

## Topic Area: Other

### Abstract Title

A Description of Sources, Types, and Distribution of Repurposed Food on the North Shore  
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### Abstract

**Background:** Food repurposing is a strategy to redistribute food that is no longer viable to the commercial sector and may go to waste. Food distribution organizations (FDOs) receive many types of repurposed foods from various sources and distribute it through community food programs.

**Objectives:** To identify sources of repurposed food and distribution methods of Vancouver's North Shore FDOs, and classify types of repurposed food received.

**Methods:** An online survey was developed and pilot tested. FDOs (N=27) were recruited through purposive sampling. Responses were analyzed using frequency distribution.

**Results:** Fifteen surveys were returned (55.6% response rate) and twelve analyzed (three respondents did not utilize repurposed food). The two most frequently identified sources of food were retail stores (58%) and fellow FDOs (50%). The most frequently received foods were grain products, foods high in sugar, fat, and/or sodium, and fruits and vegetables. However, among FDOs that received fruits and vegetables, this type of food accounted for less than 50% of total food. Foods high in sugar, fat, and/or sodium accounted for greater than 75% of food received by 17% of FDOs. Sixty-seven percent of FDOs received inedible food and 58% received food that became inedible before distribution. Ninety-two percent of FDOs distributed food via on-site meals/snacks.

**Conclusions:** The results suggest that many FDOs distribute repurposed food to clients through on-site meals/snacks, but may face challenges managing perishable food. Although FDOs receive fruits and vegetables, many also receive food that became inedible before distribution. Some receive large proportions of foods high in sugar, fat, and/or sodium, which are typically non-perishable. Further investigation to improve the conservation of nutritious, perishable repurposed food is warranted.

**Significance to Dietetics:** Understanding food repurposing practices helps guide policies to support the transfer of nutritious foods to clients through community food programs in order to improve public health outcomes.