



JANUARY 3, 2023

Sea to Sky Food Recovery Strategy and Action Plan (2021)

Progress Report 2022

Introduction

The Sea to Sky Food Recovery project (completed in 2021) identified the high-level strategies to address the biggest opportunities/needs for food recovery, redistribution, and waste diversion in the region, and then for each strategy, specific actions were recommended.

This report presents the status of each action as at the end of 2022. Through 2022, WCS Engagement + Planning coordinated implementation as much as possible with budget remaining from the 2021 project.

For the full Sea to Sky Food Recovery Strategy & Action Plan document, including background and context for the strategies and actions, please visit www.whistlercentre.ca/project/sea-to-sky-food-recovery-plan.

Progress Summary

Good progress was made on a number of important initiatives, especially those with the food distribution organizations (FDOs; aka food banks) where WCS had time to coordinate and support progress. Noteworthy actions that were either completed or where significant progress was made include:

- Action 4: Work with **large food suppliers** to increase donated food.
- Action 7: Regularly **engage food bank/program clients** to update understanding of the challenges/barriers they face to accessing food and the amounts and types of food they need.
- Action 19: Adopt and consistently track a **standardized set of metrics/indicators and units for quantifying** recovered food donations, (e.g., weight, volume, dollars, number of clients, households, etc.).
- Action 24: Advocate that the provincial **Clean BC program** and grants include food recovery as a methane reduction strategy.
- Action 27: Develop and deliver a **“Love Food, Hate Waste” campaign** with partners that educates about food waste and recognizes/celebrates major food donors.
- Action 28: Include food security and recovery in **community policies and plans** (e.g., GHG plans, OCPs), and ensure they are implemented.

Detailed Progress Report

STRATEGY 1: Secure additional recovered food donations to meet food bank/program needs.

The three food banks in the Sea to Sky corridor all purchase food to better meet client needs for the amount, types and quality of food required. Meeting food needs by increasing food donations is the focus of the actions below.

Recommended Actions	Lead	Progress Report to Dec 31, 2023
<p>1. Create more frequent/flexible pick-up systems/schedules from food donors to distribute food as quickly as possible before it perishes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nesters and the Whistler Food Bank have just created a new schedule/system that is working better. 	<p>Food Distribution Orgs (FDOs), aka food banks</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>All FDOs adjust as needed on an ongoing basis. For example, in 2021 Whistler Food Bank adjusted pick-ups from Nesters to be more flexible.</p>
<p>2. Establish storage/warehouse capacity with dry and cold storage space, considering these options in descending order of preference:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Secure a portable facility for each food distribution organization that can be moved on and off site as needed (cost is about \$25-\$30,000; Whistler Food Bank has been in touch with a provider and is already aiming to purchase). b. Establish facility in the region that is shared among FDOs and/or operated by a third party c. Pool resources with local business that have access to storage/refrigeration, i.e., grocery stores, restaurants, hotels (though recognizing 	<p>FDOs</p>	<p>Progress made by all three FDOs.</p> <p>Whistler has increased the cold storage capacity in their building, as well as more reliable and usable/walk-in space.</p> <p>Pemberton's new space has room for current need and room to add more in the future; they have also applied for funding for more freezers.</p> <p>Squamish Under One Roof location has the space needed.</p> <p>An assessment of infrastructure needs for the Corridor has been added to the Food Resiliency project.</p>

Recommended Actions	Lead	Progress Report to Dec 31, 2023
<p>this option is temporary and has significant limitations</p>		
<p>3. Work with large food suppliers to have them:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Donate food that is delivered to but is not usable by restaurants and hotels; b. Offer special pricing to local FDOs; and c. Donate non-recovered food. • Sub-quality product and wrong orders (which don't happen often but are large quantities) are typically taken back down to the Lower Mainland; it would be ideal if this food could be directed to local food programs rather than being transported back. 	<p>FDOs with Food Banks BC</p>	<p>Progress made</p> <p>Beginning in 2022, all three FDOs now pay for the shipping cost to receive shipments via My Cloverdale Kitchen, which recovers and redistributes food from large suppliers and farms in the Lower Mainland.</p> <p>Gordon Food Service and Sysco already have donation programs established in the Lower Mainland; they are not pursuing other recipients at this time.</p>
<p>4. Increase/improve access to certified commercial kitchen space (i.e., community commissary) in each community that is large enough to accommodate food donation processing/preservation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The first step might be to explore existing underused commercial kitchen space to determine whether processing needs can be met through existing facilities. The second step might be to conduct a feasibility study to explore the need for and viability of establishing commercial kitchen capacity for fast preserving/processing of perishable food into more storable options. • Consideration should be given to centralized or decentralized locations, organizational structure (a 	<p>LGs, SLRD</p>	<p>No progress. Facility/infrastructure needs assessment included as part of the 2023 Food Resiliency Project.</p>

Recommended Actions	Lead	Progress Report to Dec 31, 2023
<p>new agency or coordination between FDOs), access by farmers for processing and production, etc.). Sea to Sky Community Services is currently exploring a community food hub/centre, including a community kitchen, in Pemberton, which could be accessed by Lílwat Nation members as well.</p>		
<p>5. Continue to help HRIs understand the BCCDC Food Donation Guidelines (including Food Donor Protection Act) to ensure all recoverable food is captured and donated.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> While the opportunity for food recovery from HRI is not expected to be very significant since most of the food waste has been 'guest facing' and therefore cannot be donated, they may be some food that can be recovered. To maximize donations from HRI, it is important to keep the information about dates and food types as simple as possible; the FDOs can check/confirm dates upon receipt. 	FDOs	<p>No progress and FDOs do not have the resources to lead this. Instead, their approach is to communicate to HRIs that they err on the side of 'if the food seems good, donate it' and the FDOs will sort and determine what can be provided to clients.</p> <p>Potential next step: Instructional poster by WCS or AWARE with funding to post on-location for grocery staff – what to compost out and what to donate.</p>

STRATEGY 2: Remove barriers to accessing food programs.

After closing the gap in the supply of food to service the existing demand from existing clients, this next strategy is about ensuring that everyone who might need food programs is accessing them. Understanding who these individuals in our communities might be, and what the barriers are for them to access the food banks is the first step. Barriers might include transportation challenges, discomfort accessing the services, and hours of operation that do not align with personal schedules.

Recommended Action	Lead	Progress Report to Dec 31, 2023
6. Regularly engage food bank/program clients to update understanding of the challenges/barriers they face to accessing food and the amounts and types of food they need.	FDOs	Completed. WCS and FDOs developed shared set of core questions for surveying clients on an annual basis, covering satisfaction with food quantity, types, comfort accessing the location, transportation challenges. All three FDOs will integrate the questions into the various survey tools they use – some of which are online, and some are in person/on location.
7. Improve understanding of those needing but not able to access food programs , the barriers they face, and the amount and type of food needed.	LGs	No progress. It is expected that some additional information will emerge through the Food Resiliency project.
8. Explore low-cost/by-donation food programs to enable access to affordable food by more community members. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must be by donation since donated food cannot be sold. See Quest model from Lower Mainland. 	FDO	FDO discussions held revealed that this is something to explore but there was concern about competition with local grocers and their continued willingness to donate. It is expected that this action will be addressed further as part of the Food Resiliency project.
9. Provide home deliveries where possible to those clients with access challenges. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pemberton, Squamish and Whistler all do this for those who request delivery. Líl'wat has been unable to provide deliveries due to the high number of households requesting delivery. 	FDOs	Ongoing. Provided by Whistler and Pemberton FDOs on an 'as needed' basis. Squamish offers a weekly delivery program for those who cannot access the food bank in person due to physical or mental health barriers.

STRATEGY 3: Work with remote communities on food recovery and redistribution as desired/requested.

Remote communities in the Sea to Sky Corridor face unique challenges when it comes to the delivery of and access to food programs and fresh nutritious food. Direct engagement and collaboration to understand community-specific challenges and identify solutions was not part of the scope of this Sea to Sky Food Recovery Project and will be needed.

Recommended Action	Lead	Progress Report to Dec 31, 2023
10. Work with remote communities to identify food security challenges and potential food recovery and redistribution programs/locations as needed and as they define them.	Lilwat and/or Pemberton Food Bank	Potential future project. There was no intention to make progress on this in 2022. Food resiliency aspect of this action will be touched on through the Food Resiliency project to some extent.

STRATEGY 4: Reduce and divert food waste that cannot be donated to food banks/programs.

Maximizing the recovery and redistribution of edible food that can be donated to FDOs is the primary focus of this strategy and action plan. Beyond this, there is food that cannot be donated to FDOs either because it has been ‘guest facing’ and ‘plated’ or because it has passed the expiry date allowed for redistribution by FDOs.

Recommended Action	Lead	Progress Report to Dec 31, 2023
11. Encourage a ‘take-home’ culture in HRI establishments, where taking leftover food home in (sustainable) to-go containers is cool and encouraged. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Once food has been ‘guest facing’ on plates/tables, it cannot be donated, and this makes up most of the food waste from HRI. At minimum, ‘take it home’ messaging could be added as a zero waste tip in community 	LGs, HRI	No progress. Objective was to link this to the March 2023 Love Food, Hate Waste campaign, which is being launched though with a more limited, less customizable scope.

Recommended Action	Lead	Progress Report to Dec 31, 2023
newsletters. Messaging and training about portion size could also be considered.		
<p>12. Upcycle produce destined for the bin to make sellable products (e.g., soups, smoothies, juice, etc.).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Whistler Zero Waste Action Plan action (reworded). Nesters Whistler does this. 	Grocers	No progress to coordinate this action. Solutions Guide for grocers being updated by AWARE could be a good channel to communicate this.
<p>13. Secure food waste that cannot be donated to FDOs to feed farm animals and/or pets.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clippings/ cuttings (e.g., ends of sausages, stalks, etc.) that food banks cannot use currently go to waste and could be used to feed animals. 	LGs, Farms	<p>As requested. Pemberton and Squamish FDOs do this as possible/as requested.</p> <p>No progress made on this action to secure food from HRIs.</p>

STRATEGY 5: Build overall capacity related to food waste and recovery.

This strategy and the actions below help to support the other strategies and actions above by growing regional capacity – whether that capacity is in the form of knowledge, systems, funding or other – as articulated by the actions below.

Recommended Actions	Lead	Progress Report to Dec 31, 2023
Education/training		
<p>14. Provide or enhance learning offerings through community kitchen programs so people can learn how to use/cook and preserve (e.g., salting,</p>	FDOs	<p>In progress. Whistler hosted a canning workshop in November 2022 and is working to get staff trained to offer more in the future. This is still a priority for Pemberton though it cannot be done until their new kitchen is installed; they will look to a partner to deliver the program. Squamish typically runs youth cooking programs, which they plan to start up again post-Covid.</p>

Recommended Actions	Lead	Progress Report to Dec 31, 2023
canning, fermenting, etc.). recovered/surplus food.		
<p>15. Create work and training programs that align with both the needs of people facing barriers and the FDOs' need for staff.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This can link back to funding opportunities (e.g., Employment and Social Development Canada programs) to offset operational costs of FDOs. 	FDO	FDO discussion held , suggesting that this action has merit, but no progress made. It is expected that this will be a point for further exploration through the Food Resiliency project.
<p>16. Create learning opportunities at S2S schools about food security, food waste, and surplus food.</p>	SD48	Minimal progress. WCS has contact Whistler Secondary Eco Club to explore opportunities.
Tools/systems		
<p>17. Adopt and consistently track a standardized set of metrics/indicators and units for quantifying recovered food donations, (e.g., weight, volume, dollars, number of clients, households, etc.).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SHHS and WCSS already use this. 	FDOs	Completed. Set of core indicators developed by WCS and agreed to by S2S FDOs for annual tracking.
Funding		
<p>18. Pay or donate a fee-for-service amount to local FDOs to help each community achieve zero waste goals.</p>	Grocers, large suppliers, HRIS	In progress. WCS led discussions with FDOs focused on concerns about grocers paying an external company (Food Mesh) for food donation tracking services while local FDOs are not paid by grocers for the waste management/pick-up service they provide. FDOs do not want to discourage

Recommended Actions	Lead	Progress Report to Dec 31, 2023
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> FDOs are providing a waste management service but are not paid to do so. 		<p>grocers to donate by charging a fee, but the present arrangement does not seem fair considering the fee being paid to Food Mesh.</p> <p>Potential next step: Consider approaching S2S local governments for a fee-for-service arrangement based on the food waste management and food redistribution service being delivered in each community.</p>
<p>19. Advocate for sustainable ongoing operational funds.</p>	FDOs	<p>As per above. Consider approaching S2S local governments for a fee-for-service arrangement based on the food waste management and food redistribution service being delivered in the region.</p>
<p>20. Fund or hire someone to coordinate and monitor implementation of the Food Recovery Strategy & Action Plan.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This could be done by hiring a regional coordinator, or by existing staff, or a non-profit organization playing the coordinating role. 	LGs, SLRD	<p>2022 coordination led by WCS with remaining project budget. 2023 implementation will be left with action leads and WCS will coordinate as possible through the Food Resiliency project on any related actions.</p>
<p>Other</p>		
<p>21. Find more office space for FDO staff to work (e.g., administrative tasks).</p>	FDOs	<p>Space is adequate though better in Squamish and Pemberton with newer locations; office space at the Whistler food bank is more of a challenge and might be a next step to resolve in the future.</p>
<p>22. Advocate that the provincial Clean BC program and grants include food recovery as a methane reduction strategy.</p>	LGs, UBCM	<p>Completed. WCS submitted a resolution to the SLRD Board for endorsement and submission to the UBCM resolution process. The resolution was passed at the 2022 UBCM Convention.</p>
<p>23. Include food waste/recovery as part of the next component of the Good Food Program to be adopted by Sea to Sky institutions.</p>	Squamish CAN	<p>Planned. SquamishCAN is planning to update program components with more place-based definitions and food waste and recovery will be included, particularly language around circular food systems.</p>

Recommended Actions	Lead	Progress Report to Dec 31, 2023
<p>24. Develop and deliver a “Love Food, Hate Waste” campaign with partners that educates about food waste and recognizes/celebrates major food donors.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This is a fee-based national campaign (with supportive marketing materials) that is already being implemented by the RMOW and SLRD. 	<p>LGs, RMOW, Whistler Zero Waste Action Plan action.</p>	<p>Completed. WCS met with organizers of the LFHW campaign to gather information about the campaign offerings and connected with SLRD staff who will release regional content (see image below this table) and other LFHW material in March 2023 to coincide with the national campaign.</p>
<p>25. Include food security and recovery in community policies and plans (e.g., GHG plans, OCPs), and ensure they are implemented.</p>	<p>LGs</p>	<p>Completed. WCS developed a food recovery policy brief and will distribute it to S2S local governments in 2023.</p>
<p>26. Create showcase events about how to minimize food waste, e.g., a cooking challenge using food scraps.</p>	<p>RMOW, Whistler Zero Waste Action Plan action.</p>	<p>Two events held in 2021: WCS and Watermark Communications coordinated the delivery of two ‘food recovery’ related events at the 2021 Cornucopia Food and Wine Festival.</p>

Take Action on Food Waste

Furry Creek



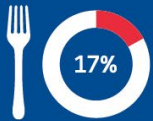
Whistler



Lillooet



Britannia Beach



Pemberton*



Gold Bridge*



Squamish



of the waste sent to landfill could have been eaten.

Steps to Reducing Food Waste

1. Keep It Fresh
2. Use It Up
3. Plan It Out

Visit [Lovefoodhatewaste.ca](https://lovefoodhatewaste.ca) to make the most of every bite.



Love this place.
Reduce your waste.

Estimated data from 2020/2022 Landfill Waste Composition Audits. Does not include food waste sent to composting facilities. *Data only captures waste from the Transfer Station