

EHOs' INVOLVEMENT WITH FOOD SECURITY: PROMOTING SAFE FOOD DONATIONS

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Topics of Discussion

- What is food security?
- Why should Environmental Health Officers (EHOs) be involved?
- What are Food Distribution Organizations (FDOs)?
- What forthcoming BCCDC guidelines are available?
- How do FDOs address food safety and what are their issues?
- What are industry issues with food donation?
- How can EHOs promote industry food donation?

INTRODUCTION

What is Food Security?

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), Food Security is defined as, *“When all people have access to sufficient, safe, nutritious food to maintain a healthy and active life. This includes meeting their dietary needs and food preferences.”*

Community Food Security

According to Hamm and Bellows, community food security is defined as, *“A condition in which all community residents obtain a safe, culturally acceptable, nutritionally adequate diet through a sustainable food system that maximizes community self-reliance, social justice, and democratic decision-making.”*

1.7 million

Canadian households
experienced food insecurity

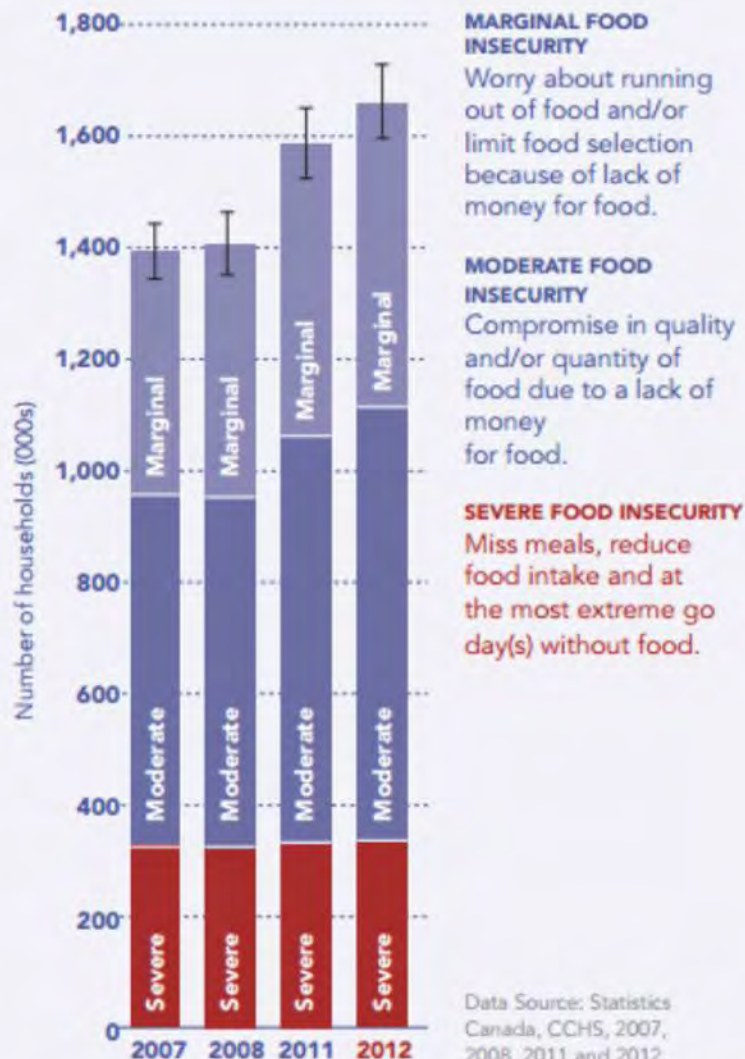
This amounts to nearly
one in eight households



4 million

individuals, including
1.15 million children

Household food insecurity



Why is Food Insecurity a Public Health Issue?

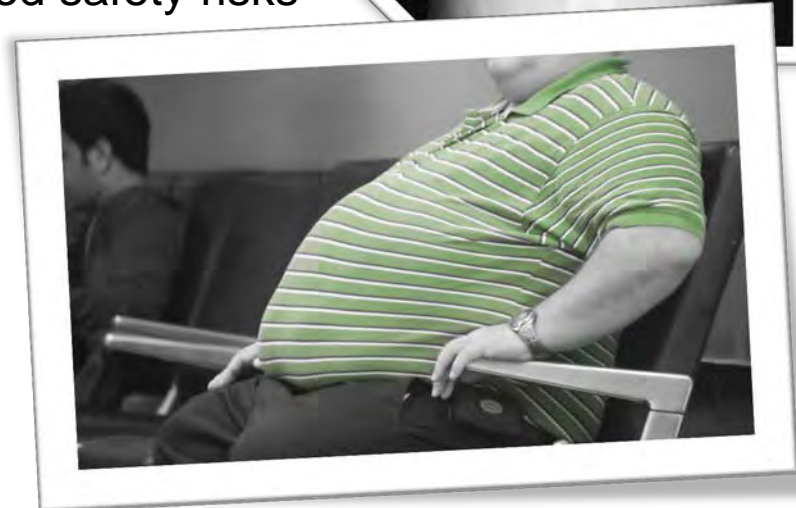
Inadequate nutrition can have effects on children

- Learning ability
- Physical development
- Mental health
- Reduced cognitive development
- Decreased learning ability and academic performance

People living with food insecurity take more food safety risks

Social and mental health issues:

- Poor functional health
- Restricted activity
- Depression
- Distress





WHY SHOULD EHOs BE INVOLVED?



EHOs' Role in Promoting Healthy Eating

Trans Fat Regulation

- Reduce heart disease

Informed Dining

- Provide nutritional information to make informed choices

Healthy-built Environment (HBE) Linkages Toolkit

- Links planning principles to health outcomes
- Developed by the HBE Alliance in partnership with PHSA Population and Public Health team



Public Health Act

- EHOs are mandated to mitigate, eliminate, and prevent public health hazards
- Health hazard:
 - Risk to public health
 - Associated with injury/illness
- Sections 23-25:
 - Provide EHOs with the authority to inspect
 - Outline EHOs' inspection power
- Food donation process can cause health hazards

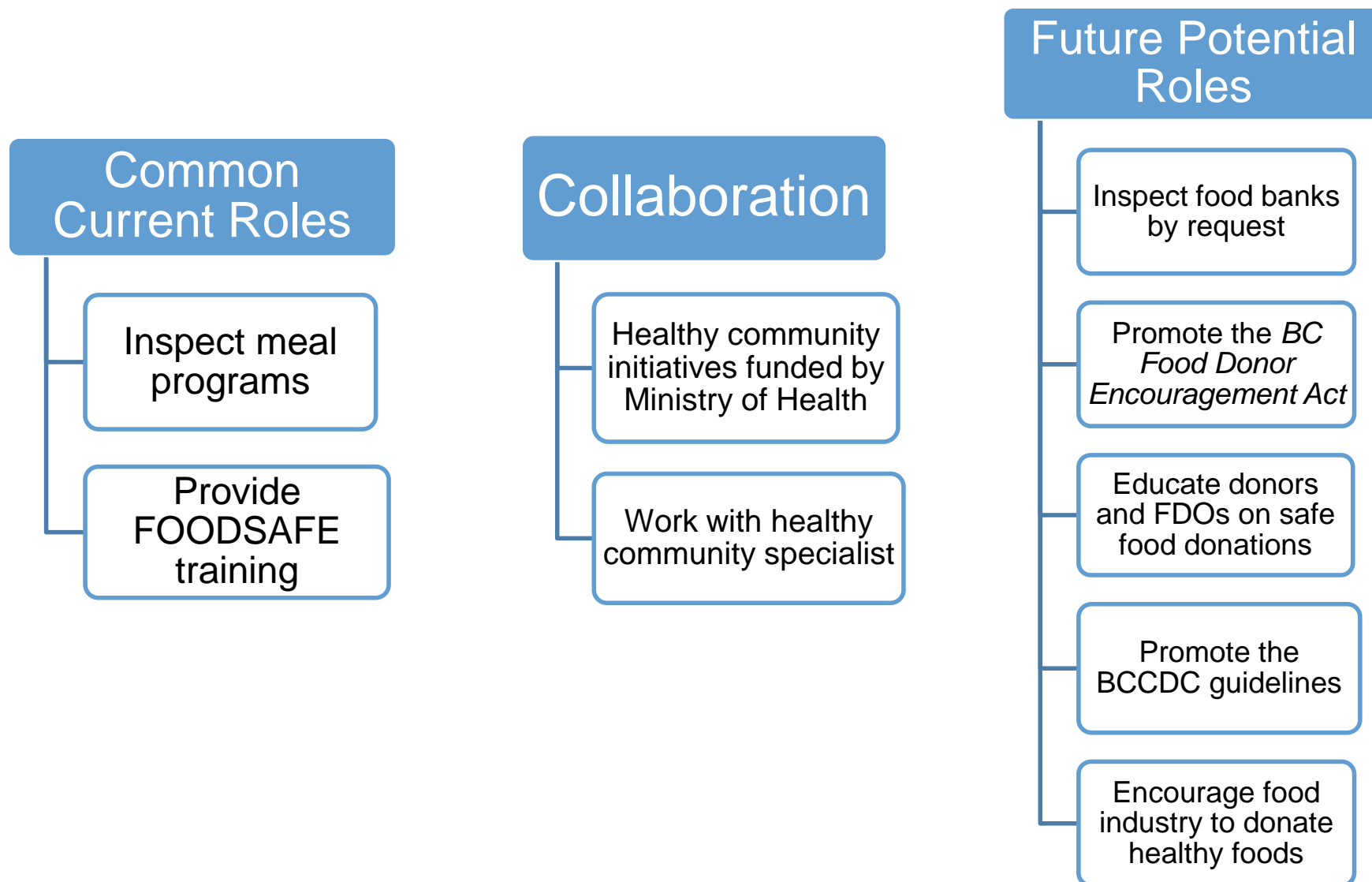
Food Premises Regulation (FPR)

- Applies to:
 - Food premises
 - FDOs that process and serve foods on-site
- Food banks are exempt
 - Definition from the FPR:
 - “a non-profit organization that operates with the exclusive intent of feeding the hungry”
 - “receives, holds, packages, repackages or distributes food to be consumed off the premise but does not process food”
- Possible reasons for exemption:
 - Do not process foods
 - Accept non-potentially hazardous foods
 - Avoid deterring good will by over-regulation

BUT...



EHOs' Role in Food Donations



WHAT ARE THE TYPES OF FOOD DISTRIBUTION ORGANIZATIONS (FDOs)?

Food Distribution Organization

Definition: recipients of food donations who distribute these foods to clients in need via a variety of methods.

FDO

Food Distribution Organizations



Food Banks



Meal Programs



Retail Outlets



Social Enterprises



Community Kitchens

Food Safety Resources for FDOs

- Food Banks Canada Safe Handling Program
- BCCDC Guidelines for Food Banks
- BCCDC Guidelines for Soup Kitchens
- Health Authority
 - Environmental Health Officers
- Ministry of Health
 - Dietitians (HealthLinkBC - dial 811)

GUIDELINES FOR FDOs WITH GROCERY OR MEAL PROGRAMS



Purpose

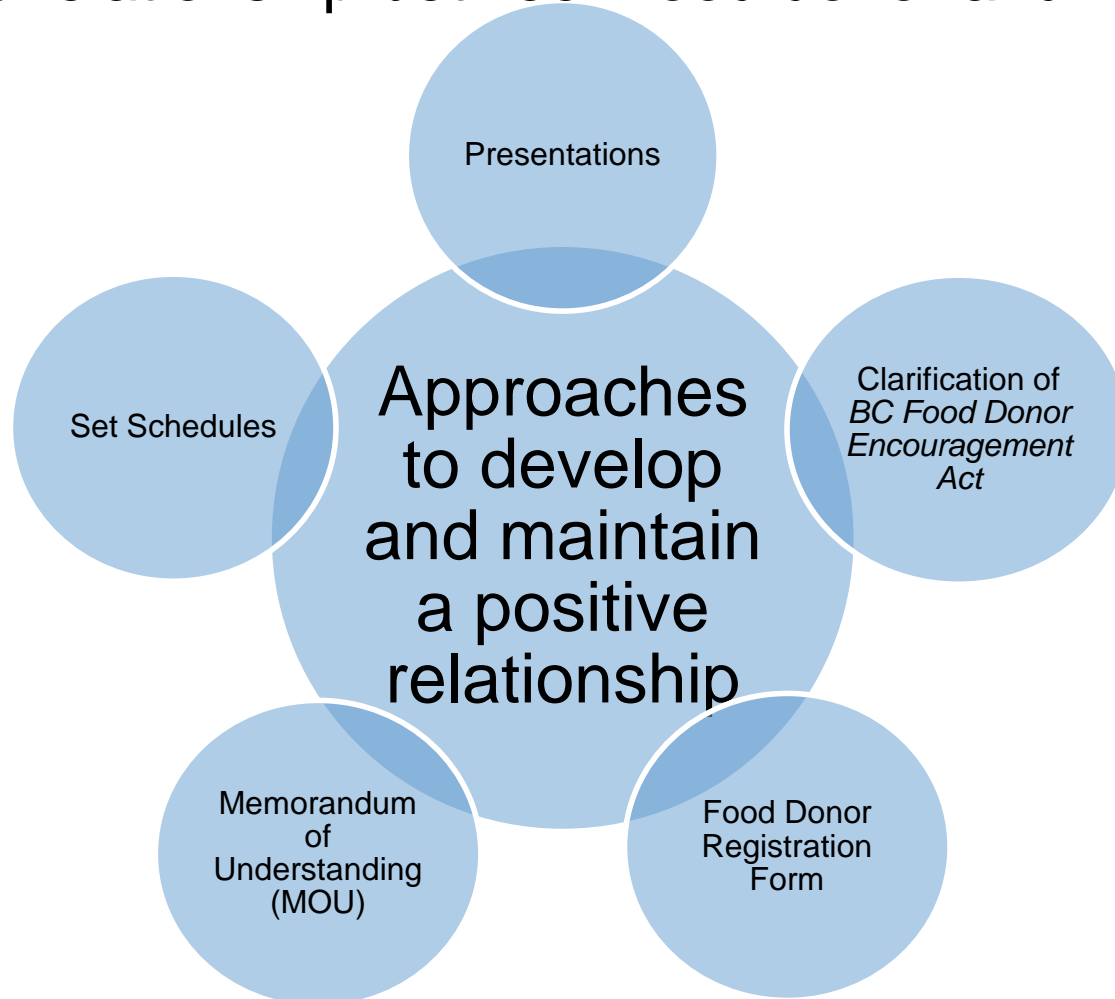
- Address the need to redistribute high quality and nutritional foods rather than just shelf stable food products
- Provide information to address food security issues and nutrition aspects
- Used as a resourceful tool for staff or volunteers to share information about safe distribution of donated healthy and nutritional foods

Healthy VS Less Healthy Foods and Beverages



Relationship Building

- Business relationship between food donor and FDO



Food Safety Standards



Category 1: Lowest Risk Non-Perishable Foods (ex. Dried Apple Slices)



Category 2: Low Risk Perishable Foods
Perishable Foods (ex. Whole Apples)



Category 3: Higher Risk Potentially Hazardous Foods (ex. Cut Apples)



Category 4: Highest Risk Foods (ex. Unpasteurized Apple Cider)

Assessing Packaging

Rodent damage

- **Droppings**
- **Urine stains (use black light to detect)**
- **Gnaw marks**



Spill or stains from unknown contaminant

- **Unknown contaminant**
- **Flood or fire damage**



Food Labels

- Food labels are required for foods being repackaged,

Donor: _____

Donation date: DD / MM / YY

Date made: DD / MM / YY

Allergens: _____

Container # of #

Donor: _____

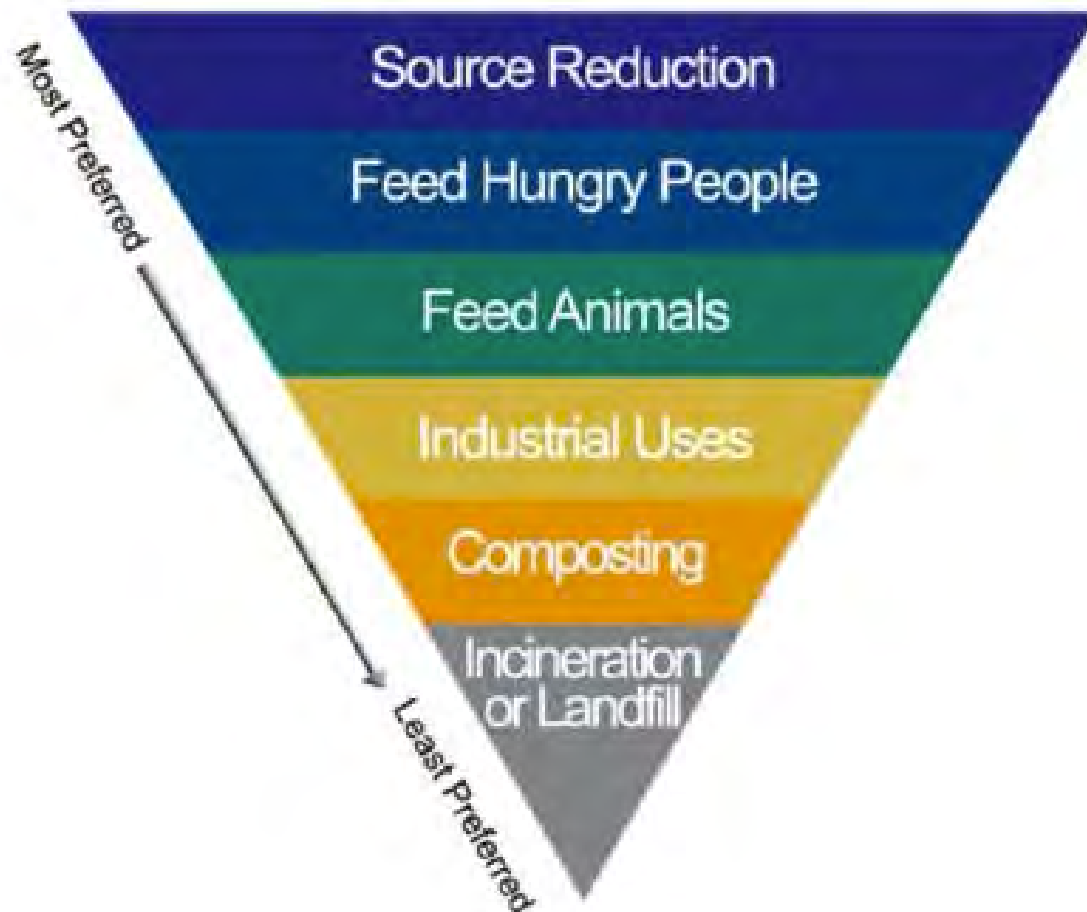
Donation date: DD / MM / YY

Date made: DD / MM / YY

Allergens: _____

Container # of #

Food Waste





CASE STUDY

What is Donated to Food Banks?

Needed:



Food Donation



Donated food comes from:

- Personal donation
- Reclaimed foods

Food is checked and culled

Food is sorted and stored until needed

Food Premises Pick Up Program

- Donors call for pick up as needed
 - PHFs must be donated from inspected food premises
- Food is picked up in a refrigerated truck
- Same day delivery to meal programs
 - Meal programs request certain food types
- Food is served immediately



Problem: Operating on Limited Resources

Problem



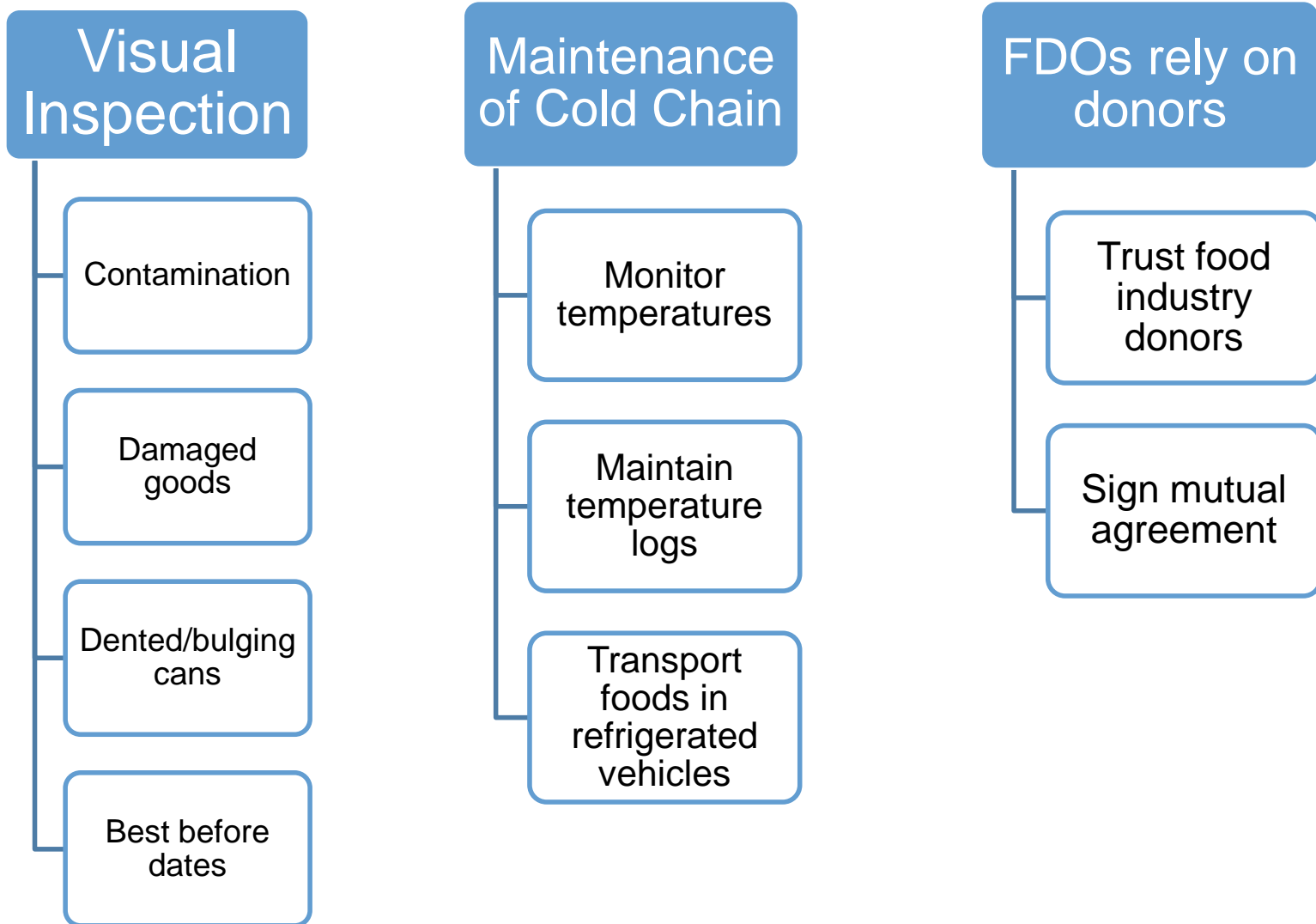
Solution

Contact Health Authority for individual needs

- Food safety advice
- Assessment

HOW DO FDOs ASSESS FOOD SAFETY AND WHAT ARE THE COMMON FOOD SAFETY ISSUES?

FDOs' Assessment of Food Safety





Inability to
identify foods
suitable for
donation



Safety
issues of
donated
foods



Inability to
determine
level of risk in
foods

Improper food
protection
from potential
contamination

INDUSTRY FOOD DONATION GUIDELINES

Purpose of *Industry Food Donation Guidelines*

- Developed to help food industry donate safe, healthy, and fresh foods to FDOs
- Outline what retailers, farmers, food manufacturers, caterers, hotels, and other food businesses need to know about donating safe, nutritional, and quality foods

What are the Benefits of Donating Food?

- 1 • Increase community level engagement
- 2 • Reduce environmental impact
- 3 • Increase corporate social responsibility
- 4 • Attract socially conscious consumers
- 5 • Increase financial benefits
- 6 • Address liability concerns

Managing Unsellable Foods

Step 1

Determine if food is appropriate for donation



Step 2

Determine which FDO to donate the food to



Step 3

Record and track food donations

WHY SHOULD FOOD INDUSTRY DONATE?

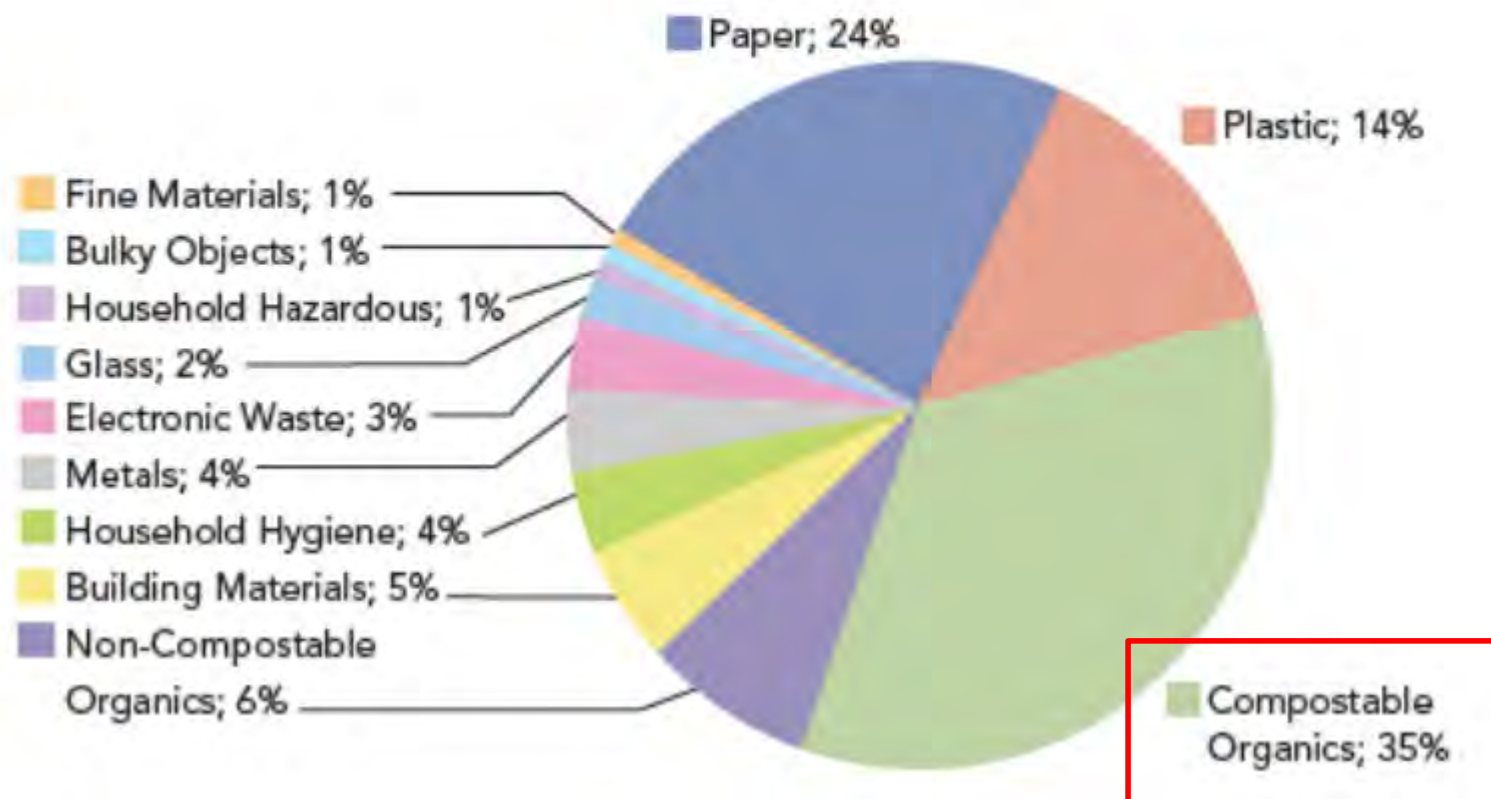
Why Donate Food?

- Every month, food banks help out **97,000** individuals in BC
- Food bank use in BC has increased by 24.7% since 2008



Reducing Waste

Waste Composition in Metro Vancouver



Reducing Waste

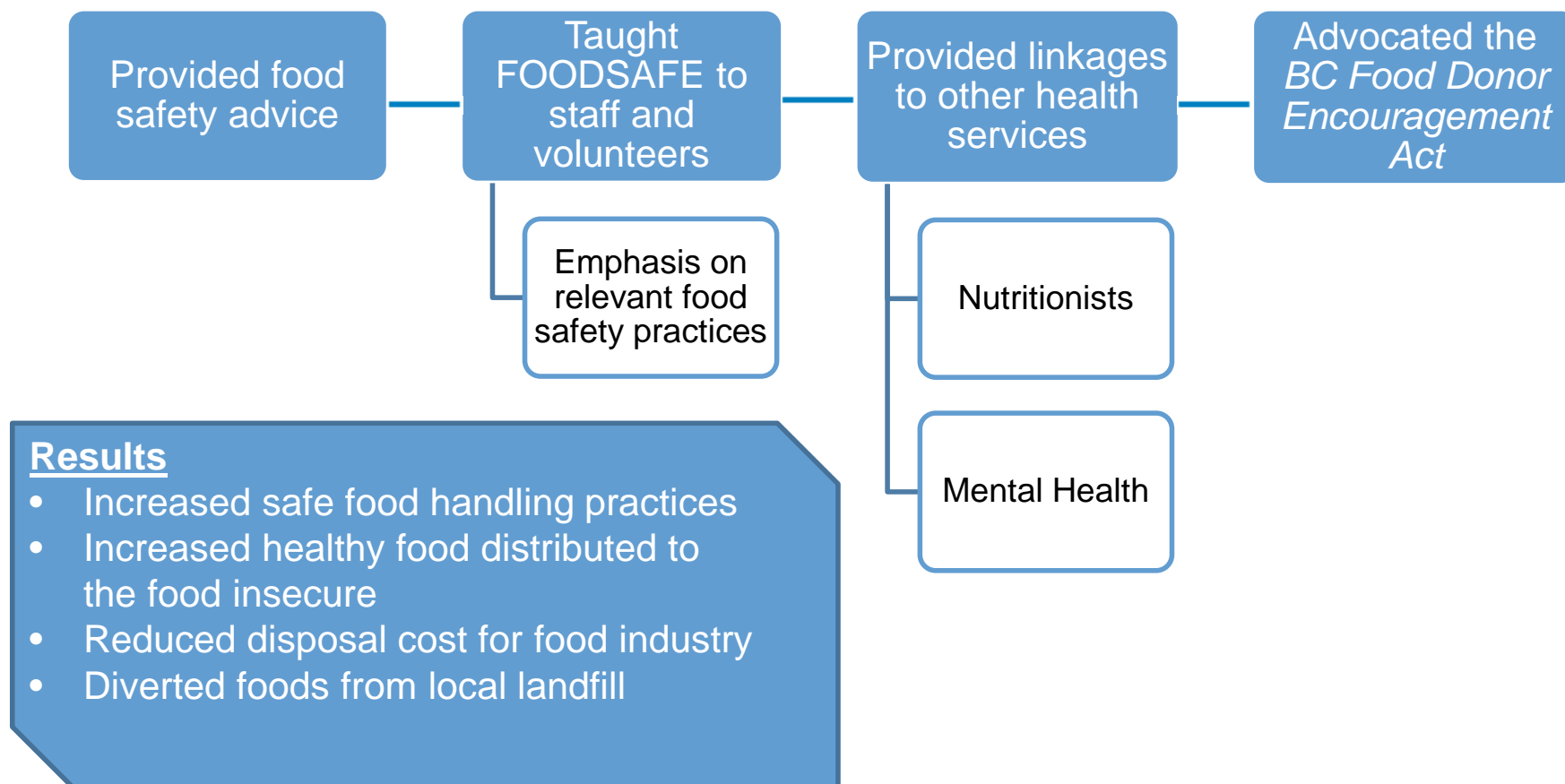
Organic Waste Bin



EHO INVOLVEMENT

KITIMAT FOOD SHARE

EHO Involvement: Kitimat Food Share



CONCLUSION

What are the problems?

Food insecurity is a public health issue

FDOs address food insecurity but operate with limited resources

FDOs receive small amounts of healthy foods

Food insecure are in need of healthy foods

Food insecure are vulnerable to foodborne illnesses

What are EHOs' Potential Roles?

EHOs' mandate is to protect public health

Promote food industry to donate healthy foods

Promote the *BC Food Donor Encouragement Act* and the BCCDC guidelines

Inspect food banks as per request

Educate on safe food donations

Educate food donors to provide relevant food information to FDOs

What are the Benefits to the Environment and Public Health?

Reduce food waste entering landfill and compost

Move towards a sustainable community

Food insecure will have access to safe and healthy foods

THANK YOU!

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