

JANUARY 2026



RETAIL'S \$384B PROBLEM: HOW SURPLUS CAN BECOME YOUR MOST VALUABLE ASSET



Every day, grocery and food retailers make dozens of decisions to keep shelves stocked, shoppers satisfied, and store operations running smoothly.

And yet, some products just don't sell by the end of a shift. Shelves need clearing, and perfectly good food reaches closing time without a buyer. Across the industry, those small moments add up to something much bigger.

In the United States, more than \$384 billion worth of food now goes to waste each year.¹ In grocery stores alone, roughly 30% of food goes unsold, contributing to 16 billion pounds of retail food waste annually.² That inventory was sourced, stocked, and staffed without ever delivering its full return.

Here's what makes those numbers worth a second look: nearly 45% of all unsold food is still edible.³ For retailers navigating tight margins, rising costs, and growing pressure to do more with less, there's a clear opportunity to transform surplus food from an operational



burden into a valuable asset—simply by making better use of what's already on hand.

With the right approach, surplus food can help recover revenue, reduce disposal costs, and bring new customers through the door. This whitepaper outlines practical, low-lift strategies that help create value from food that would otherwise go to waste.



IN THE PAGES AHEAD, WE'LL EXPLORE

- The financial impact of food waste on grocery and food retailers.
- The primary drivers of surplus food across grocery and retail operations.
- The range of surplus management strategies available to businesses today.
- The easiest ways to recover revenue from surplus and reach new customers.



TABLE OF CONTENTS



- 04** The Real Price: What Food Waste Costs Food Retailers
- 05** By the Numbers: The Cost Behind Every Unsold Item
- 06** Why it Matters: The Pressures Intensifying Food Waste Costs
- 07** The Root Causes of Surplus Food: Why Are We Wasting So Much?
- 08** Beyond the P&L: Environmental and Social Stakes of Food Waste
- 09** The Social Component: Food Access and Consumer Expectations
- 10** Reframing Waste as Revenue: The Surplus Opportunity
- 11** Common Approaches to Surplus Management
 - 1. Business As Usual with No Change
 - 2. Composting as the Sole Solution
 - 3. Donating to Community Organizations
 - 4. Relying on Traditional Markdowns
 - 5. Building an In-House Surplus Platform
- 13** Adopt a Hybrid Approach with Too Good To Go
- 14** How Too Good To Go Works: Surplus Into Surprise Bags
- 15** Perks of the Too Good To Go Marketplace
- 16** What Success Looks Like: Measurable Surplus Management Outcomes
 - 1. Financial Outcomes
 - 2. Operational Outcomes
 - 3. Brand and Customer Outcomes
- 17** The Future of Food Retail: Sustainability as Strategy
- 18** From Problem to Profit: Transform Surplus With Too Good To Go
- 19** References





THE REAL PRICE: WHAT FOOD WASTE COSTS FOOD RETAILERS

Across the U.S. food supply chain, a significant portion of what’s produced never reaches people. In 2024, 29% of the 240 million tons of available food went unsold or uneaten.⁴ Only 15% of surplus food in the U.S. is donated or repurposed, with most surplus becoming food waste that exits the supply chain entirely.

Overall, 25% of all food in the U.S. – more than 63 million tons – becomes waste each year.⁴

These figures highlight a surplus challenge that touches every part of the industry, not a single-source issue. But for grocery and food retailers, the impact is growing. Every pound of surplus represents lost investments in labor, ingredients, energy, transportation, and inventory space.

The sections ahead take a closer look at what that loss truly costs, and why understanding surplus is the first step toward recovering value that is already built into the system.



BY THE NUMBERS: THE COST BEHIND EVERY UNSOLD ITEM

Food waste carries a far higher price tag than most businesses realize. Across all sectors, including grocery and food retail, the value of food that goes to waste reached \$384 billion in 2024.¹ This loss spans every major category.

Food Waste by Category Across All Sectors ⁵

Prepared Foods	\$184B	48%
Produce	\$69.4B	18.1%
Dry Goods	\$43.5B	11.3%
Fresh Meat & Seafood	\$30.3B	7.9%
Breads & Bakery	\$23.1B	6%
Dairy & Eggs	\$20.7B	5.4%
Frozen Foods	\$10.7B	2.8%
Ready-To-Drink Beverages	\$2.12B	0.55%

Grocery stores feel this impact every day. Nearly one-third of food goes unsold, generating no profit despite incurring sourcing and handling costs that continue to rise.² Certain categories are especially vulnerable to waste because they are perishable, difficult to forecast, or sensitive to handling.

Food Waste by Category at U.S. Retailers ⁶

Prepared Foods	\$7B
Produce	\$6.04B
Fresh Meat & Seafood	\$4.83B
Breads & Bakery	\$4.81B
Dry Goods	\$4.18B
Dairy & Eggs	\$2.11B
Frozen Foods	\$985M
Ready-To-Drink Beverages	\$405M



Food service operators feel a similar strain. Restaurants, cafés, and bakeries generate up to 12.5 million tons of food waste each year,⁷ driven by preparation loss, overproduction, and portions that go uneaten. In total, 17.5% of prepared foods are wasted at the end of the day, including both kitchen waste and serving loss.⁸

These numbers underscore a familiar reality across grocery and food retail: even small amounts of daily surplus add up to significant financial loss over time. And in today’s environment, those financial losses carry greater implications than ever for margins, operations, and evolving customer expectations.

WHY IT MATTERS: THE PRESSURES INTENSIFYING FOOD WASTE COSTS

The financial impact of edible surplus lands at a moment when grocers and food retailers are already navigating some of the toughest cost pressures in years. Margins are slimmer, operations are more complex, and customer expectations continue to rise.

For retailers, growth has been slow while competition has intensified.⁹

Prices across food categories are 20% higher than they were four years ago, driven in part by global supply chain disruptions and tariff risks that threaten higher costs and potential shortages for imported staples.⁹ Consumers feel the squeeze, too. Many now prioritize price over loyalty, which means the retailer with the lowest cost often wins the largest wallet share.⁹

Labor adds another layer of pressure: nearly two-thirds of retail executives expect to make moderate to significant investments in hiring and retention this year.⁹ Yet, turnover remains high among frontline teams, from store associates to distribution center staff.⁹ These challenges make every operational decision matter, including how surplus is managed.



Food retail operators face a similar landscape. The National Restaurant Association reports that food and labor costs have each climbed 35% in just five years, while everyday expenses like rent, supplies, and credit card processing fees continue to skyrocket.¹⁰

Meanwhile, both sectors must also navigate an evolving regulatory landscape.

PRICES ACROSS FOOD CATEGORIES ARE 20% HIGHER THAN THEY WERE FOUR YEARS AGO

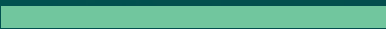








Together, rising costs, shifting consumer behavior, labor pressures, and evolving regulations make food waste a challenge retailers can’t afford to ignore. Understanding why so much food is wasted is the next step toward building strategies that work across the entire operation.



THE ROOT CAUSES OF SURPLUS FOOD: WHY ARE WE WASTING SO MUCH?

Surplus food rarely comes down to a single decision. Instead, it's the result of everyday retail realities, shaped by maturing inventory cycles, evolving customer expectations, and expanding stocking decisions.

Among retailers, surplus food comes from: ¹³

Date Label Concerns		41.2%	\$12.5B
Overproduction		17.2%	\$5.2B
Handling Errors		16.1%	\$4.88B
Spoiled Food		14.6%	\$4.44B
Equipment Issues		6.1%	\$1.84B
Trimmings & Byproducts		3.0%	\$899M
Theft		1.5%	\$455M
Cooking Issues		0.24%	\$72.2M
Food Safety Recall		0.05%	\$15.2M



One issue shared by grocery chains, food retailers, and consumers alike is confusion around date labeling.

These concerns account for more than \$14 billion in combined surplus food each year, despite fewer than 20% of Americans understanding the difference between “Use By” and “Best Before” dates.¹⁴ In many cases, surplus food is still safe to enjoy after these dates if properly stored and unopened.¹⁵

However, that’s not to say that actual spoilage doesn’t also play a role in food waste.

Between elements like forecasting uncertainty, shifting consumer spending, and overproduction, teams often purchase more food than they need. In turn, perishable items

lose quality before anyone has the chance to enjoy them. Simple storage, rotation, or temperature slips can add to the issue, especially during busy hours or staffing gaps.

High aesthetic standards contribute as well. Food is sometimes pulled from service or shelves because it doesn’t look “just right”, even when it’s still perfectly good to eat. In retail and food service alike, visual appeal often trumps usability, making slight imperfections a reason for surplus.

In the end, food waste often comes from small, every-day moments – the quick decisions, the operational pressures, and the habits built into how food moves through the system.



CLIMATE



LAND



WATER



COMMUNITIES

BEYOND THE P&L: ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL STAKES OF FOOD WASTE

Food waste affects far more than margins. When surplus food leaves the supply chain, it carries an environmental cost that continues long after the financial loss is absorbed. The impact touches land use, water consumption, greenhouse gas emissions, and our already strained landfill systems.

Across the United States, unsold or uneaten food is responsible for 24% of landfill inputs and 3.5% of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions.⁴ These are gases that trap heat in the atmosphere as food moves through the supply chain. When food waste ends up in landfills, the impact only grows.



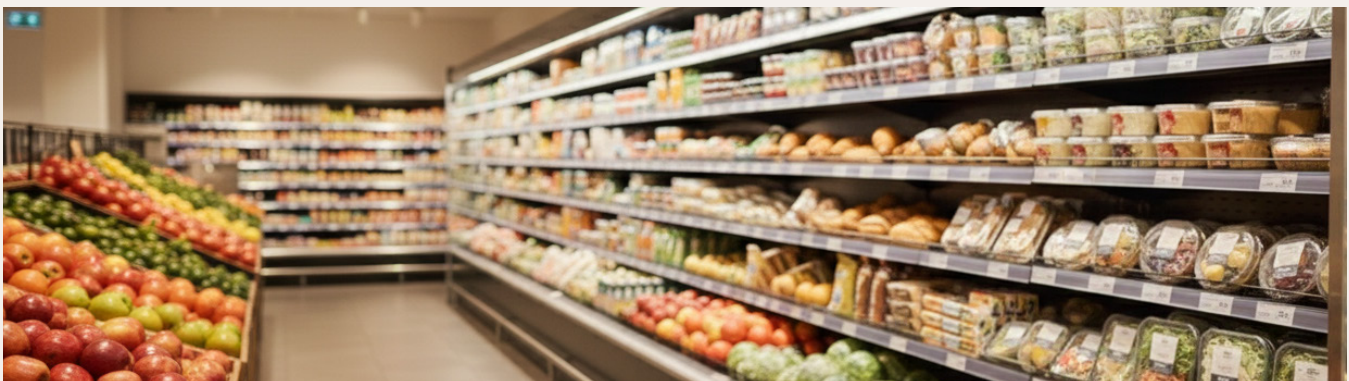
Food waste is also one of the largest burdens on our natural resources.

Surplus food accounts for 15.5% of all freshwater use in the U.S., nearly equal to all the water used in California and Idaho combined.⁴ It takes land, too. Roughly 16% of U.S. cropland – about 80 million acres, or three-quarters of California – is used to grow food that never gets eaten.⁴

These environmental impacts offer important context for why food waste matters beyond the financial line items. But the story doesn't end here. Food waste carries a human impact as well—one that touches communities, customers, and the way companies show up in the world.

15.5% OF ALL U.S. FRESHWATER USE IS TIED TO SURPLUS FOOD

ENOUGH TO SUPPLY CALIFORNIA AND IDAHO COMBINED



THE SOCIAL COMPONENT: FOOD ACCESS AND CONSUMER EXPECTATIONS

Today, 47 million Americans experience food insecurity,¹⁸ while a quarter of all food in the U.S. goes unsold or uneaten.⁴ That's nearly 115 billion meals that never make their way to someone who would appreciate them.⁴ It's a reminder of how much good food has the potential to do.

Customers are paying attention, too. Many are more aware of the ingredients, sourcing, and environmental footprint of what they buy.¹⁹ They want to support grocers and retailers that take thoughtful steps toward responsible operations. This doesn't require perfection; it simply reflects a growing desire for transparency from the places people choose to shop and eat.

Products that make ESG-related claims are outperforming their categories in 11 of 15 major food segments, signaling a meaningful shift in what customers pay attention to.²⁴ Eco-minded habits are rising, too: 58% of consumers are adopting more sustainable shopping and disposal practices.²⁵ Many are rethinking what they buy, with 27% choosing more locally sourced foods for environmental reasons and 35% reporting that they waste less food at home.²⁵

With growing interest from consumers, proactive surplus management is an opportunity for grocers and food retailers to differentiate themselves.



Yet, some businesses worry that getting involved in surplus food recovery could make their waste too visible. That concern is understandable, but the opposite is often true. Most customers interpret action as responsibility, not liability. Showing that surplus is being handled intentionally, even in small ways, can strengthen consumer trust rather than undermine it.

In fact, 69% of consumers say businesses should communicate more – not less – about their sustainability and social impact efforts, and 68% believe companies that actively share these actions have a more positive impact overall.²⁰ On the flip side, more than 40% assume companies that stay quiet either aren't taking action or aren't doing enough.²⁰

For many retailers, food waste is one of the clearest, most visible places to start. At its core, it's a chance to show leadership. Addressing it proactively uplifts communities, aligns with evolving customer values, and helps grocery and food retailers demonstrate care in a way that feels authentic and human.



**69% OF
CONSUMERS
SAY BUSINESSES
SHOULD COMMUNICATE
MORE ABOUT THEIR
SUSTAINABILITY EFFORTS**

REFRAMING WASTE AS REVENUE: THE SURPLUS OPPORTUNITY

There is real potential in the surplus food that is so often overlooked. After all, nearly 45% of the food that goes unsold or uneaten nationwide is still perfectly edible (and delicious), meaning a large portion of today's "waste" can be turned into something far more valuable tomorrow.⁴ For grocers and food retailers, that edible surplus represents meals that can still be enjoyed, margin that can be recovered, and inventory that can create impact instead of expense.

These choices reflect a growing desire to support grocers and retail businesses that also take thoughtful steps toward reducing waste and using resources wisely.

For industry leaders, this creates a clear path forward. Extra food is no longer just a challenge to manage. It is a chance to meet customers' expectations, make better use of perishable or surplus inventory, and strengthen the connection between operational decisions and community impact.

Luckily, there are far better ways to handle surplus food than letting it go unused. Even better, there are ways to transform surplus into sales with minimal lift. Explore practical strategies that help organizations turn edible surplus into value for both businesses and the people they serve.



COMMON APPROACHES TO SURPLUS MANAGEMENT

Every business handles surplus food differently. Some prioritize community impact, others lean on compliance-driven solutions, and many rely on the methods they have always used. There is no one “right” place to begin, and oftentimes it takes multiple solutions working alongside each other. What matters is recognizing that even small changes can add up to create a positive impact, both financially and socially.

Here are the surplus management approaches food retailers turn to most often. Each has its advantages, and together they show how much opportunity exists when food waste is managed with care.

1. BUSINESS AS USUAL WITH NO CHANGE

Some retailers continue operating as they always have, allowing surplus food to exit the system without new processes or tools in place. It’s familiar, requires no additional training, and keeps day-to-day operations predictable.

The tradeoff is that the costs stay locked in place. Perfectly usable food leaves without generating value, while disposal fees, lost margin, and compliance exposure

remain part of the equation. Over time, those quiet losses add up, especially as input costs rise and margins tighten.

Sticking with the status quo can also limit flexibility. As competitors find ways to recover value from surplus, businesses that do nothing may miss chances to improve efficiency, attract value-minded shoppers, or adapt to shifting expectations.

What feels simple in the moment can quickly become a constraint, leaving opportunity on the table in a market that rewards smarter use of what’s already there.

2. COMPOSTING AS THE SOLE SOLUTION

Composting can be a responsible way to handle food scraps and meet sustainability goals. For some businesses, it is also required by law. Several states now have policies that direct commercial food waste away from landfills.

In places like New York, for instance, qualifying food establishments must donate edible surplus and compost remaining scraps when an organics facility is nearby.¹¹



However, composting doesn't recover any financial value.

Businesses still absorb the full cost of ingredients, labor, and preparation, even when the food never reaches the shelf or the expo line. Composting also comes with hauling fees and operational steps that may be challenging during busy periods.

So, while composting is a positive practice, it's not a value recovery strategy.

3. DONATING TO COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS

Donation programs create tangible community impact, especially for larger grocery and food retailers looking to drive change at the local level. More than 50 million people rely on food banks in the U.S., and organizations like Feeding America rescue billions of pounds of food each year.²³ Retail donations help these keep local food banks stocked.

Behind that impact is real coordination. Donation programs rely on food safety standards, storage and pickup logistics, and dedicated staff time to operate smoothly. Though they are not typically designed to recover costs or generate revenue from surplus food, donations deliver meaningful social value and public benefit.

When paired with other approaches, donations can continue to support communities while additional surplus is managed in ways that improve flexibility and efficiency. Together, these efforts help invite more people to the table, ensuring good food reaches more hands, whether through community partners or value-driven retail channels.

4. RELYING ON TRADITIONAL MARKDOWNS

Traditional markdowns give retailers direct control over pricing and inventory movement. They can be an effective way to sell items nearing their sell-by window, particularly when shoppers are already in the store.

Promotions can help shift purchasing behavior in the moment, and customers often appreciate the opportunity to save on familiar products.²⁴

COMMON APPROACHES TO SURPLUS MANAGEMENT

1. Business as Usual with No Change
2. Composting as the Sole Solution
3. Donating to Community Organizations
4. Relying on Traditional Markdowns
5. Building an In-House Surplus Platform
6. Adopt a Hybrid Approach with Too Good to Go

That said, markdowns primarily influence existing foot traffic.

They rely on the customers currently browsing aisles and display cases, rather than bringing in new ones specifically motivated by surplus or value. While markdowns can help reduce waste within the store, their impact is often limited to the audience already present, leaving little opportunity to expand reach or attract new, value-driven customers.

5. BUILDING AN IN-HOUSE SURPLUS PLATFORM

Some businesses explore developing their own internal tools to track and redistribute surplus. This approach offers full control over data, branding, and customer experience. It can be tailored to a company's exact needs and integrated with existing systems.

The challenge is that building and maintaining a platform requires significant investment.

Software development, compliance, user acquisition, customer support, and ongoing updates all add complexity. For many grocery and food retailers, the cost and resources required outweigh the benefits, especially when simpler, proven solutions already exist.



ADOPT A HYBRID APPROACH WITH TOO GOOD TO GO

Composting, donation, and markdowns all have a place in a thoughtful surplus strategy, but most businesses benefit from combining multiple approaches. Where many companies see the greatest impact is by pairing those methods with a platform built specifically to recover value from edible surplus.

Too Good To Go offers that path.

Through the Too Good To Go app, the world’s largest marketplace for surplus food, grocery and food retailers can connect with local consumers looking to save perfectly good food from going to waste. Businesses offer Surprise Bags of unsold items at a discounted price, keeping surplus within the retail flow instead of exiting the store unsold.

This hybrid approach maximizes retail revenue recovery, reduces disposal costs, helps attract new customers, and strengthens brand reputation. It turns surplus food into an asset instead of a recurring challenge. The best part? It takes no more time than it does to throw food away.



SINCE ITS LAUNCH IN THE U.S. IN 2020, TOO GOOD TO GO HAS HELPED ITS NETWORK OF PARTNERS RECOVER AN EXTRA \$139.8M IN ADDED REVENUE



As a Too Good To Go partner, businesses can:



Complement Existing Efforts

Supports donation and markdown programs – without replacing them



Recover Incremental Revenue

Turn unsold items into revenue instead of disposal costs



Connect with Local Consumers

Offer surplus food directly to nearby app users at a reduced price



Attract New Customers

Bring value-driven shoppers into the store



HOW TOO GOOD TO GO WORKS: SURPLUS INTO SURPRISE BAGS

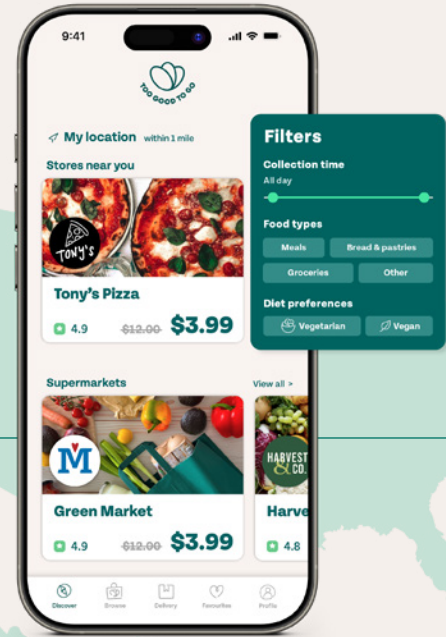
Every day, businesses of all sizes are left with food that is perfectly good to eat but hasn't sold by close. The Too Good To Go marketplace gives that food a second chance. Through our app, more than 18 million registered users can rescue Surprise Bags from local grocery stores, cafés, bakeries, and restaurants across the country.

Surprise Bags make it simple. Businesses bundle edible surplus and list it in the app at a discount for customer pick-up. It's an easy way for businesses to recover revenue, bring in new customers, and keep good food from going to waste. For consumers, it's a fun, affordable way to discover new places while supporting sustainability.

WHAT IS A SURPRISE BAG?

Surprise Bags are the mix of surplus food items To Good To Go consumers purchase from your store. Consumers do not choose the contents of their Surprise Bag, giving your store the flexibility to sell a mix of genuinely surplus goods that vary day to day.

FOR CONSUMERS WHO DON'T GET TO PICK WHAT'S INSIDE THEIR SURPRISE BAG, IT'S A FUN AND AFFORDABLE WAY TO DISCOVER NEW BUSINESSES AND SHOP MORE SUSTAINABLY.



HERE'S HOW IT WORKS

- 1. Businesses list Surprise Bags at a discount.** Surprise Bags are sold at 25–50% of their original retail value, depending on the category and volume of surplus.
- 2. Consumers browse and purchase through the app.** Businesses list their Surprise Bags on the Marketplace, where users can scroll through nearby bundles.
- 3. Pickups happen during set windows.** Customers collect in-store at times the business chooses, so the process fits naturally into existing operations.
- 4. Revenue flows directly to the business.** Food that doesn't make it to the plate can still make profit. The model is simple, predictable, and designed to work with busy teams.



The Too Good To Go marketplace model works for large chains and local stores just the same. For grocery retailers, Too Good To Go is ideal for produce nearing peak ripeness, unsold bakery items from throughout the day, dairy close to its date, and prepared foods that won't carry over.

For restaurants, the Too Good To Go marketplace is a strong fit for end-of-day meals, ingredients prepped for service, or items not suitable for next-day menus. And for bakeries, the marketplace is perfect for day-old bread, pastries, and baked goods that are still delicious but didn't sell during operating hours.

PERKS OF THE TOO GOOD TO GO MARKETPLACE

The Too Good To Go marketplace is designed to work with the natural rhythm of a business. Customers pick up bags during off-peak hours that retailers and restaurants set themselves, driving foot traffic with no interference to daily workflow. There's no added time for customer acquisition either: Surprise Bags do the heavy lifting, introducing people to businesses they may not have visited otherwise.

Whether you're selling sandwiches, sushi, and salads, or burgers, burritos, and bread, Too Good To Go offers benefits like:

- **Timing**
Pickups happen at the time the business decides, with no disruption to regular service.
- **Pricing**
Value-driven customers love discovering quality food at lower prices.
- **Discovery**
Every Surprise Bag brings in potential new customers.
- **Differentiation**
It supports sustainability without pulling demand away from full-price items.
- **Simplicity**
Minimal lift for teams already focused on daily operations.

Too Good To Go's solution is also a built-in environmental benefit. Rescuing a single Surprise Bag avoids 6 pounds of CO₂e emissions, saves roughly 214 gallons of water, and prevents the unnecessary use of around 30 square feet of land per year.²⁵ With Too Good To Go, **every saved meal creates value instead of loss.**



41%

of Too Good To Go customers buy something else when picking up a Surprise Bag from a grocery store.

\$18.41

The average cross-sell purchase value for grocery retailers on Too Good To Go.

214

gallons of water saved with every purchased Surprise Bag



WHAT SUCCESS LOOKS LIKE: MEASURABLE SURPLUS MANAGEMENT OUTCOMES

The results speak for themselves. Revenue returns to the P&L instead of being lost to waste, operations run more smoothly, and customers feel more connected to the places they shop and dine. Explore the three areas where modern surplus management gains show up most clearly.

Too Good To Go has done so many other things for our business that we never could have put a metric on in the beginning. One of the biggest things is just how much foot traffic gets pushed into the store. And once people are in here, we pride ourselves on being the kind of place where the whole store becomes an impulse buy.

– Greg Saidnawey

*Store Manager at Pemberton Farms,
a single-location grocer in Boston, MA* ²⁷

FINANCIAL OUTCOMES

Financial impact is often the first place businesses see measurable change. With 40% of restaurant operators listing profitability as their top priority this year, tracking recovered revenue and reduced disposal

costs becomes an essential part of the story²⁶ and the same goes for retailers.

Surplus management helps transform what would have been a write-off into incremental income, while also reducing hauling fees and improving overall margins. When businesses use surplus more intentionally, every recovered item contributes to healthier financials and more resilient operations.

OPERATIONAL OUTCOMES

Operational benefits also show up quickly, especially for teams managing perishable inventory day in and day out. When surplus is handled more intentionally, stores experience fewer last-minute decisions, faster routines at closing, and better alignment with evolving compliance requirements.

Too Good To Go fits into those existing workflows **without** disrupting daily operations. In fact, 88% of grocery employees report that using Too Good To Go takes less than four minutes per day – often less time than taking out the trash.²⁸ No new technology, hardware, or system integrations are required, and stores can be up and running in as little as one week.

Beyond efficiency, reducing food waste can also have a positive ripple effect on teams. Many retailers find that giving surplus a clear purpose helps boost employee engagement and pride, contributing to stronger morale and more sustainable day-to-day operations. It's a win-win-win.



BRAND AND CUSTOMER OUTCOMES

Surplus recovery also strengthens how businesses show up for their customers. At a time when nearly one-third of operators say increasing guest demand is a top priority, offering an easy, accessible way to save good food resonates with value-conscious and sustainability-minded consumers alike.²⁶

That can explain why 83% consumers say they favor a store they know is on the Too Good To Go app versus a competitor.²⁹ Businesses that adopt eco-conscious surplus food strategies often see increases in foot traffic, new customer reach, and even stronger brand perception.

These gains compound over time, turning a simple action into a significant contributor to customer loyalty – especially among younger consumers. With 63% of Too Good To Go users between the ages of 18 and 34, surplus recovery is a smart way to build relevance with future shoppers.³⁰

PEMBERTON FARMS OUTCOMES: BY THE NUMBERS



\$47,659

Revenue earned from Surprise Bags since 2020



12,280

Meals saved instead of going to waste



87%

Customer return rate among new shoppers ²⁷

THE FUTURE OF FOOD RETAIL: SUSTAINABILITY AS STRATEGY

Across food retail, sustainability is shifting from a nice-to-have to a true business advantage. Surplus management now sits at the center of this shift, helping retailers navigate rising expectations, new regulations, and smarter technology that makes it easier to use every resource well.

Several trends are pushing the industry in this direction:

Regulatory trajectory

More states are introducing policies that divert organic waste from landfills, and additional mandates may follow. Businesses that act early are better positioned for compliance and smoother operations.¹¹

These trends point to an emerging business model, one where profitability grows through sustainability. Retailers that embrace surplus management today are building the operational resilience, customer trust, and environmental impact that tomorrow’s marketplace will demand.

Consumer expectations

Sustainability is quickly becoming a deciding factor: 78% of U.S. consumers say living sustainably matters to them, and many choose where to shop based on whether brands reflect those values.²¹

Technology integration

Advances in forecasting and tracking tools, including AI-powered analytics for customer behavior and product movement, help retailers optimize category management and reduce unnecessary waste, especially for perishables.



FROM PROBLEM TO PROFIT: TRANSFORM SURPLUS WITH TOO GOOD TO GO

Food waste represents more than an operational challenge—it's one of the biggest untapped revenue opportunities in food retail today. Businesses that rethink how they manage surplus aren't just reducing waste, they're strengthening their margins, simplifying operations, and showing customers what responsible leadership looks like in practice.

Too Good To Go provides a proven, scalable way to deliver those outcomes. Through the Too Good To Go app, retailers turn surplus food into sellable inventory and connect with value-driven, eco-conscious customers looking for good food at a great discount, with no hardware or heavy lifting involved.

**Scan the QR code below to
discover how to turn your
surplus into your most valuable
asset with Too Good To Go:**





REFERENCES

- 1 ReFED, 2024 – ReFED - Food Waste Monitor. Retrieved December 9, 2025.
https://insights-engine.refed.org/food-waste-monitor?break_by=food_type&indicator=us-dollars-surplus&view=detail&year=2024
- 2 RTS, 2025 – Food Waste in America in 2025. Retrieved December 9, 2025.
<https://www.rts.com/resources/guides/food-waste-america/>
- 3 ReFed, 2023 – Harwood, A. et al. (2023). ReFED’s New Estimates on Food Waste in the United States: 2020-2021, Trends, and COVID-19 Impact.
<https://refed.org/articles/refed-s-new-estimates-on-food-waste-in-the-united-states-2020-2021-trends-and-covid-19-impact/>
- 4 ReRED, 2025 – Food Waste Data—Causes & Impacts. Retrieved December 9, 2025.
<https://refed.org/food-waste/the-problem/>
- 5 ReFED, 2024 – ReFED - Food Waste Monitor. Retrieved December 9, 2025.
https://insights-engine.refed.org/food-waste-monitor?break_by=food_type&indicator=us-dollars-surplus&view=detail&year=2024
- 6 ReFED, 2024 – ReFED - Food Waste Monitor. Retrieved December 9, 2025.
https://insights-engine.refed.org/food-waste-monitor?break_by=food_type&indicator=us-dollars-surplus§or=retail&view=detail&year=2024
- 7 ReFED, 2024 – ReFED - Food Waste Monitor. Retrieved December 9, 2025.
https://insights-engine.refed.org/food-waste-monitor?break_by=sector&indicator=tons-surplus&view=detail&year=2024
- 8 National Library of Medicine, 2021 – Lins, M. et al. (2021). Food Waste on Foodservice: An Overview through the Perspective of Sustainable Dimensions.
<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC8225138/>
- 9 Deloitte, 2025 – Edsall, D. et al. (2025). 2025 US Retail Industry Outlook.
<https://www.deloitte.com/us/en/insights/industry/retail-distribution/retail-distribution-industry-outlook.html>
- 10 National Restaurant Association, 2025 – Inflation. Retrieved December 9, 2025.
<https://restaurant.org/research-and-media/research/inflation/>
- 11 RILA, 2021 – Retail Compliance Center, Retail Industry Leaders Association (2021). Mandatory Organics Recycling Regulations Fact Sheet. Retrieved December 9, 2025.
<https://www.rila.org/getmedia/8b9f81ef-db9e-40f7-a37a-291a768effa0/Mandatory-Organics-Recycling-Regulations-Fact-Sheet-1-23.pdf>
- 12 EPA, 2025 – U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (2025). Food Recovery Hierarchy. Retrieved December 9, 2025.
https://19january2017snapshot.epa.gov/sustainable-management-food/food-recovery-hierarchy_.html
- 13 ReFED, 2024 – ReFED - Food Waste Monitor. Retrieved December 9, 2025.
https://insights-engine.refed.org/food-waste-monitor?break_by=cause&indicator=us-dollars-surplus§or=retail&view=detail&year=2024
- 14 The Natural Resources Defense Council, 2025 – Gunders, D. et al. (2025). Wasted: How America is Losing Up to 40 Percent of Its Food from Farm to Fork to Landfill. Retrieved December 9, 2025.
<https://www.nrdc.org/sites/default/files/wasted-2017-report.pdf>
- 15 USDA, 2025 – U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food Safety and Inspection Service (2025). Food Product Dating. Retrieved December 9, 2025.
<https://www.fsis.usda.gov/food-safety/safe-food-handling-and-preparation/food-safety-basics/food-product-dating>
- 16 EPA, 2023 – U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Office of Research and Development (2023). Quantifying Methane Emissions from Landfilled Food Waste.
https://www.epa.gov/system/files/documents/2023-10/food-waste-landfill-methane-10-8-23-final_508-compliant.pdf
- 17 EPA, 2025 – U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (2025). Quantifying Methane Emissions from Landfilled Food Waste.
<https://www.epa.gov/land-research/quantifying-methane-emissions-landfilled-food-waste>
- 18 USDA, 2024 – U.S. Department of Agriculture, Economic Research Service (2024). Household Food Security in the United States in 2023.
https://ers.usda.gov/sites/default/files/_laserfiche/publications/109896/ERR-337.pdf?v=25695



REFERENCES CONTINUED

- 19 Stout, 2025 – Grocery Retail Industry Update - Q1 2025.
<https://www.stout.com/en/insights/industry-update/grocery-retail-industry-update-q1-2025>
- 20 TriplePundit, 2024 – Mazzoni, M. (2024). Consumers Want To Hear More From Companies About Sustainability, Study Finds.
<https://triplepundit.com/2024/consumers-companies-sustainability/>
- 21 McKinsey, 2023 – McKinsey Consumer Packaged Goods Practice (2023). Consumers Care About Sustainability—and Back It Up with Their Wallets.
<https://www.mckinsey.com/industries/consumer-packaged-goods/our-insights/consumers-care-about-sustainability-and-back-it-up-with-their-wallets>
- 22 L.E.K, 2024 – Audon, B. et al. (2024). Sustainability Confirmed as a Key Ingredient for Food and Beverage Consumers.
<https://www.lek.com/insights/con/global/ei/sustainability-confirmed-key-ingredient-food-and-beverage-consumers>
- 23 Feeding America, 2025 – Hunger in America. Retrieved December 9, 2025.
<https://www.feedingamerica.org/hunger-in-america>
- 24 International Journal of Scientific Research and Engineering Development, 2025 – Priyadharshini S., et al. (2025) Impact of Discounts and Offers On Consumer Purchasing Behavior.
<https://ijsred.com/volume8/issue2/IJSRED-V8I2P278.pdf>
- 25 Too Good To Go, 2025 – 2024 Impact Report (2025).
<https://cdn.sanity.io/files/nqimd3nr/production/83977a7461d5d52e3f4412cf733f75221adccbb5.pdf>
- 26 Toast, 2025 – The 2025 Voice of the Restaurant Industry Survey (2025). Retrieved December 9, 2025.
<https://pos.toasttab.com/blog/data/2025-voice-of-restaurant-industry-survey>
- 27 Too Good To Go, 2025 – How Pemberton Farms Cut Waste Without Adding Work.
<https://www.toogoodtogo.com/en-us/blog/pemberton-farms-grocery>
- 28 Too Good To Go, 2025 – Internally managed survey: ALDI UK, 2022, 25 respondents
- 29 Too Good To Go, 2025 – Pick and Mix Deck (2025). Too Good To Go 2022 Survey across 24K users in 17 markets who bought a Surprise Bag between 15.08.22-20.09.22
- 30 Too Good To Go, 2025 – Too Good To Go Brand Tracker Survey, USA data, n=810 (base current users =296), weekly internet users, aged 18-65, conducted by Kantar Insights, Jan. 2024