



Second
Helpings

Sustainability Report

2026

Sustainability in Action

How Second Helpings is reducing waste, improving operations, and fighting hunger from all angles

At Second Helpings, sustainability is woven into our mission. Every day, we rescue good food that might otherwise go to waste and put it to work nourishing our neighbors. We also look closely at how we operate—how we use energy, reduce waste, and make practical improvements that strengthen our work over time.

This year, that commitment showed up in meaningful ways. We continued rescuing and redistributing millions of pounds of food while making smart upgrades across our facility and operations. Together, those efforts help us serve more people well while using resources more thoughtfully.



Food Rescue Is Sustainability in Action

Good food should feed people, not landfills

Food rescue is one of the clearest ways we fight hunger sustainably. We work with wholesalers, grocery stores, caterers, restaurants, and other food businesses to safely collect surplus and perishable food that might otherwise be thrown away. Five days a week, our refrigerated trucks and vans are on the road rescuing produce, meat, prepared foods, bread and more so that good food can reach our community instead of a landfill.

In 2025, Second Helpings rescued 4,922,528 pounds of food, redistributed 3,563,720 pounds of food product to local partners, and distributed 1,368,726 meals. Since our founding, we have rescued 58,000,000 pounds of food from entering the waste stream. Those numbers reflect a model that reduces waste, supports nonprofit partners, and helps more people access nutritious meals.

Our impact since 1998

- **58,991,853 pounds** of food rescued
- **34,474,836 pounds** of food redirected
- **22,250,693 meals** distributed



Operational Improvements

Practical upgrades with long-term impact

This year, we made several important improvements across our facility and operations. We installed flat panel LED lighting throughout most of the building and added motion sensors to help reduce unnecessary energy use. We also added four EV chargers at our headquarters and expanded our electric equipment with one electric vehicle and one electric forklift now in service.

Inside our kitchens, we will replace our cook and hold cabinets with newer, more efficient models. Taken together, these upgrades reflect a practical approach to sustainability: making thoughtful changes that support daily operations and position us well for the future. We are continuing to monitor utility use to better understand the long-term impact of these improvements.

At a Glance

- **Flat panel LED lighting** installed throughout most of the building
- **Motion sensors** added to lighting systems
- **4 EV chargers** added at headquarters
- **1 electric vehicle** now in service
- **1 electric forklift** now in service



Reducing Waste at Every Step

Stewardship is part of our daily work

At Second Helpings, reducing waste is part of how we work every day. In our Hunger Relief and Culinary Job Training kitchens, we teach volunteers and students to use as much of each ingredient as possible and to compost what cannot be used. We also continue using donated fruits to make our own jams, helping support sandwich production while adding nutrition with less sugar and no preservatives.

Our recycling, composting, and reuse efforts remain an important part of this work. We estimate that in the last two years, our partnership with RecycleForce has helped us recycle more than **24,000 pounds of plastic and metal**. We estimate that in 2025 we composted over **58,000 pounds of food scraps** through Green with Indy, and that our reusable water bottle filler has offset the equivalent of more than **23,200 single-use water bottles** since October 2023.

We carry that same mindset into our in-house events by using compostable or reusable tableware, composting food scraps, and recycling drink containers whenever possible.



What We're Building Toward

Focused next steps for 2026

Our next major priorities are replacing refrigeration systems with current, energy-efficient models, continuing to electrify cooking equipment where possible, and installing smart thermostats to improve building energy management. We are continuing to monitor utility use so future decisions can be guided by stronger data for a clearer understanding of where additional efficiencies can be gained.

At Second Helpings, sustainability is not separate from our mission. It is one more way we fight hunger from all angles, by rescuing good food, reducing waste, and building stronger systems for the future.



Helpful Links

Learn more about our sustainability efforts

[Read last year's sustainability report](#)

[View our sustainability dashboard](#)

