



MealConnect: Making Local Food Rescue Easy and Safe

To set the foundation for a brighter tomorrow, Feeding America provides nutritious meals to help feed families today. Last year, the Feeding America network provided 4 billion meals to more than 46 million people.

However, to ensure every American at risk of hunger has access to the nutrition he or she needs, we must increase the amount and diversity of food we source. Feeding America has identified a meal gap of 8.7 billion meals—that is the number of meals missing from families' tables each year. This need is driving our 2025 goal to source and distribute enough nutritious food for people struggling with hunger and make meaningful progress toward ending hunger.

In order to source more meals, Feeding America has developed MealConnect, a technology platform that maximizes network capacity, prevents meals from ending up in landfills and allows food donors to easily provide nutritious surplus product in real-time.

MEALCONNECT

MealConnect facilitates the easy, safe and quick donation of food from grocery stores, convenience stores and foodservice locations to member food pantries or meal programs.

Sourcing more food to meet the need in a community often necessitates enabling a food bank's member food pantries and meal programs to pick up food directly from donors, but managing these relationships can be both difficult and time-consuming for a food bank. MealConnect enables food banks to easily oversee the relationships, improve data management and eliminate barriers to food rescue. When a food pantry located a couple miles away from the donor can pick up the product, it saves valuable food bank resources and the need for expensive transportation. Through MealConnect, food that previously might have gone to waste—such as a small load of lean meat from a local butcher—is recovered by one of the food bank's member food pantries or meal programs and is immediately directed to families in need.



EMPOWERING FOOD DONORS

The intuitive MealConnect software empowers food donors and revolutionizes local food rescue. When donors such as restaurants, grocery stores or cafes post food to donate on **mealconnect.org**, an algorithm determines the best-suited local pantries to quickly pick up and distribute the donation. The affiliated Feeding America member food bank is instantly notified and supervises the donation process. MealConnect also allows donors to keep track of the total amount of food they have provided over time and calculates tax benefits to which they may be entitled. It is the only tool of its kind available on a national scale that ensures high food safety standards.



SEAMLESS SOLUTION

MealConnect is free and easy to use. At no cost, donors post food donations that are then picked up within a prearranged window of time by a local food bank, food pantry or meal program that has been vetted for capacity and adherence to food safety standards.



EASY TO NAVIGATE

With simple onboarding and an intuitive design, MealConnect can be accessed from a smartphone, tablet or computer. This makes it possible for the manager at a small cafe to pick up her smartphone, go to the website and quickly let her local food bank know she has a bin of apples she won't be able to use.



REAL TIME DATA COLLECTION

Customizable dashboards make it possible to track donations over time to maximize tax benefits and show a donor's impact in the community.

SOPHISTICATED TRACKING AND REPORTING

By empowering a food pantry to pick up available food, a food bank can expand its food rescue capacity and provide more fresh foods to people in need. However, the food bank must monitor and track these donations to ensure the highest measures of food safety and to provide accurate reporting to food donors. MealConnect's sophisticated software emphasizes timely and accurate reporting and tracking. When a food pantry picks up a donation, it can quickly record details pertaining to the food it rescues and that information is then automatically integrated into the food bank's and Feeding America's tracking systems. Feeding America is able to more quickly and accurately provide donors with one national receipt and the opportunity for significant tax deductions because of the seamless reporting.

Through MealConnect we can rescue millions of meals for people facing hunger in our communities. When our neighbors are unsure of where their next meal will come from, we cannot let good, healthy food go to waste. Together we can make local food rescue a go-to solution. **Together we can solve hunger.**

MealConnect™

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