

# Case Study

## OzHarvest food rescue expansion

Weekend and weeknight food pick-ups benefit community and environment.

May 2019

### AT A GLANCE:

## Surplus food ends up in landfill

Surplus food from restaurants and food companies, which could be used in meals for people in need, regularly ends up in landfill

## 3 x more food collected

By increasing the number of surplus food pick-ups from food donors, OzHarvest tripled food collection from 664 kg to 1.8 tonnes

## 40,000 extra meals

An extra 40,000 meals were prepared

## 13.5 tonnes diverted

13.5 tonnes of food diverted from landfill, avoiding 27 tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions

*OzHarvest Melbourne believed that if it offered more extensive evening and weekend food pick-ups, it could increase its number of overall food donors. That would ensure less food ended up in landfill and more people in need would be fed.*



### WHY?

OzHarvest is Australia's leading food rescue organisation. From a range of donors (restaurants and food companies), it collects high quality, surplus food otherwise destined for landfill, and distributes it to charities for use in meal provision for people in need.

The organisation's Melbourne arm already had 400 food donors and redistributed food collected to 115 charities in the metropolitan area. Of those 400 donors, 27 were in the CBD and 3.6 tonnes of food was collected from them monthly.

In 2018, OzHarvest partnered with Metropolitan Waste and Resource Recovery Group (MWRRG) on a project to expand Melbourne's donors by between 15 and 20, and thereby increasing monthly food rescue by 1.5 tonnes.

## HOW?

With the assistance of project funding, OzHarvest was able to expand its weeknight and weekend collection, especially in the CBD, and its wider Melbourne food deliveries to charitable organisations. Before the project, OzHarvest had one rescue and redistribution van on the road on Saturdays, but project funding allowed the organisation to put three vans on the road on Saturdays.

OzHarvest measured the project's deliverables by using "Crittah", its logistics technology system. The system allows the organisation to monitor the amount of food it rescues and redistributes, including the number of individual donors and other statistics regarding recipient charities.

OzHarvest discovered that there were difficulties early on in scheduling some weekend collections and deliveries because different staff or volunteers managed premises at these times. Sometimes staff/volunteer numbers were low or unstaffed.

The project, however, showed immediate effects; food rescue and redistribution on Saturdays alone soon almost tripled from 664 kg to 1.8 tonnes. That was part of a pattern for the project that saw OzHarvest Melbourne dramatically boost its overall food rescue and redistribution.

## WHAT WAS THE RESULT?

- Saturday and weeknight delivery **boosted capacity**, in the project period – late April to late June 2018.
- OzHarvest diverted **more than 13.5 tonnes of food** from landfill.
- Extra rescued food enabled charities to deliver **more than 40,000 meals** to people in need.
- More than **27 tonnes of greenhouse gas was avoided**.
- OzHarvest increased from eight CBD and metropolitan donors to collecting from **28 donors**.
- **Three vans** on Saturday means **more** of the organisation's regular Melbourne-wide donors are requesting Saturday pick-ups.



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## ABOUT MWRRG'S COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL WASTE PARTNERSHIP PROJECT

This pilot commercial and industrial (C&I) waste partnership project is a result of MWRRG research which found food and plastic waste represent two of the three highest volume C&I waste streams, have significant environmental impacts and offer the greatest potential for additional resource recovery. The project helps deliver our strategic objective of reducing waste sent to landfill as outlined in the Metropolitan Waste and Resource Recovery Implementation Plan 2016. [Download the Metropolitan Implementation Plan snapshot.](#)