



# Food Recovery: Feeding Communities, Not Landfills

Alliance for a Hunger Free NY – Food Summit – June 12, 2024



# Rockland Community Against Hunger (RCAH)

## Introduction & Background – Food Recovery



**Anita Dreichler**

Coordinator

Rockland Community Against Hunger

# STRUGGLING FOR FOOD

## OUR NATIONAL PROBLEM

**WHAT IS FOOD INSECURITY?**



Lack of consistent access to enough food for all household members to have an active and healthy life.

Limited or uncertain availability of nutritionally adequate foods.

## HOW DOES FOOD INSECURITY HAPPEN?



Overlapping life challenges force families to make trade-offs between housing or medical bills and nutritionally adequate food.

## WHO IS AFFECTED BY FOOD INSECURITY?

**1 out of every 6 children in the U.S.**



**1 in 8 Americans**



**63%**

of senior households have to choose between food and medical care

**2.7M**

Rural households face food insecurity



**1 in 4 African-American children** struggle getting enough to eat

**1 in 4 Latino children** are at risk of hunger



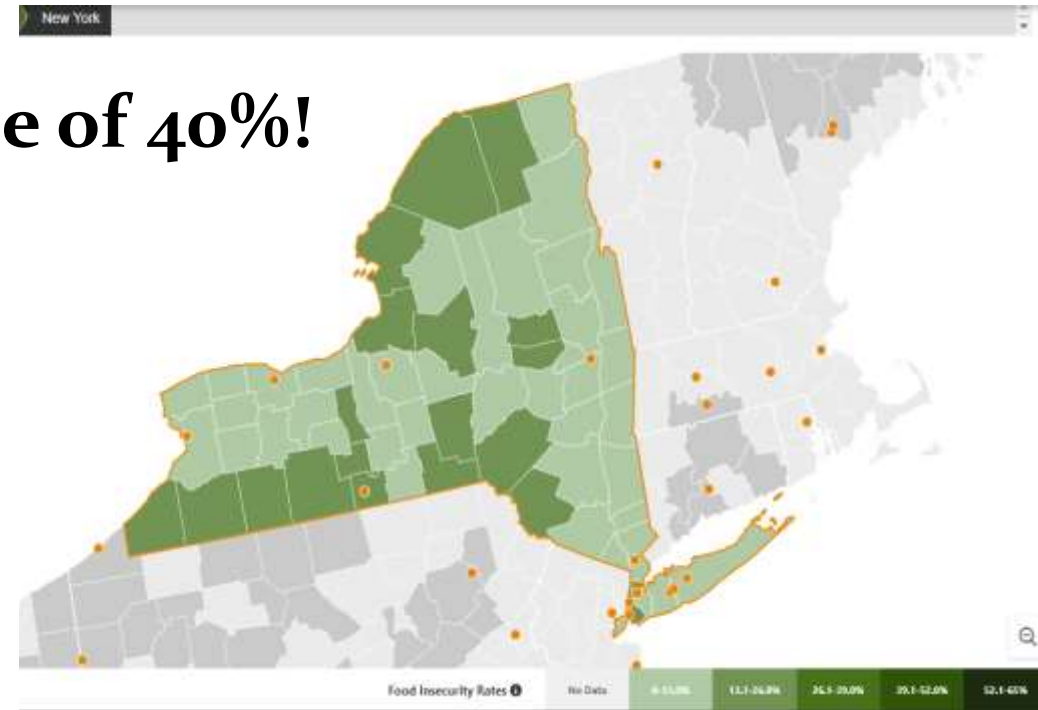
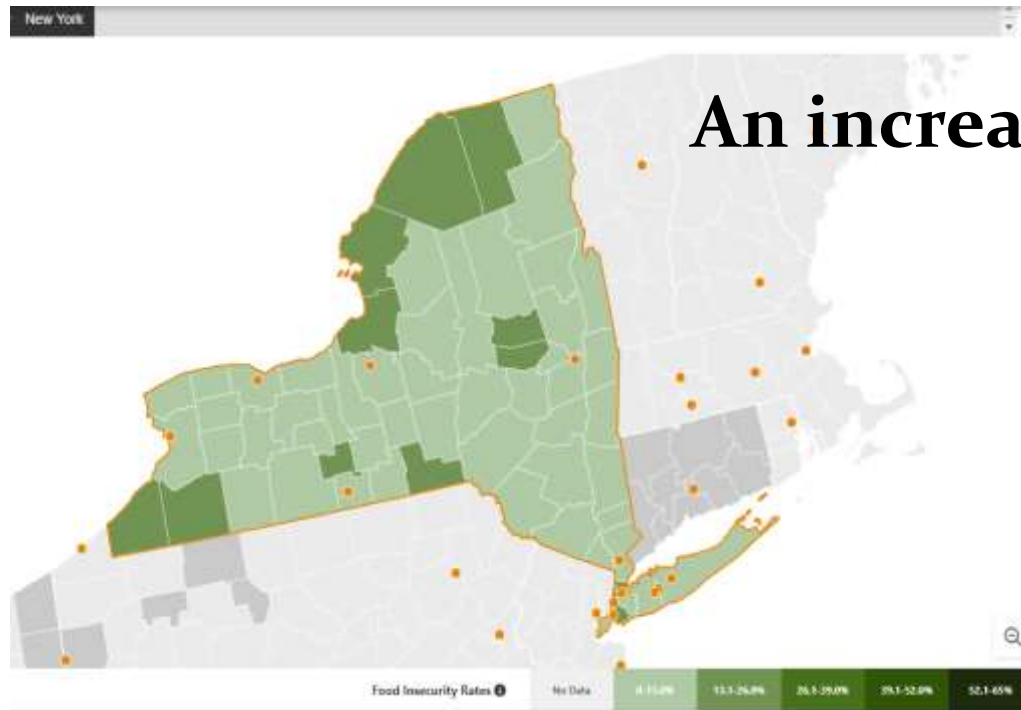
# What is Food Insecurity?

- Lack of consistent access to enough food of all household members to have an active and healthy life.
- Limited or uncertain availability of nutritionally adequate foods.
- Many factors contribute to food insecurity
- 1 out of 8 Americans and 1 out of 6 children are food insecure

# Food Insecurity Statistics for NYS<sup>(1)</sup>

**2020** 1,882,580 people were reported as food insecure

**2022** - 2,638,700 or 1 out of 7 people in NY were food insecure



**23%** of those considered food insecure were above the SNAP threshold

**42%** of those considered food insecure were above the SNAP threshold

(1) Feeding America - <https://map.feedingamerica.org/county/2022/overall/new-york>



# Food Waste in the US

- More than 44 million Americans lack reliable access to nutritious meals. <sup>(1)</sup>
- Meanwhile, 80-100+ billion pounds of food go uneaten in the U.S. each year – or 30-40% of the country's entire food supply. <sup>(1)</sup>
- Effective January 1, 2022, the NYS Food Donation and Food Scraps Recycling law requires businesses and institutions that generate an annual average of two tons of wasted food per week or more must: <sup>(1)</sup>
  1. donate excess edible food; and
  2. recycle all remaining food scraps if they are within 25 miles of an organics recycler (composting facility, anaerobic digester, etc.).

<sup>(1)</sup> US Dept. of Agriculture



# Food Recovery in NY

- There are many organizations throughout NYS providing food recovery and distribution services
  - 8 organizations canvassed in upstate, Hudson Valley and Long Island recovered 6 million pounds of food from over 240 sources and distributed to over 350 recipient organizations
  - Feeding Westchester recovered and distributed 21 million pounds in 2023
  - City Harvest has recovered and distributed over 1 billion pounds of food in 40 years!
- The focus for all is to recover and distribute good healthy food!
  - 75% of the food recovered and distributed by City Harvest NYC is produce
- Food Recovery organizations report that the number of people needing food has increased from 20% to over 100+% since the pandemic!



# Food Recovery Presenters

- **Many types of Food Recovery organizations:**
  - Organizations picking up prepared food from hotels, restaurants and event venues.
  - Farms and Cooperatives connecting with Food Recovery organizations
  - Individual or collaborative organizations picking up directly from stores, farms, bakeries, etc. and distributing to local food pantries and meal programs.
  - Organizations arranging for individuals to pick up food and distribute to food pantries
- **Deb Goedeke** – *Destination Services Manager and Albany County Film Commissioner for Discover Albany*
- **Meghan Young** – *Cornell Cooperative Extension of Orange County SNAP-ED Nutritionist*
- **Julian Palmer** – *Executive Director of TOUCH (Together Our Unity Can Heal); lead agency of Rockland Community Against Hunger (RCAH)*
- **Les Aylesworth** - *Community Hunger Outreach Warehouse (CHOW), a program of the Broome County Council of Churches*

# Championing Sustainability: Integrating Food Recovery

Deb Goedeke  
Destination Services Manager



DISCOVER  
**ALBANY**



# **Cornell Cooperative Extension of Orange County SNAP-Ed & Rescued EATS**



**Meghan Young**  
Nutrition Educator  
Cornell Cooperative Extension



**Cornell Cooperative Extension  
Orange County**

**RESCUED EATS**

# Rescued EATS

Reduce food insecurity

Fill nutritional gaps

Improve nutrition among those at risk of poor health, chronic disease, and obesity.



# Vision

Address malnutrition  
and food insecurity

Reduce food waste.





# Goal

Create opportunities to build capacity

Supplement meals

Impact the health of the Hudson Valley





# What can SNAP-Ed do?

## Rescued EATS

Education

Assessment

Technical

Support



# Rescued EATS Roundtables

Need for connection

Facilitated first Rescued EATS roundtable  
in September 2021

17 roundtables held to date

Created a foundation for partners to  
connect, grow and learn

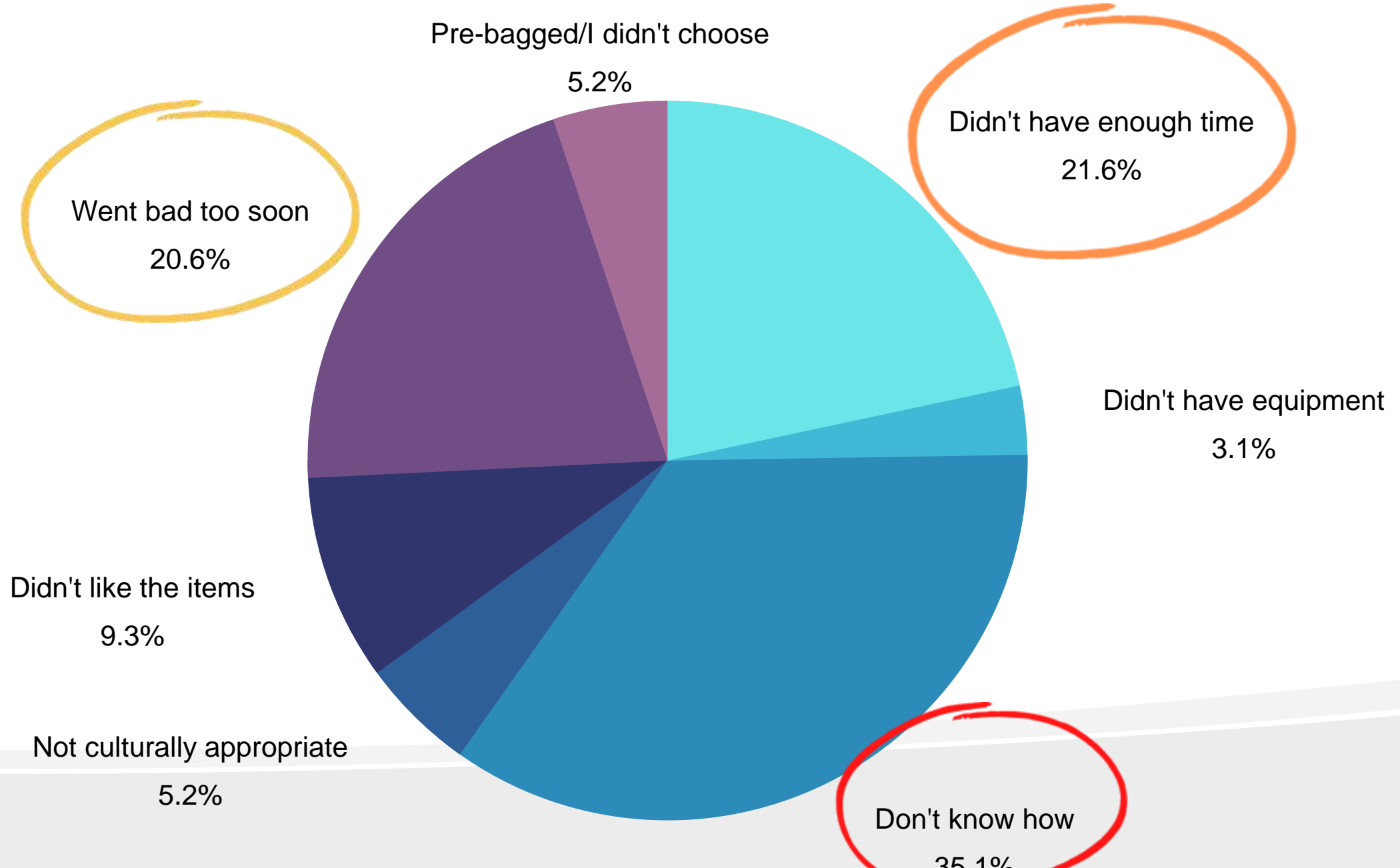


# Survey Says...





# What happened or why did not use produce?





# Think about this...

35 individuals answered "Yes/Maybe" to  
produce going unused

52 answered "Why



# Prepackaged meals/components:

- 88% of pantries and 71% of clients said they would be interested in distributing/receiving prepackaged meals/meal components



# Barriers to Processing:

Kitchen/equipment

Capacity: staff and volunteers

Funding

Storage

Transportation



# **Project Awesomesauce!**



# **How it started...**

**Levy Restaurants @ Legoland**

**CCEOC Gleaning Team**

**Crist Bros Orchards, Orange County NY had 1600lbs of apples**

**Levy would process into applesauce in kitchens with their staff**

**CCEOC Gleaning would re-distribute to food pantries**

**All attempts to work through the liability/challenges**



**How it ended...**











Friday 4:28 PM

🍏 Did you know at school today, Middies had applesauce made from local apples picked at Crist Orchard right here in Orange County?

🍏 When we asked the kids, they said Cinnamon Applesauce was their favorite!

🍏 Check out our favorite cinnamon applesauce recipe here: <http://lil.ms/okwb/8ssr06>



Text Message



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Receive 1-2 texts per week to keep your family healthy & active.



Sign up by texting **SNAPedNY** to 89860 or scan the QR code!

Standard texting and data rates apply.



Want recipes, tips, and ideas right away?



Visit [www.snapedny.org](http://www.snapedny.org) or check out our SNAP-Ed NY channel on YouTube!



Cornell Cooperative Extension  
SNAP-Ed New York Program

 **SNAP-Ed**  
New York  
SAVE TIME. SAVE MONEY. EAT HEALTHY.



# What's next?

- Continue the conversation**
- Funding opportunities**
- More processing opportunities**
- Educational materials**

# **TOUCH / RCAH**

## **Food Recovery Collaboration**



**Julian Palmer**

Executive Director

TOUCH (Together Our Unity Can Heal)



## PROBLEM: Food Insecurity in Rockland

- **Over 49,000 people are living below the poverty line in Rockland.**  
That's 1 out of every 7 people. (US Census Bureau)
- 17% of children in Rockland are defined as food insecure by Feeding America.
- 25% of children in Rockland County live in poverty (US Census Bureau)
- 4 in 10 Rockland residents (over 130,000 people) are economically insecure, living in households that lack the income to meet the basic cost of living, including essential items such as housing, child care, food, transportation, health care, and a smartphone plan.  
(United Way, ALICE Report)
- These statistics are disturbing and unfortunately similar to many communities across NY State.



Together Our Unity Can Heal, Inc.



## RESPONSE: KEY PROGRAMS

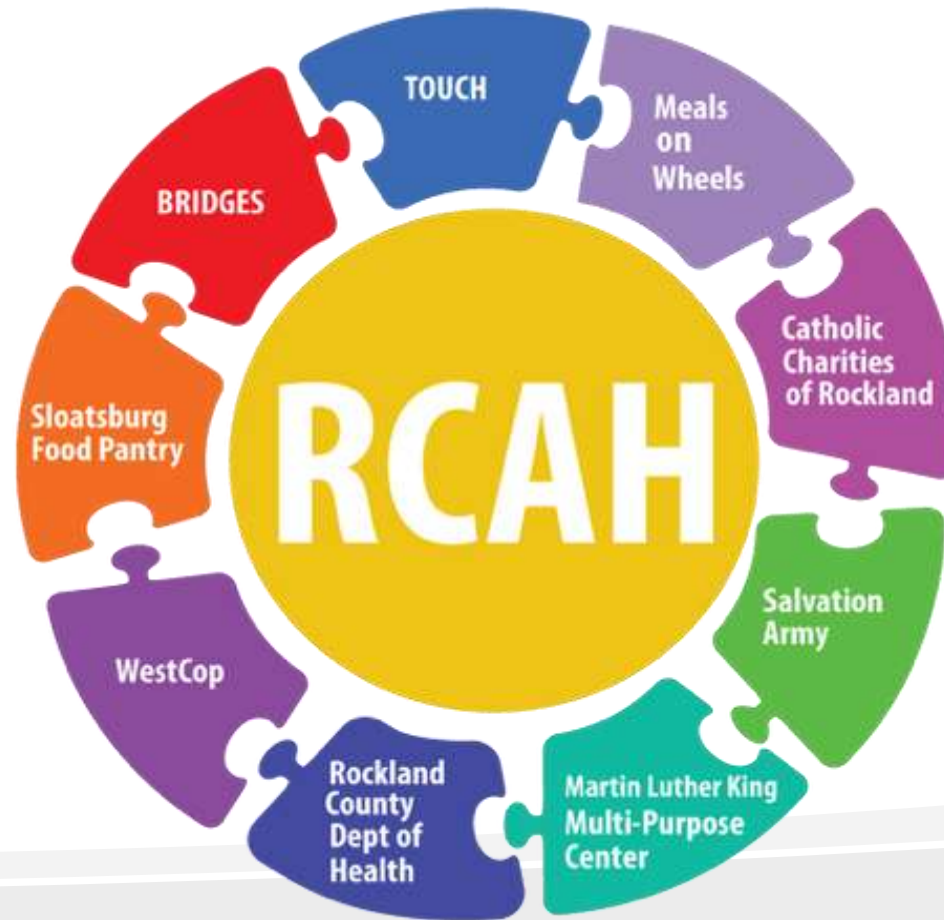
- TOUCH launched the **GET FRESH** program in 2011 with **RCAH** and works with the **Food Bank of the Hudson Valley** and the **Food Bank of Northeastern NY** to organize weekly mass distributions of food to local pantries.
- TOUCH also manages **Hunger Prevention & Nutrition Assistance Program (HPNAP)** and **FEMA Emergency Food and Shelter Program (EFSP)** grants to serve those in urgent need.
- **Through all our nutrition programs we have distributed food for over eight million meals in Rockland County over the past decade!**
- In response to the pandemic, we increased the **Get Fresh** distributions to weekly, arranged no-contact drive through pickups for safety and partnered with **Rockland Conservation Corps** volunteers.
- TOUCH recognizes that food can be medicine and is committed not only to preventing hunger but also to promoting health through better food choices. Our nutrition programs are informed by the expertise of a Registered Dietitian who also gives individualized counseling to our clients through our **Eating Well Medical Nutrition Therapy Program**.





# The RCAH Collaboration

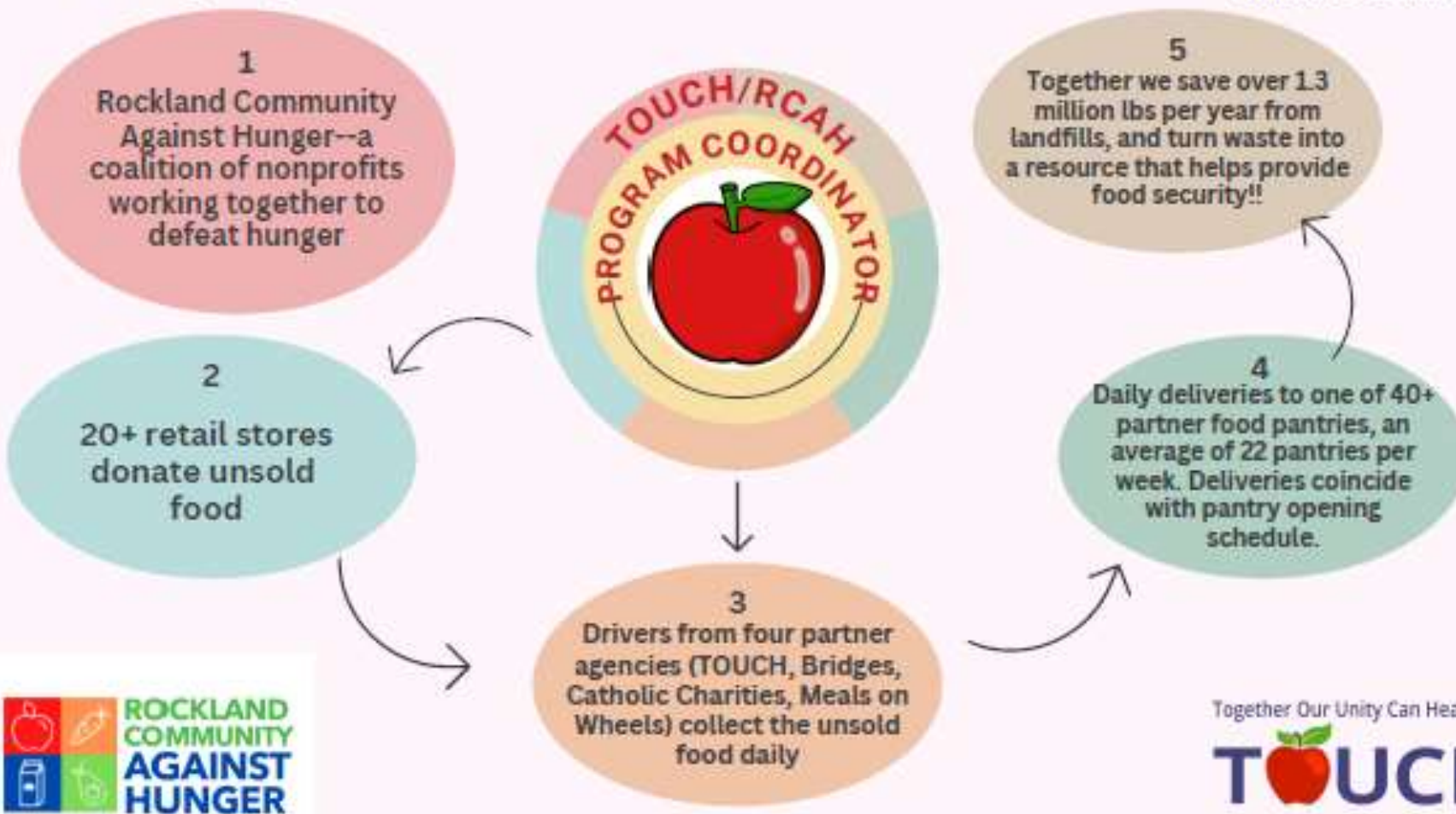
## PREVENTING HUNGER AND REDUCING FOOD WASTE SINCE 2010



# It Takes A Village - and A Lot of Coordination!

www.RocklandHunger.org

www.TouchNY.org



## **PREVENTING HUNGER AND REDUCING FOOD WASTE**

**TOUCH and our partners make a difference every day but we need to do more.**

We coordinate pickup, delivery and distribution of over 25,000 lbs. of food per week that would have gone to landfills, instead feeding the most vulnerable in our communities.

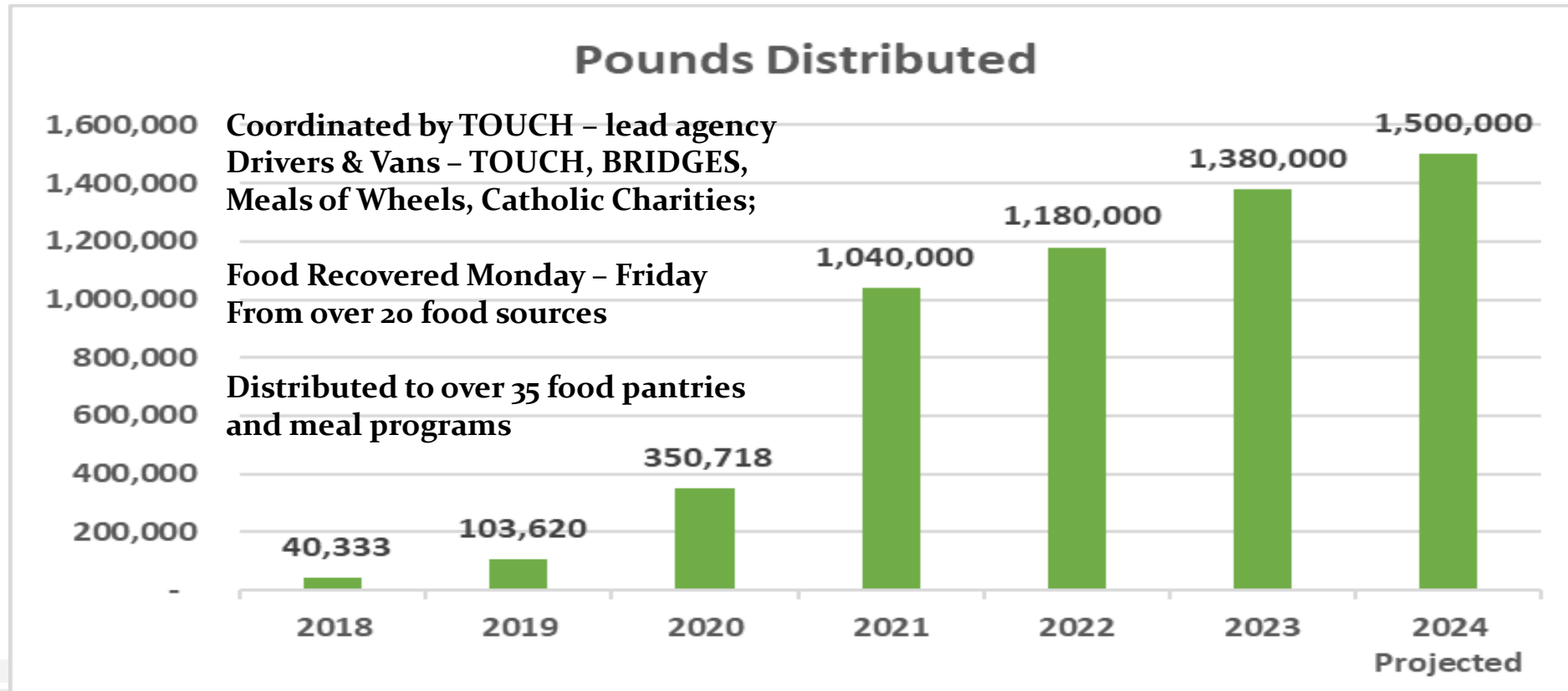
Primarily through Retail Store Partnership Agreements with the Regional Food Bank we pick up from over 20 stores and distribute to over 40 pantries and feeding programs.

### **TOUCH and The RCAH Coalition:**

Partnerships, grants, donors and volunteers power our work. Staff, vehicles, refrigeration, and more are coordinated to make sure we rescue and distribute as much food as possible to those who need it.

# PREVENTING HUNGER AND REDUCING FOOD WASTE

From small seeds big programs grow.



**On our way to over 5 million total pounds and counting since 2018!**

Together Our Unity Can Heal, Inc.



[www.TouchNY.org](http://www.TouchNY.org)

845-268-8024

**Julian Palmer**

**Executive Director**

**TOUCH-Together Our Unity Can Heal  
Can Heal**

[jpalmer@touch-ny.org](mailto:jpalmer@touch-ny.org)



[www.rocklandhunger.org](http://www.rocklandhunger.org)

845-268-8023 (option 4)

**Magda Durante**

**Food Recovery Coordinator**

**RCAH/TOUCH-Together Our Unity**

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[info@rocklandhunger.org](mailto:info@rocklandhunger.org)

**Volunteers, donations and word of mouth make our work possible.**

**Thank you for all you do to help!**

**CHOW**  
**Community Hunger Outreach Warehouse,**  
*a program of the Broome County Council of  
Churches*



**Les Aylesworth**

Director of CHOW

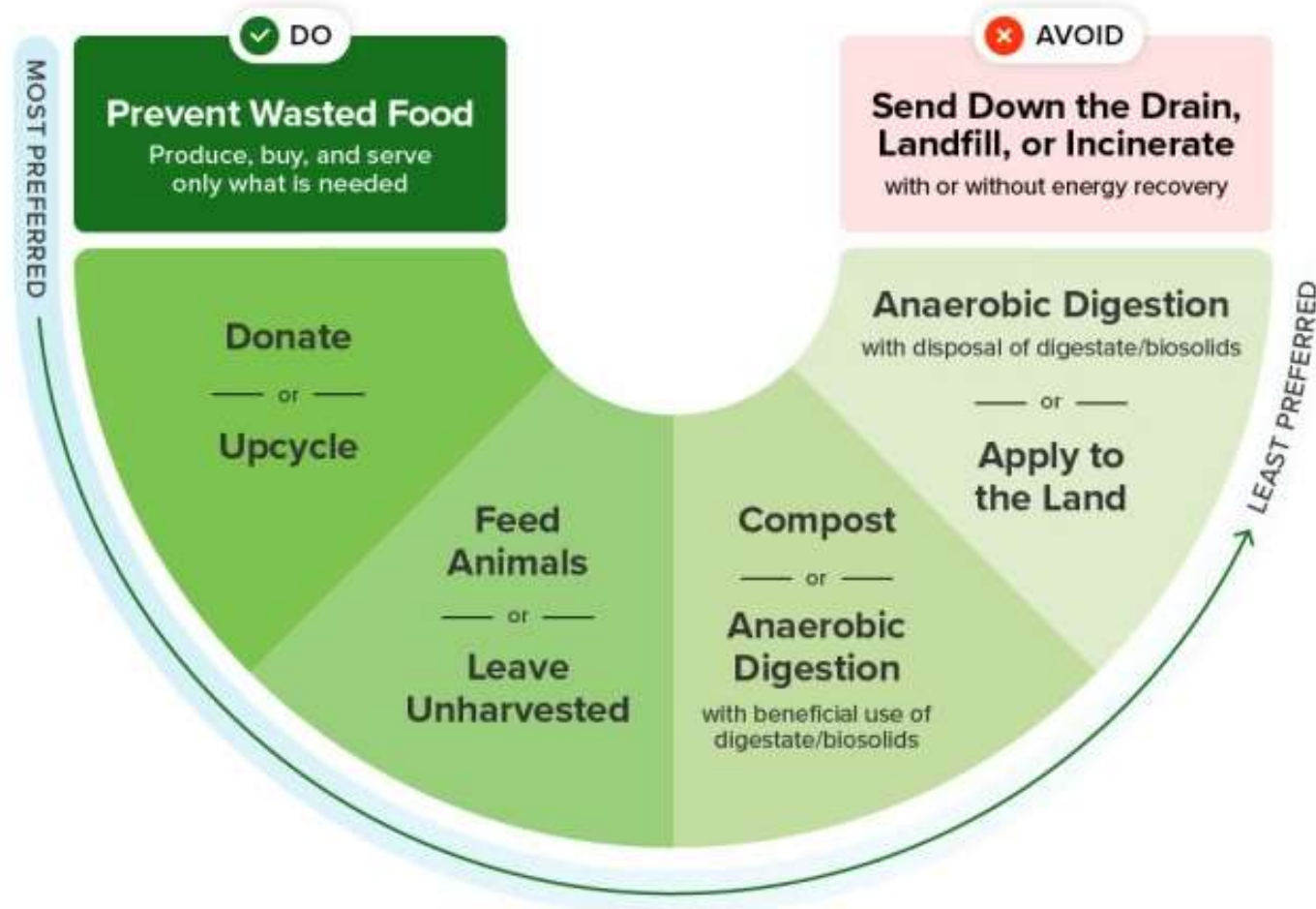
Broome County Council of Churches

# We Can All Reduce the Impact of Wasted Food

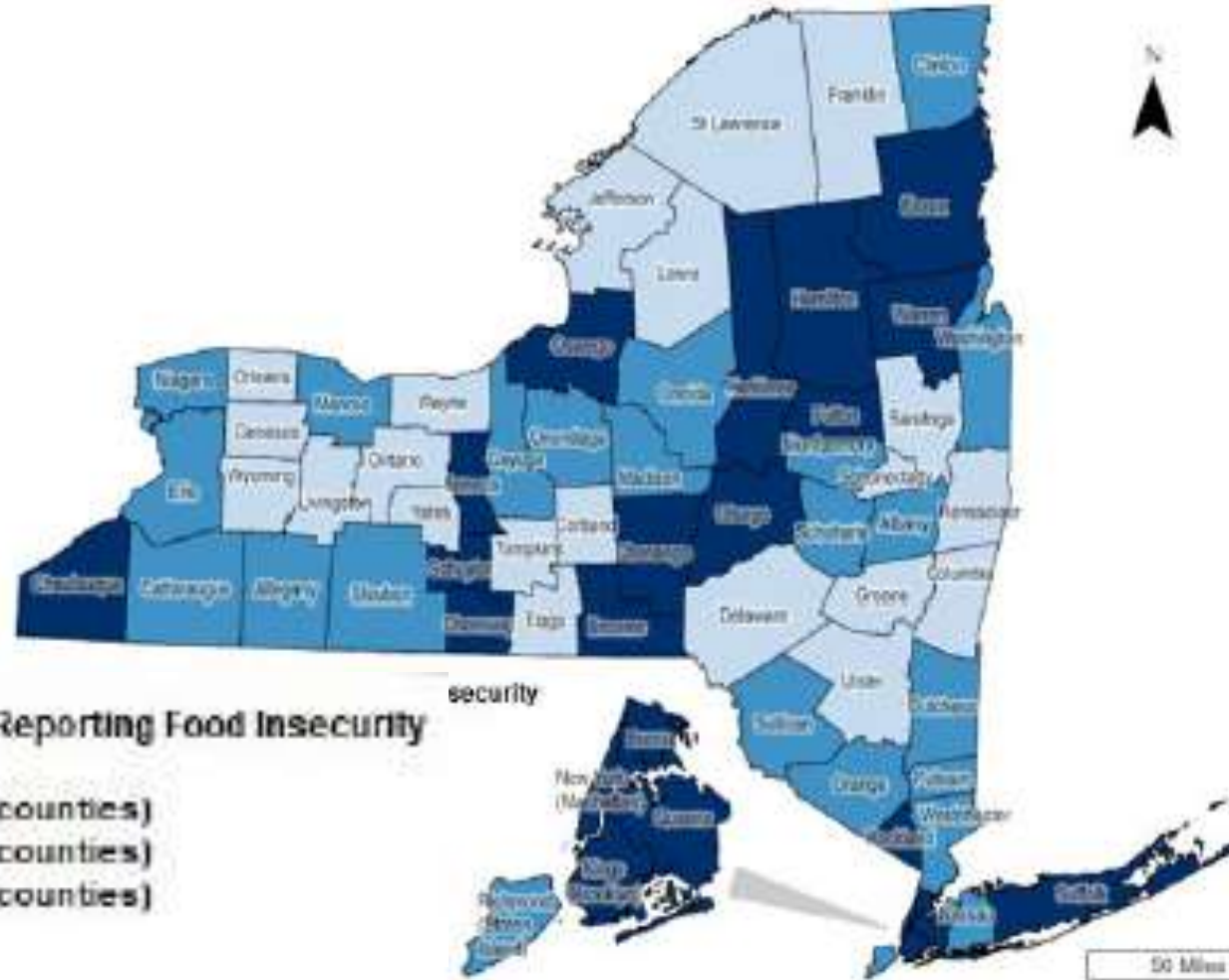


## Wasted Food Scale

How to reduce the environmental impacts of wasted food



# Self-Reported Food Insecurity Among Adults 2023



- Overall percentage is 24.9%
- Counties outside of New York City with the highest percentages are Herkimer (28.8%), Oswego (26.2%), and Rockland (25.8%).





# What is CHOW?

- Starting in 1976, CHOW is the Community Hunger Outreach Warehouse in Binghamton NY.
- It is a network of food pantries located in Broome County with the goal of making emergency food available to people requiring short-term assistance
- CHOW is a program of The Broome County Council of Churches, a network of 100+ congregations and our programs operate in an interfaith way.
- In 1985, CHOW began it's Food Recovery Program
- All food is distributed at no cost to over 115 emergency food programs

# CHOW

## Community Hunger Outreach Warehouse

**HELP**  
**CHOW**  
**STOP HUNGER**  
CHOW is a program of Broome County Council of Churches

**FOOD FOR FAMILIES, NOT LANDFILLS**

**30% of food in American grocery stores is thrown away.**

**CHOW recovered 133 Garbage Trucks worth of that good food last year.**

**Recovered food becomes part of the millions of meals CHOW distributes in our community.**

**BROOME BOUNTY**

- Recovered and distributed 2.66 million pounds of food in 2023 alone
- Operates 5 days a week with multiple trucks
- Embarking on recovering prepared food



Thank You - Questions?