



# County of San Mateo

## Inter-Departmental Correspondence

**Department:** COUNTY MANAGER: OFFICE OF SUSTAINABILITY

**File #:** 20-017

Board Meeting Date: 2/11/2020

**Special Notice / Hearing:** None  
**Vote Required:** Majority

**To:** Honorable Board of Supervisors  
**From:** Jim Eggemeyer, Director, Office of Sustainability  
**Subject:** Edible Food Recovery Program Update and Contracts

### **RECOMMENDATION:**

Adopt resolutions:

- A) Authorizing an agreement with Second Harvest of Silicon Valley to provide services increasing the capacity and infrastructure for grocery rescue and redistribution as part of the Edible Recovery Program as required under CA SB 1383, for the term of January 28, 2020 through June 30, 2022, in an amount not to exceed \$624,988; and
- B) Authorizing an agreement with Pacifica Resource Center to provide services increasing the capacity and infrastructure for grocery rescue and redistribution in their service area as part of the Edible Food Recovery Program as required under CA SB 1383, for the term of January 28, 2020 through June 30, 2022, in an amount not to exceed \$219,163; and
- C) Authorizing an agreement with Nuestra Casa East Palo Alto to provide services increasing the capacity and infrastructure for grocery rescue and redistribution in their service area as part of the Edible Food Recovery Program as required under CA SB 1383, for the term of January 28, 2020 through June 30, 2022, in an amount not to exceed \$492,240; and
- D) Authorizing an agreement with Fresh Approach to provide public education and outreach about food waste prevention and food preservation, for the term of January 28, 2020 through June 30, 2022, in an amount not to exceed \$312,630.

### **BACKGROUND:**

According to Get Healthy San Mateo County, 30 to 40 percent of San Mateo County residents are food insecure. People experiencing food insecurity have a limited or uncertain ability to acquire nutritionally adequate foods. At the same time, there is a significant amount of food wasted in the county. According to the US Environmental Protection Agency, 20 percent of the municipal waste

stream in this country is food. Not only is this a waste of valuable resources, organic material decomposing in the anaerobic conditions of a landfill generates methane, a green-house gas 30 times more potent than carbon dioxide in trapping green-house gasses (GHG). In San Mateo County alone supermarkets, grocery stores, wholesalers, and caterers generate an estimated 36 million pounds of excess edible food per year.

The County of San Mateo is proactively preparing for climate change in numerous ways and there remains an urgent need to slow the production of greenhouse gases in the County. Reducing the amount of excess edible food in landfills will aid the County by reducing methane emissions and feed hungry people.

The State of California has acted to address GHG emissions through CA SB 1383. The new legislation will become effective January 1, 2022, and by 2025 it will require a 75 percent reduction in organics waste disposal, including a 20 percent state-wide reduction in edible food in the waste stream. The act requires all jurisdictions to establish Edible Food Recovery Programs to divert excess edible food from landfills to human consumption.

More specifically, the legislation requires supermarkets, some grocery stores, wholesalers, and caterers to divert their excess edible food to human consumption instead of composting or landfilling it. It also requires jurisdictions to work with food recovery organizations to build up their capacity and infrastructure to collect and re-distribute excess edible food from such generators.

In March 2019, the County through the Office of Sustainability began pilot programs to expand existing grocery rescue and redistribution programs in San Mateo County. With County support, Second Harvest of Silicon Valley and Nuestra Casa have successfully pioneered an innovative strategy to redistribute rescued groceries to multi-family housing complexes. This strategy takes advantage of the pantries, storage space, and refrigeration of the many individual kitchens in these complexes and alleviates the need to store food at a central location which is key to the success of the Edible Food Recovery Program and greatly reduces costs. The program is open to all residents in the complexes wishing to participate. Since the program launched, over 250,000 pounds of edible food has been distributed to over 7,000 residents per month. In June 2019, Pacifica Resource Center began an expansion of their existing grocery rescue capacity with the purchase of a County funded refrigerated van.

To support these new pilot programs, the Office of Sustainability also partnered with Fresh Approach and their partner, Leah's Pantry, to develop a new curriculum and delivery system for outreach to educate the public on how to waste less food. The outreach focuses on food waste prevention, food preservation techniques, nutrition advice and cooking tips and demonstrations in the County. Between May and October 2019, food waste prevention/food preservation workshops in Colma, Daly City, East Palo Alto, Pacifica, Redwood City, San Bruno, San Mateo, and South San Francisco served over 450 participants. Additionally, information was shared at booths and cooking demonstrations at the East Palo Alto Farmers' Market with over 750 individuals.

## **DISCUSSION:**

A robust Edible Food Recovery program in compliance with CA SB 1383 will require both large and small grocery rescue programs in the various areas of the County.

Currently, the County is funding one large scale pilot program with Second Harvest of Silicon Valley and two smaller, similar programs with Nuestra Casa East Palo Alto and the Pacifica Resource Center. Through these contracts, the programs will provide edible food recovery services much like a

recycling hauler provides waste diversion services. Trucks and drivers will work regular routes, picking up food from generators and redistributing it through the expanded food distribution network. Second Harvest of Silicon Valley is expanding their capacity and infrastructure as well as training generators and other smaller food recovery organizations. All food recovery organizations are following all applicable food handling safety guidelines.

Educating the public to waste less food in general will be needed for SB 1383 to succeed. The contract with Fresh Approach will continue food waste workshops and demonstrations as well as expand outreach and education to the coast.

The County of San Mateo is poised to be a leader in California in implementing CA SB 1383 because of the proactive approach the County has taken to address hunger and reduce the GHG emissions from wasted food. These contracts will allow the County to continue this work, study other innovative strategies for further diversion, and build the capacity of the County to meet its responsibilities under this legislation.

**PERFORMANCE MEASURES:**

	<b>FY 2019-20</b>	<b>FY 2020-21</b>	<b>FY 2021-2022</b>
Number of workshops	90	120	120
Pounds of food recovered	300,000 lbs.	400,000 lbs.	400,000 lbs.

**FISCAL IMPACT:**

Funding will come from the AB 939 Fund Account, which is a funding source dedicated to the implementation of waste reduction programs, and therefore no Net County Cost is associated with these Agreements. The not to exceed total for all four agreements is \$1,649,021. Budgetary appropriations for these agreements have been included in the Office's FY 2019-20 Adopted Budget and in the FY 2020-21 Recommended Budget.