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Metro Vancouver Supports Expansion of Regional Food Recovery Network

In time for Waste Reduction Week in Canada, FoodMesh is pleased to announce that Metro Vancouver has provided financial support that will enable a significant expansion of its regional food recovery network.

Metro Vancouver has provided FoodMesh with funding to significantly grow its network in the region, and use its existing programs and services to help local organizations divert their surplus food away from landfills and compost and ensure it is put to its highest use – to people first, and then to animals.

“As someone with a lifelong connection to farming, I see daily the incredible hard work farmers dedicate to putting food on Canadian tables, and believe it’s essential that we all do what we can to ensure those efforts don’t get wasted,” said Jack Froese, Chair of Metro Vancouver’s Zero Waste Committee, and Chair of the National Zero Waste Council. “We’re pleased to financially contribute to the work of FoodMesh and help connect businesses along the supply chain with organizations that feed people and animals, making it much easier to innovate and implement circular economy solutions to prevent food waste.”

“We have found that over half of the food that is wasted along the food supply chain is preventable,” said Jessica Regan, CEO and Co-Founder of FoodMesh. “Food is not waste. It exists when there are no alternative channels for unsold product. This project is about building a connected food system where we can quickly match that unsold food to a network of verified organizations that can put that food to good use according to best and highest end-use.”

Through its work, FoodMesh has discovered that food is unnecessarily disposed of for a multitude of reasons – it could be because it has cosmetic imperfections, packaging errors, undeclared allergens or due to misconceptions about best-before dates. None of these reasons mean the food isn’t edible, just unsalable.

And yet, while all this perfectly good food is being thrown away, food insecurity is as high as ever and hunger relief organizations in the region remain in need of a reliable supply of fresh food donations. For example, one of FoodMesh’s local partners, CityReach Care Society, which serves vulnerable individuals, children and



families across the region, [saw a 1,000-per-cent increase in the demand for their services in 2020](#).

During the first week of this contract, FoodMesh helped an airline company from YVR redirect 4,000 meals worth of donated pasta buns that would have otherwise been sent to landfill, to a number of charities across Metro Vancouver. “This is just one small example of what is possible when we have a connected food system in place,” said Regan.

Establishing a food recovery network supports Metro Vancouver’s Board Strategic Plan vision to embrace collaboration and innovation in providing sustainable regional services that contribute to a livable and resilient region and a healthy natural environment.

“This support is a testament to Metro Vancouver’s commitment to building a socially, environmentally and economically sustainable region, and we couldn’t be happier to help them do it,” said Regan.

“Reducing waste by feeding more people in need is a message we can all get behind and a big congratulations to FoodMesh and Metro Vancouver,” said B.C.’s Agriculture, Food and Fisheries Minister Lana Popham. “Connections like this go a long way towards ensuring food security for British Columbians. By putting a renewed focus on regenerative agriculture in B.C. that is supported by new, innovative technology, our government is continuing to build a more resilient agriculture and food sector that will enhance B.C.’s food security and strengthen our communities.”

This initiative will enhance existing food recovery hubs that FoodMesh has helped to build, including in the [City of Richmond](#) (which won the city the [2021 Community Project Award](#) from The British Columbia Economic Development Association) and the Fraser Valley Regional District.

FoodMesh is actively working to engage Metro Vancouver-based businesses and hunger relief organizations to join their network and become either a food provider or recipient. Members of the network will be able to participate in food recovery through FoodMesh’s online B2B Marketplace and Retail Food Recovery Program. If FoodMesh’s programs aren’t able to help organizations with their food recovery needs, then they will help to connect them to other food recovery service providers in Metro Vancouver that can.

For more information and to join the FoodMesh network, visit foodmesh.ca/metro-van-loves-food



About us

Mesh Exchange (dba FoodMesh) is a Vancouver-based Certified B Corporation, dedicated to reducing unnecessary food waste and feeding more. It provides digital solutions that unite all elements of the food supply chain to help organizations quickly and easily divert their surplus food to the people in our communities who need it most.

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