



FOOD FORWARD'S
ANNUAL IMPACT 2023:
BUILDING
GENERATIONAL
HEALTH





CEO AND BOARD CHAIRPERSON MESSAGE

Before dawn on August 31, 2023, a truck hauling a perfectly ripening load of Crenshaw melons pulled into Loading Dock 4 at the Food Forward Produce Pit Stop in Bell, CA. Over the next 20 minutes, our expert staff, with a cumulative 300+ years of experience in the produce industry, soon folded them into mixed pallets of 23 other types of fresh produce. Within hours, these were distributed to 32 organizations, which picked up loads ranging from 2,000 pound pallets in semi-tractor trailers down to just a few dozen small mixed packages for passenger cars.

By 2 p.m., Food Forward had logged its largest single day of produce donations in its history: 652,000 lbs of fresh fruits and vegetables.

In all honesty, this day could never have transpired in year one, year five—but it was possible in 2023 as we crested towards our 15-year anniversary, during which we satisfied the nutritional needs of over a quarter million people each day through deep partnerships with our 260 hunger relief partners.

We often measure our impact in pounds, pallets, and truckloads, but there is so much more. The impact of our work is truly based on every human being who makes all this possible, and whom our food reaches. So we wanted to share those stories of individuals and communities whose lives have been transformed by having access to healthy fruits and vegetables coming through Food Forward. The effects last far beyond any given meal; they're laying the long-term foundation to Build Generational Health.

While we have experienced tremendous growth in impact in the last few years, Food Forward remains an incredibly effective and efficient operation and a “best-in-class” social investment.

- Our operational cost to recover and distribute a pound of produce is approximately \$.07/lb.
- With our “High Impact + High Civic Engagement” model, on an operational budget of \$6.3M, in 2023 we distributed nutritional fresh produce valued at \$168M to our hunger relief partners.

Even now at 15 years, we still feel that there are bigger things to come with a very pure sense of possibility. We hope that as you read our 2023 Impact Report, and when you think of Food Forward, you feel that same sense of wondrous possibility to the future we can build together.

Fruitfully,

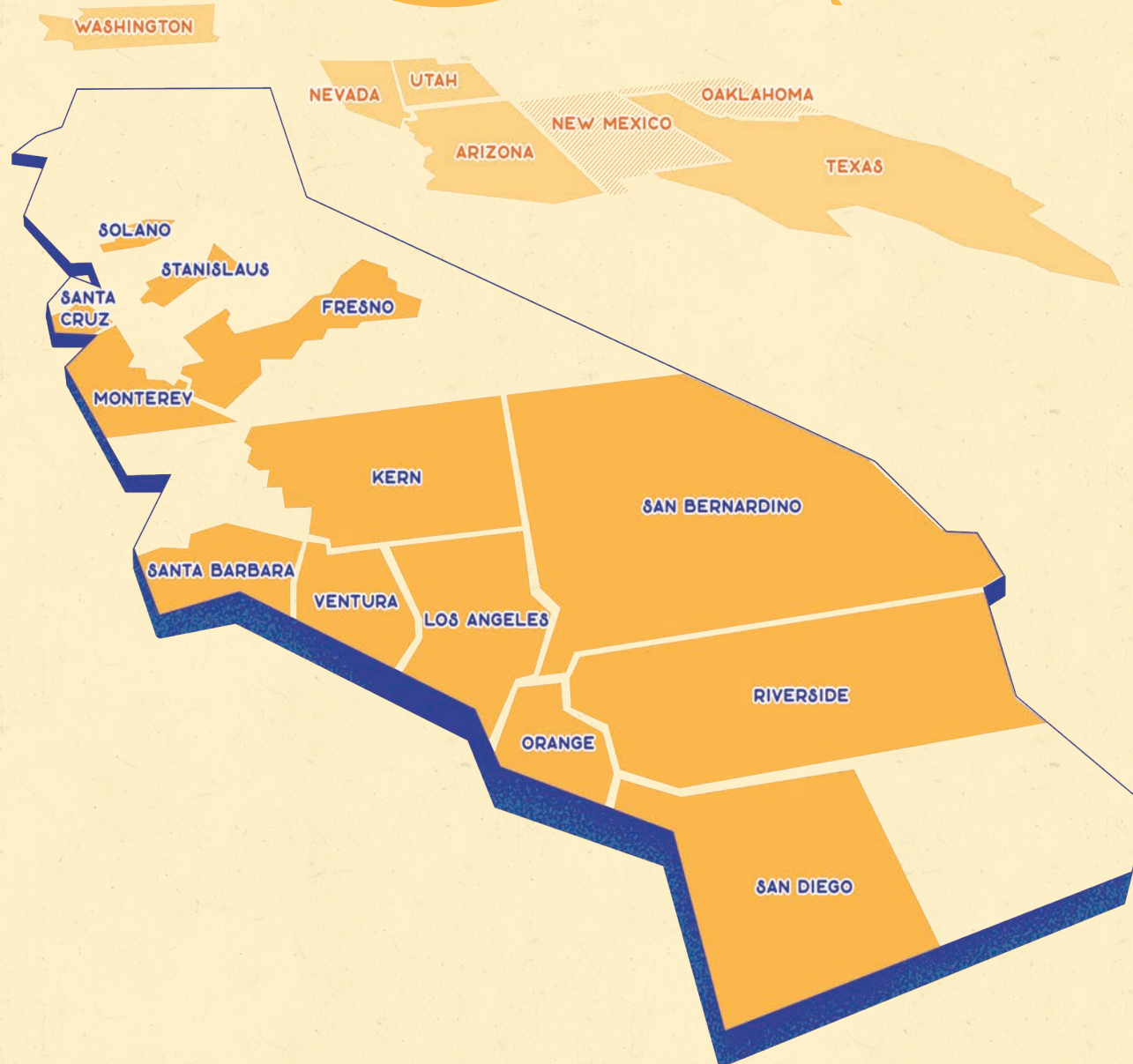
Rick Nahmias
Founder & CEO

Rob Valencia
Board Chair, 2021-2024

Jeff Harris
Board Chair, 2024-2027



Fruitland Map in 2023



In 2023, our food reached people in 13 counties in California, and seven additional states and tribal lands.

- 260 hunger relief organizations across nearly 300 distribution sites received produce free of charge.
- In 2023, Food Forward increased its distribution by more than 14 million pounds from 2022, recovering and donating 87,198,895 total pounds of produce.

Los Angeles County: Partners based in Los Angeles County received 66% of the fresh produce Food Forward distributed in 2023, including fruits and vegetables from all three of our recovery programs.

Ventura County: We continued to grow our relationships with packing houses in Ventura County in 2023. This allowed us to recover even more surplus citrus to combat food insecurity and food waste in local communities.

Orange County: In partnership with Second Harvest Food Bank of Orange County, Food Forward gleaned a total of 227,000 pounds of fruits and vegetables and 6,650 pounds of flowers from the International Fresh Produce Association Global Produce & Floral Show in October 2023, donating to local communities.

Riverside County: Expansion of emergency aid: what began as a pilot transformed into a robust distribution network to provide produce to communities affected by disasters like Tropical Storm Hilary. By increasing our supply, Food Forward stands ready to respond to emergency needs with increased consistency.

Kern County: In this rural region, Food Forward provided produce for farmworker-led organizations that care for their communities.

Santa Barbara County: The Backyard Harvest Program has continued its longstanding partnership with the Foodbank of Santa Barbara County, where our volunteers glean local fruit trees.

Imagine a world where everyone's nutritional needs are met.

The USDA recommends that half of every plate be filled with fruits and vegetables, for a total of five daily servings of fruits and vegetables.

Food Forward recovers and donates enough produce each day to meet the USDA's daily recommended servings of fruits and vegetables for over 270,000 people.

Servings are a critical measurement for nutrition, but what exactly is a serving?



Did you know? A serving can be a side salad of leafy greens, a banana, two carrots to munch on, an orange cut into slices, or an ear of corn eaten right off the cob.

Through our partnership with 260 hunger relief organizations, the people they serve are receiving this daily recommended intake in a variety of ways, such as in hot meals for seniors, as boxes of produce for families to cook at home, as after-school snacks for children, and as grab-and-go meals for people who are unhoused.

By ensuring more consistent access to fresh and healthy produce with our community partners, we are creating a brighter future and Building Generational Health together.



TESTIMONIALS



Cedrice

VOLUNTEER

"I love that there are people genuinely helping out other students and other people. It feels good for me to be able to help out, and I feel good about supporting the students here as I am also a fellow student."

After volunteering at weekly food distributions with Student Lunchbox, one of Food Forward's hunger relief partners, Cedrice brings groceries home for herself and shares them with her 77-year-old neighbor.

"Fresh produce is really important for our students because there's actually a really big demand. They like the snacks, but they really prefer fresh, healthy food options. It's important to have fresh produce because people are more aware and more educated about what it really means to be healthy, so I would say that having fresh produce is very, very important on our campus."

One of Food Forward's close partnerships expanded in 2023 to reach even more children. Brighter Bites works with schools to bring produce and nutrition education to children and their families. For the second year, Food Forward was the primary source of produce for this multi-pronged approach to health, diet, and food access in 13 schools in Los Angeles.

In the 2022-2023 school year, Food Forward helped Brighter Bites share 164,093 servings of produce with students and their families throughout Los Angeles.

"Food Forward was a game changer for us. We would not be able to serve the Los Angeles community without them. We are so grateful for the continued support of this valued partner."

- Lisa Helfman, CoFounder, Brighter Bites

Naser

FOOD FORWARD PRODUCE RECIPIENT

"I got blueberries today, and it's my favorite fruit!"

Naser, who joined his mother at our partner's food distribution, is one of many children who can enjoy their favorite fruits and vegetables thanks to Food Forward.

With consistent access to fruits and vegetables, children can learn healthy habits at an early age, developing a love for the foods that energize and sustain them.





Michael

PARTNER MEAL DELIVERY DRIVER

“I like being around people and helping people that are in need. Every time we bring someone a salad or something fresh, they really light up—you can see it—so you know they’re feeling better that day.”

Michael works for one of Food Forward’s partner organizations where he delivers healthy meals to homebound seniors. Thanks to fresh produce from Food Forward, ONEgeneration—an organization that works with older adults, children, and families—can provide meals that are vibrant, delicious, and nutritious.

Virginia

FOOD FORWARD PRODUCE RECIPIENT

“This support is helping me, as both fruits and vegetables bring satisfaction to my heart. For me it is a great joy.”

Virginia relies on food distributions at Immanuel Presbyterian Church in Koreatown as a source of produce and other essential groceries. Through hardship and unemployment, she finds joy in the produce she receives.

“It is a great blessing, not only for me, but for all the people who come to receive this help because there are quite a few people who need it. So thank you for your kindness, for being here with us, supporting us in this way, because sometimes we are unemployed, and how are we going to eat? It is a great help for us to enjoy vegetables and fruits.”



87,198,895
pounds



Food Forward recovered and distributed **87,198,895 pounds** of fresh fruits and vegetables in 2023. One pound of produce is the equivalent of four servings, meaning that we donated over 493 million servings to food insecure communities.



2.4+ million servings

Backyard Harvest Program:

over 2.4 million servings recovered and donated in 2023.

Food Forward began in 2009 with a group of volunteers harvesting in their neighborhood, and we still have a corps of dedicated volunteer leaders. In 2023, volunteers harvested at 850 events in Los Angeles and Ventura counties!

Ventura victory: In 2023, volunteers harvested a record-breaking 2 million servings of citrus and other produce from Ventura County backyards, larger private properties, and fruit packing houses.

3+ million servings

Farmers Market Recovery Program:

over 3 million servings recovered and donated in 2023 from 16 farmers markets.

Recovery record: On November 22, the day before Thanksgiving, volunteers gleaned 21,851 servings of fresh fruits and vegetables from the Santa Monica Wednesday Farmers Market, setting a record for the single largest farmers market glean Food Forward has ever seen. Produce from 29 market donors went directly to hunger relief organizations across Southern California, just in time to make it to tables throughout Los Angeles.

488.2+ million servings

Wholesale Recovery Program:

over 488.2 million servings recovered and donated in 2023.

Nearly 10 years after the launch of the Wholesale Recovery Program, expanded relationships with produce industry donors continue to ensure we can provide a greater variety, volume, and consistency of fresh fruits and vegetables to communities facing food insecurity.

The most bountiful day in Food Forward history: On August 31, Food Forward staff facilitated the recovery and donation of 3.69 million servings of produce at our Produce Pit Stop refrigerated warehouse in Bell, California.



HUNGER AND CLIMATE IMPACT

Food waste and climate: When Food Forward rescues surplus produce, we're reducing the greenhouse gas emissions caused by waste in landfills, thus mitigating some of the effects of climate change. In fact, in 2023, we prevented the emissions of 77,607 metric tons of CO2 equivalent.

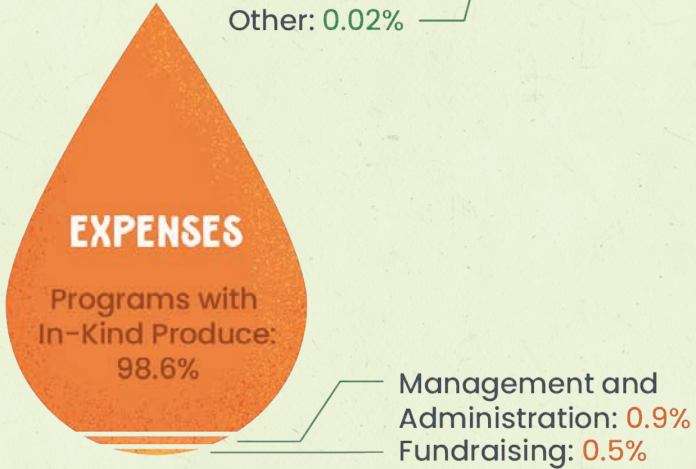
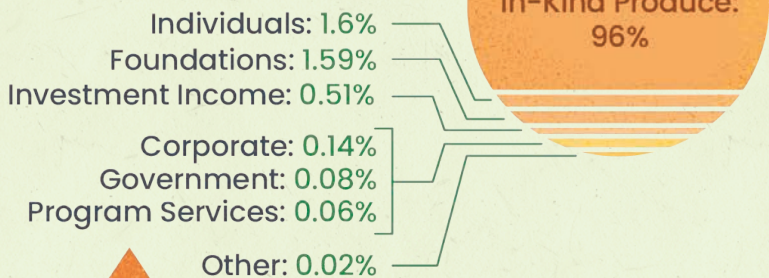
The emissions reduced by our produce recovery in 2023 are the equivalent of nearly 70,000 drives from Los Angeles to New York. As we center food justice and environmental justice in our work, we know that the communities most affected by food insecurity are also disproportionately impacted by the effects of climate change.

Food Forward is committed to increasing sustainability in our operations. Thanks to a generous supporter, Food Forward acquired its first electric van in 2023—the Juice Box!—that is now moving supplies for the volunteer-powered food recovery programs across Los Angeles and Ventura Counties.



We are proud to be recognized by the California Green Business Network as a Certified Green Business.

- **U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Food Recovery Challenge Recipient**
(six years in a row)
- **California Green Business Network**
- **1% for the Planet Environmental Partner since 2017**



Food Forward is grateful to the thousands of people who supported our mission!

Every contribution to Food Forward results in multiple servings of fresh, healthy food distributed to people experiencing food insecurity.

Food Forward’s operation is extremely efficient.

With cash expenses of just \$6.3 million Food Forward returned a social impact value of \$168 million (in the value of in-kind produce) to communities across the region.

In 2023, it cost approximately \$.07 cents in operational costs to recover and distribute a pound of fruits and vegetables.

For more information, contact Chief Development Officer **Jen Cox** at jen@foodforward.org.

To make a financial contribution and support Food Forward’s mission, please visit foodforward.org/give.

2023 DONORS

Thank you for your support.

Food Forward is grateful to our volunteers, hunger relief partners, produce donors, and financial supporters.

\$1,500,000+

Anonymous

\$500,000+

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\$100,000+

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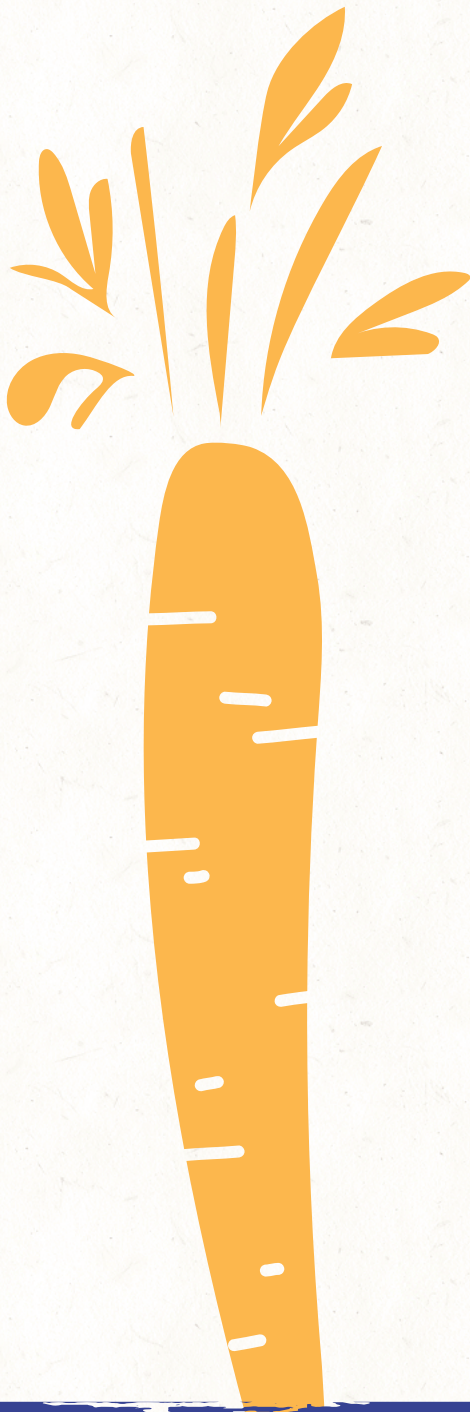
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*Acknowledges a monthly donor.

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WHO WE ARE

Thank you to everyone who moves
Food Forward.



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Over one third of all food goes unsold or uneaten in the United States. **Food Forward** is changing that.



- Food Forward recovered and distributed 87,198,895 pounds of produce in 2023. That's 70,000 pallets, which would fill 2,692 semi-truck trailers.
- 77,607 tons of CO2 equivalent were prevented from entering the atmosphere in 2023. That's the equivalent of taking 18,471 cars off the road for the year.
- 1.4 billion gallons of water were prevented from going to waste in 2023—the equivalent of 2,129 Olympic-sized swimming pools.

Thank you for moving Food Forward.



How will you Share the Abundance™?

Volunteer

foodforward.org/volunteer

Register Your Trees

foodforward.org/donate-food

Produce Industry

foodforward.org/produce-industry

Make a gift to support food insecure communities and reduce food waste

foodforward.org/donate

For more information on making financial contributions:

Jen Cox, Chief Development Officer

jen@foodforward.org

818-764-1022 ext. 110

For more information, visit foodforward.org/give.



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Report designed by Marie Ramos