

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**June 15, 2021**

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## **Student-led food Recovery Organizations Rescue Over One Million Pounds of Surplus Food Amid COVID-19**

- *Food Recovery Network (FRN) partnered with The Farmlink Project to rescue surplus food from 120 farms across the United States*
- *Over one million pounds of food recovered and donated to food insecure communities across the country.*
- *Student volunteers provide critical support to research and contact farmers, diverting good food from going to waste while millions of people experience hunger*

**WHAT:** From August 2020 to June 2021, [Food Recovery Network](#) (FRN) joined in partnership with [The Farmlink Project](#) to provide immediate food recovery assistance as farmers across the country experienced [unprecedented levels of surplus food](#) during the pandemic. Namely, by activating FRN's network, The Farmlink Project successfully increased its impact to purchase surplus food from farmers and transport it to hunger-fighting partner agencies.

FRN students and alumni dedicated **456 hours of volunteer service** to help The Farmlink Project identify and contact hundreds of farmers in 48 states across the country to offer support in purchasing or transporting their surplus food to hunger-fighting nonprofit and community organizations. FRN volunteers recorded that **1,062,000 pounds of food**, equivalent to 885,000 meals, was recovered and distributed to people in need.

The collaboration of the two student-led organizations provided the perfect opportunity to activate a sophisticated network of young, passionate and capable leaders to reduce farm food loss and feed the millions of people experiencing food insecurity during COVID-19. The purpose of this partnership was to provide young people with an opportunity to develop their leadership skills, to teach others how to be environmental stewards, and to feed the [42 million people](#) who are hungry in the US.

**WHY:** As pandemic restrictions forced food businesses across the U.S. to shut down last spring, [farmers were hit hard](#) by the sudden loss of buyers and inability to pay for labor to harvest their crops. Meanwhile, food insecurity rates skyrocketed with [42 million people](#) experiencing food insecurity and hunger, many for the first time. By activating FRN's network to support, Farmlink was better able to support farmers' livelihoods and feed hundreds of people who experienced food insecurity during the pandemic. Through this partnership, FRN and The Farmlink Project have helped one another achieve our shared mission to end food waste and combat hunger through food recovery.

**HOW:** This program was made possible thanks to funding from FRN's partners, [The Kroger Co. Zero Hunger | Zero Waste Foundation](#) and [Aramark](#). FRN also extends our appreciation to [all of our funders](#) who make this work possible.

#### **ADDITIONAL DETAILS AND CONTACT**

- **Organizations:** [Food Recovery Network](#), [The Farmlink Project](#)
- **For interviews:** Contact Isabella Oidem, [Isabella@gomixte.com](mailto:Isabella@gomixte.com), 619-732-0789 X 472
- **Further Action:**
  - [Donate to Food Recovery Network](#)
  - [Donate to The Farmlink Project](#)
- **Link to use in your story:**
  - [Food Recovery Network Official Website](#)
  - [The Farmlink Project](#)

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#### **About Food Recovery Network:**

Food Recovery Network (FRN) is a national 501(c)3 nonprofit that unites 4,000 college students, dining providers, food suppliers, and local businesses students at colleges and universities who recover perishable food that would otherwise go to waste and donates that food to over 350 nonprofit partners who feed people in need. Our programs are on 170 campuses in 46 states and the District of Columbia and have recovered and donated more than 4.9 million pounds of food to date – the equivalent of more than 4.1 million meals to individuals and families in need. In the last year alone, FRN has recovered 1,042,525 pounds of surplus food from campus dining halls, food suppliers, restaurants, and farms, across the U.S.; the equivalent of 868,771 meals for people experiencing hunger in 2020. For more information, visit <http://www.foodrecoverynetwork.org>.

#### **About The Farmlink Project**

Founded in 2020, The Farmlink Project currently acts as the “link” connecting the broken supply chains in the agricultural and food access industries. We believe that no one should have to go to bed hungry while perfectly viable produce goes to waste. This produce shouldn’t have to be “rescued” from rotting in fields or being sent to the landfill, either; why were we letting this food go to waste in the first place? These are systemic issues that our society needs to address. In a perfect world, The Farmlink Project wouldn’t need to exist—systems would be in place to streamline the supply chain so that surplus food went directly to those who need it. Our long-term goal is to set up infrastructure which will render our work obsolete. Learn more at <https://www.farmlinkproject.org/>.