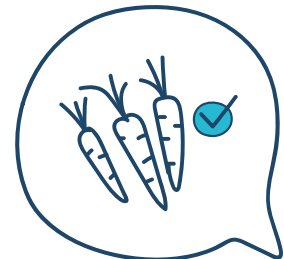


COMMUNITY

MEAL



SERVICES



YOUR GUIDE TO GETTING STARTED



FoodCloud
Academy



FoodCloud

Top tips for using surplus food in your existing services



Start small

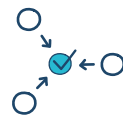
Try one day a week using surplus food from FoodCloud to show what's possible.



Keep menus flexible - substitution is key

The biggest challenge starting out is getting other food sources to supplement what you'll receive from FoodCloud each week. Most places run on rotating menus, so substitution is essential.

Chefs need to be creative. Have fun with the surprise ingredients! Some items you get might be things an organisation wouldn't usually splurge on – a perfect chance to try new meals and boost nutrition in exciting ways.



Build a strong sustainable food supply. Don't depend on just one source.

While FoodCloud is a great starting point, also reach out to local food shops, cafés, and suppliers to build stronger, local food partnerships that last.



Ask for the right kind of food

When working with food partners, it's okay to request food that's useful – like fresh fruit and veg – so you can make the best use of what you get.



Build a solid team

Get a small group of committed people together to lead the charge. A strong team helps the project keep going and growing over time.





Connect with others in your area

Reach out to other community groups and projects nearby. Share food, resources, ideas, and support. Working together strengthens everyone and makes your efforts go further.



Use food as a tool to connect with people

Surplus food acts as a **powerful connector** - particularly in engaging individuals and families who may not typically interact with local services, such as those living in underserved communities. For example, a home school liaison officer reported new connections being made through food collection.



Leverage food donations to stretch limited budgets further

Using surplus food **lowers the cost of programme delivery**, freeing up resources for other needs like tools, training, or facility improvements.



Use FoodCloud's motto: No good food goes to waste

Remember: you're getting perfectly good food from supermarkets. Follow FoodCloud's motto "no good food goes to waste." With the right mindset and storage practices, you can turn this into a real success.



YOUR
JOURNEY
starts
HERE

Community Meal Services

Want to feed your community, reduce waste, and save money? Here's how. Turn surplus food into something powerful - meals, connection, and community impact.

WHY?

- Save money
- Offer more choice
- More food to share
- Support those in need

1

HOW WILL YOU
USE this FOOD?

Can you create a menu around surplus food?

WHO are we supporting?

HOW much food can we use?

HOW will we measure success?

Tipperary Community Council

"We prepare and serve meals for around 120 people every day. Surplus food can do more than fill stomachs- it can build relationships, restore dignity and create pathways to wider support."

2 IMPACT

SET
CLEAR
GOALS

3 STORAGE

BIG ENOUGH
CLEAN
SAFE
SECURE

DRY STORAGE
for cupboard items

FRIDGE & FREEZER
for chilled/ frozen food

FOOD for DONATION
stored separately

YOU'LL NEED...

4 FOOD SAFETY

5 TRAINING
CHECKLIST

HSA
An tAidís Náisiúnaí um Ailteacht agus Sláinte
(Health and Safety Authority)

MANUAL
HANDLING

FOOD
SAFETY

LEVEL ONE: Required if giving out food parcels.

LEVEL TWO: Required if cooking or preparing food.

Food Safety
AUTHORITY OF IRELAND

6 SUPPORT
VOLUNTEERS

Volunteer
Ireland
Oibrí Dheonach Éireann

VOLUNTEERS
are
VITAL!

7 INSURANCE

✓ FOOD COLLECTION
✓ FOOD DISTRIBUTION
✓ VOLUNTEERS

8

CONNECT with
FOOD CLOUD

Contact our
Community
Engagement
team!

FoodCloud

charities@foodcloud.ie

Buncloody Further Education Centre

"We incorporate surplus food into cooking and nutrition classes, reducing financial barriers and making education more accessible. We also preserve and creatively reuse food that would otherwise go to waste."

✓ INFORM
your
ENVIRONMENTAL
HEALTH OFFICER

HE

EMO

✓ CREATE
a HACCP PLAN

HACCP

PROVIDE TRAINING
and
HEALTH & SAFETY
PROCESSES



Case Study: Tipperary Community Council - Community Services Centre

Overview

In a small but vibrant community, a local organisation has reimagined how surplus food can do more than fill stomachs - it can build relationships, restore dignity, and create pathways to wider support.

Through their **Meals on Wheels** service and the **Mustard Seed Community Restaurant**, food has become a tool for social connection and lasting impact.





How do you use FoodCloud in your service?

Surplus food is at the heart of this organisation's work, but it's used for much more than just feeding people - it's a vehicle for connection, inclusion, and dignity.

The food is used across two key services:

- **Meals on Wheels**, which delivers nutritious meals to individuals in their homes.
- The **Mustard Seed Community Restaurant**, which provides a welcoming space where people can enjoy meals together in a community setting.

The organisation partnered with FoodCloud to support its community food services. This provided access to a structured, reliable supply of surplus food, which is delivered regularly from **FoodCloud hub**. This allows them to prepare and serve meals for around 120 people every day.

The organisation also shifted from ad-hoc food handouts to a **sign-up system**, allowing them to deliver food in a more organised and dignified way. This approach enables them to learn more about each recipient, fostering deeper support beyond meals - such as connecting people with health, housing, or wellbeing services.

The community restaurant and Meals on Wheels service are more than just meal programmes - they're a way to connect with individuals who may be vulnerable or in need of extra support. By providing nourishing food and regular contact, they help people feel part of the community, build social connections, and access wrap-around services they may need to thrive.



Benefits for service users

- ✓ **Improved nutrition and dignity:** Meals are thoughtfully prepared using high-quality food. This enhances both physical wellbeing and self-worth.
- ✓ **A sense of belonging:** The food programme helps reduce isolation, particularly among older adults, new members to the community, and those going through hard times. Shared meals and regular contact build relationships and trust.
- ✓ **Pathways to further support:** The food service often becomes a bridge to broader assistance - mental health support, social services, or simply someone to talk to.
- ✓ **Community empowerment:** The model encourages volunteers, neighbours, and service users to take part - turning recipients into participants and building local resilience.



Benefits for the organisation

- ✓ **Reduced costs:** Surplus food from FoodCloud dramatically lowers the cost of purchasing fresh ingredients, especially expensive staples like carrots or meat.
- ✓ **Operational stability:** With a steady supply of food, the organisation can plan ahead and ensure reliable, high-quality service delivery.
- ✓ **Wider reach:** Structured use of surplus food has allowed the organisation to triple its meal output since the programme began.

Conclusion

By using surplus food with structure, intention, and care, this organisation has created a model that goes beyond charity.

It strengthens the fabric of the community - nourishing bodies, restoring dignity, and building lasting human connections.



Case Study: Bunclody Further Education and Training Centre

Overview

Bunclody FETC plays a vital role in supporting community education and development through inclusive, hands-on learning experiences. They use surplus food as a powerful tool to engage hard-to-reach individuals and create welcoming spaces for connection and learning. By incorporating surplus food into cooking and nutrition classes, they reduce financial barriers and make education more accessible.

Their innovative approach also promotes sustainability, as they preserve and creatively reuse food that would otherwise go to waste. Through these efforts, Bunclody FETC strengthens both community wellbeing and environmental responsibility.





How do you use FoodCloud in your service?

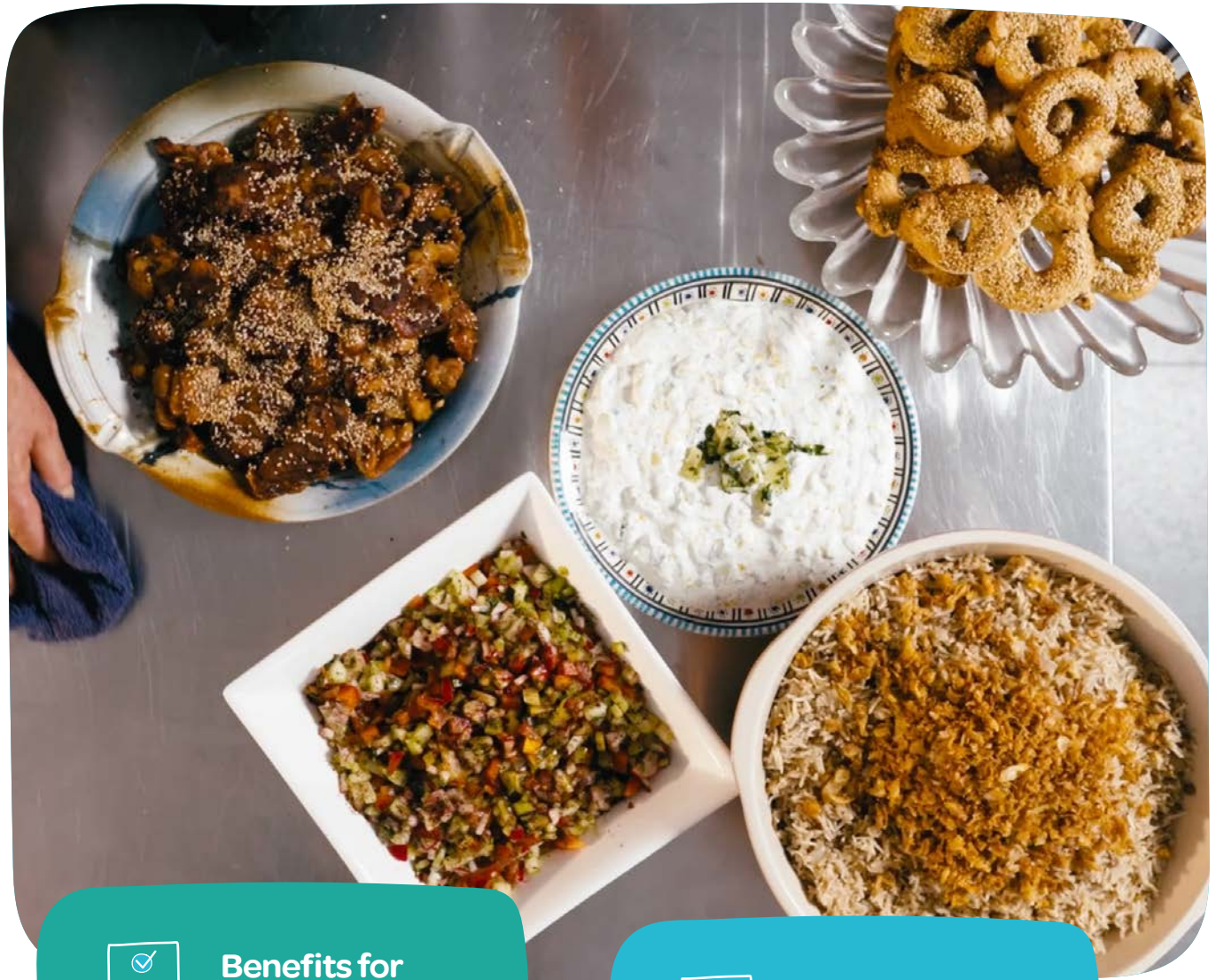
Surplus food is sourced through the **Foodiverse App**, **collected from the retailers** and it's then carefully sorted. Items that can be used immediately or within a day or two are prioritized.

The remaining food is shared with two schools via home school liaison officers, who collect on designated days. Some of the surplus is preserved through methods like freezing, making ice cream (e.g., from excess strawberries), and dehydrating (e.g., bananas for granola).

The surplus food is also integrated into daily educational cookery courses, helping learners prepare a variety of meals based on what's available. In addition, surplus items are shared more broadly across the centre, ensuring that all learners can benefit.







Benefits for the service

- ✓ **Substantial cost savings:** Surplus food reduces the need to buy ingredients, enabling the delivery of a wide variety of dishes.
- ✓ **Flexibility in teaching:** The availability of different foods allows the educator to prepare multiple dishes, enhancing the learning experience.
- ✓ **Improved infrastructure use:** Tools like ice cream makers and dehydrators are maximised due to the diverse surplus collected.



Benefits for the users / learners

- ✓ **Access to nutritious food:** Especially for lower-income or marginalised groups.
- ✓ **Practical cookery education:** Using real-world ingredients.
- ✓ **Connection to wider support services:** Seen in increased participation from families through home school liaison officers.
- ✓ **Support for basic needs:** Especially in areas with vulnerable populations like children or individuals with disabilities.

**Join
Ireland's
largest
food rescue
network**

food.cloud/community-partnerships