

Planning for Potential Food Surplus

Why?

When food is served at events, it's common for leftovers to go to waste. However, you can take steps to minimize food waste while also repurposing excess food. To do so, it's important to create a plan for potential food surpluses in advance.

How?

Depending on the event, it may be possible to repurpose food safely, or food may need to be discarded. If you are unsure, consider asking your caterer for guidance or review this brief [guide to leftovers](#) from Health Canada.

Preventing food waste:

- Confirm the number of attendees to estimate the amount of food needed.
- Ask about dietary preferences in advance.
- Note how much food was consumed and use the information to inform your next event.
- For self-service formats, wait to refill food containers to avoid excess.
- If needed, seek advice from individuals who have executed a similar event. They may have insight on appropriate food quantities.

Repurposing the food:

- Distribute leftovers at the event or bring them back to your office or club for sharing.
 - TIP: Consider asking any staff or volunteers to bring a reusable container for leftovers and/or provide sandwich bags.
- Freeze the food items that can be easily repurposed in a different recipe.
- **Contact McGill MealCare**, which repurposes edible leftovers and donates them to local nonprofits in need.
 - Pickup is provided, depending on availability and logistics.
 - **See instructions on page 2**

Discarding food:

- Determine whether composting is available. All organic food waste and paper napkins are compostable in the city of Montreal. (Visit [Compost Montréal](#) to learn more.)
- Containers and wrappers should be correctly sorted.
 - The following [tool](#) shows how to correctly sort waste into each category.
 - Be sure to remove sandwich picks and plastic wrap before composting.
- If composting is unavailable, food waste should be thrown out in the landfill.

McGill MealCare

About

MealCare McGill is the first of 8 MealCare chapters across Canada. We work with student volunteers and drivers to divert edible surplus food from cafeterias and restaurants in downtown Montreal from becoming waste by delivering it to our food aid partners. MealCare is scaling its impact by offering a food pick-up service for events on and around campus, beginning in Winter 2023. Join us in reducing food waste and tackling food insecurity in Montreal!



Instructions

If you are planning an event on campus that may have surplus food that you would like to be donated, please send a message to [@mealcare_mcgill](#) on [Instagram](#) or [Facebook](#) with the date, approximate pick-up time, and location of the event. We recommend reaching out only if you anticipate having leftovers of roughly 5 meal portions or more, otherwise a delivery is not worthwhile. In case of a smaller amount of food, you can reach out to us on Instagram and we can recommend some food aid organizations within walking distance on campus. If less food is leftover than anticipated, please contact us so that we can inform our volunteers to cancel the delivery.

Upon receiving your request, we will let you know whether or not the pick-up will be possible. While we will try to make accommodations for all deliveries, it is possible that there are times where our volunteers will not be available.

Considerations

Perishable, non-perishable, and uncooked food (ex: raw vegetables) can be donated, provided that they comply with food safety standards. When donating food, be mindful that soups, beverages, and other hard-to-transport items may not be accepted. If possible, plan to provide your own recyclable containers for the delivery. If needed MealCare can provide aluminum tins upon request.