABILITY OF PERSON OR GLEANER - *A person or gleaner shall not be subject to civil or criminal liability arising from the nature, age, packaging, or condition of apparently wholesome food or an apparently fit grocery product that the person or gleaner donates in good faith to a nonprofit organization for ultimate distribution to needy individuals.*

-Courtesy of the Bill Emerson Good Samaritan Act

Tools for Finding Food Charities

- **2-1-1 San Diego** Serving San Diego County, connects you with community, health and disaster services through a free, 24/7 stigma-free phone service and searchable database. Simply dial 2-1-1 or search their online database. <http://211sandiego.org/>

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- **County of San Diego - Soup Kitchens List** the County of San Diego's Health and Human Services website provides a list of soup kitchens as a resource for veterans, military service members and their families. <http://sandiego.networkofcare.org/veterans/services/subcategory.aspx?tax=BD-5000.8300>
- **San Diego Food Bank – Food Pantry Zip Code Search** offers a 'zip code finder' search for residents to use to find nonprofit partners who offer food assistance. Residents can also call at (866) 350-FOOD (3663). <http://sandiegofoodbank.org/>
- **Feeding San Diego – Food Distribution Partner Search** connects residents in need with their local partners or mobile pantry locations through a searchable map <http://feedingsandiego.org/need-help/> Residents can also call (858) 452-3663 or email info@feedingsandiego.org
- **I Love A Clean San Diego** zero waste database and call center is a one-stop resource which offers information on donating perishable and non- perishable food--as well as other household items waste from our landfills. Easy access information connects to local resources that reduce waste. <http://www.WasteFreeSD.org>
- **Ample Harvest “Find a Pantry”** a national site providing a map tool for finding local food banks and pantries. <http://ampleharvest.org/find-pantry/>

Gleaning Organizations

- **Joint Gleaning Website** county gleaning organizations provide a single site to access information about active gleaning groups. The site provides descriptions of each group, contact information and the geographic area each serves. www.sandiegogleaners.org
- **Feeding San Diego** sends requests for gleaning to local organizations who can come out to farms, orchards, or backyards to pick the remaining crop for distribution to the hungry. <http://feedingsandiego.org/get-involved/donate-food/residential-harvests/>
- **ProduceGood** operates the CropSwap gleaning program which organizes teams of volunteers to pick fruit from private groves and orchards throughout San Diego County. Its *Market Share* program which recovers unsold produce from San Diego Farmer's Markets. Gleaned fruit is donated to food banks for distribution to the hungry. www.producegood.org/
- **Harvest CROPS** organizes teams of volunteers to pick fruit from backyards and orchards throughout San Diego County. The gleaned fruit is donated to local charities for distribution to the hungry. <http://harvestcrops.org/>
- **Senior Gleaners** volunteer gleaners aged 55+ harvest from backyards and farms throughout San Diego County, and collect unsold food from grocery stores and restaurants. Gleaned food is distributed at no charge to agencies feeding low income residents. <http://seniorgleanerssdco.org/>
- **Harvesting San Diego** organizes volunteers to glean excess fruit from private trees to rescue and donate fresh, healthy food to families who rely on the food assistance system. Harvesting SD is a program of San Diego Roots Sustainable Food Project a non-profit educational organization. <http://www.sandiegoroots.org/harvesting.php>

Working Towards a Fuller Future

These organizations coordinate efforts to reduce food waste and end hunger in San Diego County.

- **San Diego Hunger Coalition** leads coordinated action to end hunger in San Diego County through research, education and advocacy. <http://www.sandiegohungercoalition.org/>
- **San Diego Food System Alliance** is a collaborative with a mission to develop and maintain an equitable, healthy, and sustainable food system in San Diego County. The Alliance is focused on a number of issues including supporting local farmers and fishermen, addressing food waste, catalyzing urban agriculture, and ensuring that healthy, quality food is available for all San Diegans. <http://www.sdfsa.org/>
- **North County Food Policy Council** has a purpose to find solutions to address the unmet food security needs of the residents of North County and to increase access to a secure and nutritionally quality food supply and food shed. <https://www.regionalsolutions.net/food-policy-council>

3. Feed Animals

Food not suitable for donation to hungry people may be valuable for farmers with animals to feed. For instance, many breweries in San Diego donate their spent grain to farms and dairies in the region as well as out of state. The Ramona Unified School District uses some food scraps from schools to feed animals in their agricultural program.

- For information on which farms are in need of spent grain or other food donations, please contact the **San Diego County Farm Bureau** - www.sdfarmbureau.org or call (760) 745-3023.

4. Industrial Uses

Fats, Oils and Grease, also known as FOG, can be converted into fuel and has various industrial uses. There is increasing interest in finding effective means to obtain biofuel and bio-products from wasted food. San Diego regional options include:

- **New Leaf Biofuel** collects grease from restaurants, schools, hotels and other businesses to convert the cooking oil that would otherwise be discarded into biodiesel fuel. <http://www.newleafbiofuel.com/>
- **Buster Biofuels** partners with different businesses and corporations to collect and repurpose their used kitchen oils and grease to convert it into biofuel. <http://busterbiofuels.com/>
- **EDCO Disposal Recycling Buy Back Centers** accepts clean residential and commercial fat, oil and grease at no charge. For more information and locations visit www.edcodisposal.com/Food

5. Food Scraps Composting

Composting turns food scraps into a nutrient-rich soil amendments and can be done on site in smaller amounts or on a larger scale at larger facilities.

Composting Facilities

The San Diego region has facilities that accept food scraps for composting.

- **Miramar Greenery – City of San Diego** accepts commercial food scraps from pre-approved City of San Diego businesses to be taken to the Greenery and turned into compost. San Diego residents are allowed to take up to two cubic yard of compost for free. The Miramar Greenery website also list uses for compost. <https://www.sandiego.gov/environmental-services/miramar/greenery/foodwaste>
- **El Corazon Compost Facility – City of Oceanside’s** green waste program takes all green waste collected curbside to be composted at the El Corazon Compost Facility <http://www.agriserviceinc.com/>. El Corazon Compost Facility is also currently accepting vegetative food scraps from pre-approved businesses in Oceanside. Oceanside residents are allowed to pick up compost for free with proof of residency. www.greenoceanside.org
- **City of Chula Vista** is currently operating a pilot program where vegetative food waste is being collected from homes and businesses, and taken to the Otay Mesa Landfill Compost Facility. <http://www.chulavistaca.gov/departments/public-works/environmental-fiscal-sustainability/environmental-services>

Do Your Own Composting

Food scraps, spoiled and leftover food are perfect for composting. When combined with yard trimmings, this material provide nutrients needed to form a balanced compost pile. In gardens, backyard, and farms, composting may be done in a pile or a bin. Vermicomposting, or composting with worms, uses less space than traditional composting and produces worm castings instead of finished compost. “In-vessel” composting is an alternative that keeps materials contained and allows composting to be done in a range of locations. For more information please contact your local jurisdiction.

Commercial on-site, vermicomposting and backyard composting

- **Solana Center for Environmental Innovation** is one of San Diego’s main source for backyard composting and vermicomposting education and supplies. Through its contract with the City of San Diego, Solana Center offers six free composting workshops throughout the year, and the City’s Rotline 760-436-7986, a one stop resource for all composting questions. Several local jurisdictions contract their technical and education outreach efforts with them. For more information www.solanacenter.org.

City of San Diego’s Compost Bin Voucher Program provides City of San Diego residents with a discount on one of three styles of compost bins. Applications can be picked up at a Dixieline Lumber and Home Center location within City limits or online at [Compost Bin Voucher Application \(Online Form\)](#).

6. Food Recovery Successes

The San Diego region has some notable successes in food recovery.

- **Petco Park** this large public venue and home to the San Diego Padres donates large amounts of food to Feeding San Diego for distribution to those in need. All concession stands and restaurants within Petco Park participate in a food waste diversion program, which includes composting food waste from games and major event at the Miramar Greenery where it's turned into compost. The compost is periodically returned on site for use in the ballpark landscaping. <http://www.petcoparkevents.com/>
- **San Diego Airport Authority** started a food waste diversion program in 2013 composting at the Miramar Greenery food scraps generated by the on-site food prep in all 40 of the airport's restaurants, three prep kitchens, and the USO Airport Center They also have a food donation program from their sites directed to their USO Sport Center, . <http://www.san.org/Airport-Projects/Environmental-Affairs>
- **San Diego Zoo and Safari Park** donates food to feed people, and composts animal food prep waste at their Children's Zoo facility, and all food waste from all their restaurants at the Miramar Greenery. <http://sandiegozoo.org/sdzglobal/>
- **Ramona Unified School District's** innovative program finds the highest and best uses for unserved food and food scraps. Unserved food is collected by a local pantry and donated to feed people; vegetative and bakery food scraps suitable for animal feed are delivered to the district's agricultural program; and high school students compost other food scraps in an on-site Earth Tub composting unit. Landscape trimmings help provide the "brown" carbon materials needed in the composting process, and the finished compost is used in school landscapes and gardens. <http://www.ramonausd.net/>
- **Sharp Memorial Hospital** has been composting all their food waste at the Miramar Greenery since 2012, and in 2016 started donating their edible food scraps to local charities. <http://www.sharp.com/hospitals/memorial/>
- **San Diego Unified School District:** (858-637-6268) partners with *Feeding San Diego* on a food rescue program that began in September 2016. Through their *Love Food Not Waste* pilot program the district recovered leftover prepared food from over 170 school kitchens. The food is consolidated at 19 production kitchens where local hunger relief organizations, coordinated through *Feeding San Diego*, pick up the school food on a daily basis. These organizations are then able to extend a meal to those facing food insecurity in and around the school communities.

In addition to those examples, many farmers, manufacturers, grocery stores, restaurants, hotels and caterers donate leftover or unsold food to hunger relief organizations.

For More Information:

EPA Sustainable Food Management Website:

<http://www2.epa.gov/sustainable-management-food>