REDUCING FOOD WASTE AND IMPROVING NUTRITION STATUS: INNOVATIVE SOLUTIONS IN FOOD RECOVERY PROGRAMS

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LEARNING OBJECTIVES

• At the end of this session, participants will be able to identify key community partners to develop a food recovery and meal delivery program.

• At the end of this session, participants will be able to describe strategies to overcome common barriers to implementing a food recovery and delivery program.

• At the end of this session, participants will be able to describe the impact of a food recovery program for volunteers and participants.
DOUBLE TROUBLE

• FOOD INSECURITY
  – 1 in 6 Americans lack access to an adequate amounts of affordable and nutritious food
  – In Florida, 1 in 5 are food insecure
  – The recent pandemic has increased food insecurity, particularly in vulnerable populations

• FOOD WASTE
  – Did you know that 40% of all food produced is wasted?
  – 4x amount of food needed to feed the hungry
A POSSIBLE SOLUTION?

FOOD RECOVERY – MEAL PREPARATION & DELIVERY
THE MODEL

Cafeteria, Hospital, Restaurant → Organizer → Non-Profit Organization/Individuals
UNF CNFS FOOD RECOVERY & MEAL DELIVERY PROGRAMS
FOOD FIGHTERS
FOOD FIGHTERS MODEL

- Partner with the on-campus cafe
- Student volunteers to recover, repackage & deliver
- Recover food that would normally be wasted 2x/week
- Repackage into healthful meals
- Deliver to the Northeast Florida AIDS network and other area social service

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MEALS ON WINGS: THE PROBLEM

• Meals on Wheels is available for homebound seniors however, demand has surpassed capacity

• In Northeast Florida alone, over 1000 seniors in Jacksonville who are eligible for meals on wheels remain on a waiting list due to funding limitations

“I always look forward to Wednesdays and Fridays”- MOW Participant
MEALS ON WINGS: A SOLUTION

• Partner with area hospitals to rescue unused prepared food that would normally be wasted
• Repackage the food into healthy, balanced meals
• Delivery the meals directly to homebound seniors
• Student volunteers recover, repackage, & deliver
MORE THAN A MEAL

• Social interaction
• Safety check
• Connection

"What you bring me really saves me from not eating at all." – MOW Participant
IMPACT

FOOD FIGHTERS:
• 18,000 meals provided

MEALS ON WINGS:
• 19,000 pounds of food recovered
• 12,000 meals delivered

“You all are a blessing.”- MOW Participant
RESEARCH

Receiving

Receiving home-delivered meals for a short duration significantly improves nutritional status, dietary intake, food security, loneliness, and social well-being in seniors.

Volunteering

Volunteering with a food recovery/delivery program significantly improves students’ empathy and social responsibility.
INTERESTED IN STARTING YOUR OWN PROGRAM?
THE INGREDIENTS

• STAFF
• COMMUNITY PARTNERS
• FACILITIES
• SUPPLIES
• VOLUNTEERS
• KEY COMMUNITY PARTNERS
THE INGREDIENTS: COMMUNITY PARTNERS

• Identifying your partners
• How can you work together to solve a common problem?
• A university with a nutrition and dietetics program
• Communication is imperative
THE INGREDIENTS: STAFF

- UNFCNFS Food Recovery Team Includes:
  - 2 Registered Dietitians
  - 1 Chef
  - Many student volunteers

- Identify leaders with experience, connections within the community
- Willingness to serve others
THE INGREDIENTS: FACILITIES

• UNFCNFS currently utilizes the Food Lab in the Nutrition Department
• Can be an ideal space as it already equipped with most of the necessary equipment
• Considerations:
  • Scheduling
  • Dry storage
  • Freezer & refrigerator space
  • Equipment
  • Cleaning
THE INGREDIENTS: SUPPLIES

• Coolers for transporting food/meals
• Ice bricks for coolers
• Meal containers
  — Freezer and microwave safe
• Serving utensils
• Scale
• Labels/printer
  — Large font
• Cleaning supplies
THE INGREDIENTS: VOLUNTEERS
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## POTENTIAL CHALLENGES

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<td>Misconceptions on liability (Bill Emerson Act)</td>
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<td>Uncertainties about the quantity and types of food available</td>
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THANK YOU!

For more information, please visit our website:
www.unf.edu/brooks/Center_for_Nutrition_and_Food_Security/

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