

Rethink
Food

2022

ANNUAL
REPORT

THANKS TO YOUR SUPPORT



To our **restaurant partners, community-based organizations, individual and institutional donors, government supporters and advocates**, we are proud to share what we've accomplished in 2022. We continued to strengthen bonds across our food system, placing local businesses at the front lines of food equity and diverting excess food from landfill/combustion.

Despite challenges posed by inflation, supply chain issues, and ongoing effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, we remain steadfast in our mission to create a more sustainable and equitable food system. In 2022, we exceeded our excess food recovery goal of 500,000 lbs. by 14%. We were thrilled to welcome James Beard Award-winning **chef J.J. Johnson**, best known for his barrier-breaking cuisine connecting the foodways of West Africa and Asia to the Americas, to our board. We directed **over \$10.6 million to dozens of restaurants and food establishments—80% women- or minority-owned/led**—and provided **over 2.7 million meals** for communities across New York City, San Francisco, Chicago, Nashville, Washington D.C., and Miami. In Q1 '23 we provided our **10 MILLIONTH MEAL** on the path toward alleviating food insecurity.

And yet the work is never finished.

- Inflation and increased costs are heavily affecting our network—from our partners to underserved communities already struggling to put food on the table.
- Food prices alone rose by 13% in 2022—the highest in over 40 years.

- In Q4 2022, 68.2 percent of the nation's total wealth was owned by the top 10% of earners. By contrast, the lowest 50% of earners owned 3% of total wealth.
- The universal free lunch program, introduced during the pandemic, ended in September 2022, removing guaranteed free meals that were available to nearly 30 million students.
- The nation is facing a looming hunger cliff as pandemic era SNAP benefits were set to end in March 2023, with average benefits decreasing to \$6/person per day.

While our technology allows us to track—nearly in real time—our quantity of meals provided, lbs. of excess food diverted, and tons of water+CO2 saved as a result, we recognize that the numbers tell only one, significant part of a larger story.

We begin this report with one such story: how simple actions lead to lasting change, strengthening bonds that last beyond one meal—or 10 million meals—provided. We invite you on a journey through community impact with restaurants and CBOs, highlighting the difference a fresh, chef-prepared meal makes, combining seasonal, excess food and culinary skill to nourish communities that are disproportionately affected by poverty and food insecurity as social determinants of health.

As we move into our sixth year of operation, Rethink is at a critical juncture. The number of meals we provide—at no cost to food-insecure communities—is directly dependent on the amount of support and funding we receive. From everyone at Rethink Food, our thanks and gratitude for your partnership, your confidence in our mission, and your continued support.





A STORY

THE RETHINK NETWORK

Early morning at the Rethink Food commissary kitchen

Aluminum trays filled with vegetable rice pilaf slide into place. Steel carts roll by. Freezers doors slam shut with the crisp click of a handle as the air-sealed door settles into place. Plastic bins slam down with a clap, stacked for delivery. As Rethink's culinary team prepares for service, the kitchen's direct elevator whirs and lurches into place with an arrival chime. Doors slide open, and members of Rethink's trucking team bring in containers filled to the brim with hundreds of pounds of excess food. Once empty, they reload the truck with containers full of stacked pan trays—hundreds of meals—and disembark, en route from the commissary kitchen to community-based organizations (CBOs) throughout New York City's five boroughs.

WHAT'S ON THE TRUCK

Creativity. Improvisation. The culinary team never knows what might show up in a day's food donations. Meals are conceived, prepped, cooked, and shelved for delivery to go out across NYC, a city of growth, possibility, dramatic wealth inequality, yet determination. Each of Rethink's partner CBOs prepare for the day's meal distribution, giving much-needed meals at no cost, day after day.

Later that day, meals arrive from the commissary kitchen at Community Help in Park Slope (CHiPS), a soup kitchen/food pantry serving Brooklyn for over 50 years. Here, the multiplier goes into effect. Tables unfold. Boxes slide between hands as meals are unpacked, opened. Meal containers are stacked triple-high in rows, each stack awaiting open hands. Within the space of half an hour, over 150 people, some having lined up over an hour before, receive meals. For many, it's their main source of nourishment for the day.

A RESTAURANT PARTNER JOINS IN

At hip Thai restaurant Zaab Zaab Talay that same morning, chef Kannika is with her team in a tight kitchen space in Williamsburg, Brooklyn, getting ready to plate for service. On the menu: a twist on Pla Kha Min, or red snapper fried with garlic and cumin, prepared to meet Rethink's meal guide for nutrition. The dish is plated in sturdy to-go containers, dozens laid out in the kitchen, spooned over hearty scoops of white rice. Service this morning is not for the dining room, but for delivery to New Hope Family Worship Center the same day—with all meals funded by Rethink.

That's Monday. On Tuesday, the Rethink network mobilizes again.



NATIONWIDE, 25.7M PEOPLE reported being food-insecure in October 2022.

In NYC, the number of residents without food over a 7-day period was 35% higher in October 2022 than the previous year.

YOUR FUNDS AT WORK

100% OF YOUR DONATION PROVIDES MEALS TO COMMUNITIES.

A FRESH, PREPARED MEAL

...channels the care and dignity chefs put into their cooking to communities of greatest need.

...offers true nourishment for those who do not have time-wealth to **prepare meals themselves.**

2.7M MEALS served in 2022

\$10.6M DIRECTED to 72 restaurants serving 98 CBOs

80% DIRECTED to MWO/LB

569K+ lbs excess food recovered

\$834K+ RAISED through network, funding 170k meals



A JOURNEY THROUGH IMPACT

From neighborhood cafés to Michelin-starred restaurants, Rethink Food weaves together a diverse tapestry of partners that work together locally in six cities. Rethink takes a hyperlocal approach: identifying neighborhood CBOs, then linking them to nearby restaurants.

The net effect? Sustaining the operation of small businesses—80% of which are minority- or women-owned/led (MWO/L)—and strengthening pathways that efficiently move resources to need within local neighborhoods.



TACOMBI EXPANSION

MEAL-MAKING GROWS BY 150%

From 2021 to 2022, TACOMBI expanded its partnership with Rethink Food, increasing meal counts by 150% to reach 273,676 meals. Tacombi added a new location in Chicago to make meals and began donating excess food starting in January 2023. The partnership will grow to three more locations in 2023.

GROWTH IN MIAMI

A SELF-FUNDED NETWORK

The partnership with chef Michael Schwartz's + CEO Sunil Bhatt's The Genuine Hospitality Group grew to over 85K meals, reaching 100K in Q1 2023. Miami is a proven model for locally funding meals via a 2% donation on every check at restaurants Amara + Michael's Genuine. Diner donations fund 6 Haitian restaurants to make fresh meals for 7 local CBOs.

CHICAGO RESTAURANT ESMÉ JOINS

Gratitude + thanks to Chef Jenner Tomaska at Esmé Chicago for adding a 1% donation to every check, which goes directly to making culturally celebrated meals for local communities. Esmé's fundraising continues to provide meals, free-of-charge, to YWCA and iGrow in Chicago.

To date, Rethink's committed network of internationally-renowned chefs has raised over \$834,000+, funding over 170,000 meals created by local restaurants.

2022 EFFORTS ACROSS OUR NETWORK



ASYLUM SEEKERS: A FRESH MEAL ON ARRIVAL

50K+ MEALS

Rethink prepared meals for asylum seekers arriving in New York City's Port Authority, in partnership with local nonprofits coordinating the response efforts.

Rethink's efforts to support asylum seekers have expanded to multiple boroughs and is ongoing — a direct support to our community-based partners, who have experienced a rising need for meals in response to asylum seekers throughout NYC.



PROVIDING FOR RAMADAN 2022, FAMILY DAY, & EID EVENTS

38.9K+ MEALS

Rethink provided 38.9K+ meals for Ramadan, providing to APNA Brooklyn Community Center, Brooklyn Emerge, ICNA Relief, and Muslim Community Patrol & Services.

At APNA Brooklyn Community Center, Rethink sponsored meals for Family Day and an Eid Celebration, with more than 700 people attending. Thank you to APNA CEO Erum Hanif, who told us, "especially kids love the food!!"

Rethink provides supplementary meal distributions throughout the year for Lunar New Year, Passover, Thanksgiving, and Independence Day.



PARTNER HIGHLIGHT JEANETTE LUGO, AGAPE FOOD RESCUE

A WORD from JEANETTE

"I was a Marine for 16 years, and I've been pretty much everywhere. In terms of what I would like to leave ...is that I chose kindness. ...And what's so beautiful for us, as chefs — and people in the food industry, is that feeding someone is the only way you can stay in someone's DNA, and you're with them forever. Food is in you, it becomes you. And knowing that our work, our time, our commitment — we became that fiber inside someone. And for that moment, I was a part of you and you were part of me."

SUSTAINABILITY

**ALL TIME
through 2022:**

1.2M+ meals served

1.5M+ lbs. excess food

3.9M+ lbs. CO2 diverted

36M+ gals. water saved

NEW + EXPANDED

**WHOLE FOODS donations
increased to over 58K lbs**

**First-of-its-kind BROOKFIELD
PROPERTIES MANHATTAN WEST
partnership expanded ESG across
the entire campus**

**Inventive protein company 50/50
began donations of its half-meat,
half-plant patties to Rethink's
commissary kitchen**

WELCOMED PARTNERS

- **Chelsea Market (Jamestown Properties)**
- **Great Performances catering**
- **JP Morgan corporate dining**
- **Recycle Track Systems**

PRESERVATION PROGRAM

**became a permanent part of the
commissary work, converting
seasonal bumper crops of produce
into soups, stocks, frozen meals,
and more to community fridges and
soup kitchens**



RETHINK FOOD'S SUSTAINABLE COMMISSARY KITCHEN IN 2022

The commissary kitchen is run by a team of culinary professionals who receive over half a million pounds of excess food donations every year, transforming them into delicious, nourishing meals that are delivered at no cost to local food organizations across three boroughs of NYC.

**SUSTAINABLY PREPARED
MEALS SERVING 14 CBOs**

**VOLUNTEER + EDUCATION
SPACE**

**FOOD RECOVERY GROWTH:
586K lbs., +48% vs. 2021**



VOLUNTEER + EDUCATION SPACE

Rethink Food welcomes corporate teams, institutional and individual donors, education groups, and members of the public to visit + volunteer at our commissary kitchen, learning how the team transforms excess food into meals. Groups can [book a tour + tasting](#) at the commissary to see the transformation take place.

PRESERVATION PROGRAM

What began as an experiment to prolong fresh, daily-received ingredients became a permanent program in 2022. With culinary skill and creativity, seasonal ingredients such as berries, herbs, and vegetables are puréed and blended to make soups, sauces, jams, and beverages. Menus are customized based on conversations with our CBOs on preferences and seasonal availability.



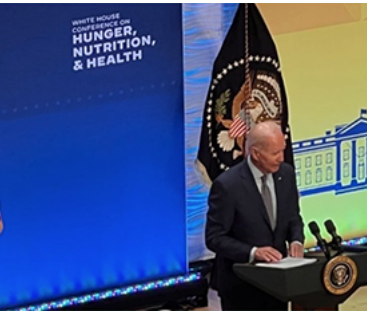
ADVOCACY

**POLICY +
FUNDING
+ ACTION
= RESULTS**

Our advocacy work is critical to building improved connections across the entire food chain, providing equity and access to food-insecure communities.

Rethink Food maintains strong relationships with the Mayor's Office of Food Policy, the New York City Council, Equity Advocates' NYC Food Policy Coalition, the Neighborhood Opportunity Network - Nutrition Kitchen (NeON Nutrition Kitchen), and the New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA).

WORKING WITH OUR GOVERNMENT PARTNERS



THE GOOD SAMARITAN FOOD DONATION IMPROVEMENT ACT

Rethink Food advocated for the Food Donation Improvement Act alongside WW's Healthy Coalition, NRDC, and Harvard Food Policy Clinic. By extending liability protection for donations to nonprofits, the FDIA allows for innovation in food distribution models to ensure broader access to food and increased food rescue.

The [BILL PASSED](#) and was signed into law in January 2023. [READ MORE](#)

NY STATE RESTAURANT RESILIENCY PROGRAM

in partnership with CITY HARVEST + administered by the US DEPT. OF AGRICULTURE, RETHINK/CITY HARVEST received \$1 million in partnership to allocate to restaurants.

THE IMPACT:
~50K MEALS from 19 restaurants—67% of which were minority- and women-owned.

9 emergency food providers to 4 boroughs

WHITE HOUSE CONFERENCE ON HUNGER, NUTRITION, AND HEALTH

RETURNING AFTER 50+ YEARS

Rethink Food was invited by NYC Mayor Eric Adams and Congressman Jim McGovern to the second-ever [WHITE HOUSE CONFERENCE](#) on September 28.

As part of our participation, we made a bold commitment in conjunction with the CDC Foundation over the next 5 years to contribute to lasting change in the food system.

[READ THE REPORT](#)

ROUNDTABLE - REP. JIM MCGOVERN | HOSTED AT MANNA'S RESTAURANT, HARLEM

In August 2022, ahead of Rethink's participation at the WHITE HOUSE CONFERENCE, we gathered with REP. MCGOVERN, Exec. Dir. of NYC Mayor's Office of Food Policy KATE MACKENZIE, Manna's restaurant founder BETTY PARK, & stakeholders that brought together food + government + nonprofit + higher education to discuss Rethink's impact & how the government can look to innovative solutions that address our country's challenges.

SHARING OUR IDEAS



EDUCATE

RETHINK FOOD X NYC SCHOOLS

Motivating the next generation to imagine how they can create a better food future.

We worked with hundreds of NYC students on virtual and in-person projects, including programs on reducing food waste, preparing a business plan for a restaurant that provides free meals to food-insecure neighbors, and creating holiday cards for community members receiving meals.

VOLUNTEER

HELP OUT AND ALLEVIATE FOOD INSECURITY

Throughout 2022, we welcomed corporate partners, individuals, and groups to volunteer in our activities, from making meals at the Commissary Kitchen to packing + distributing meals to local people with our community partners. Thank you to Brookfield Properties, Spotify, JPMorgan, Javits Center, American Securities, Daybreak Management, Conti, First Republic Bank, Schmidt Futures, Trusteer Financial, and Meta for volunteering.

[GET INVOLVED](#)

IDEAS @ ASPEN 2022

LATOYA MEADERS, COLLECTIVE FARE + MATT JOZWIAK, CEO spoke at ASPEN IDEAS FESTIVAL on JUNE 25, 2022. LaToya: "At Collective Fare, we do Afro-diasporic food. So we do southern, we do African, we do Caribbean. Across the board we have a myriad of different chefs that work in our organization all from various backgrounds. How we found out what the community wants is we literally went and asked them."

[WATCH NOW](#)

YOUNG PROFESSIONALS NETWORK

Each year we welcome our RETHINK NETWORK to in-person and virtual events, educational panels on food insecurity and sustainability, and more.

We invite members of diverse socioeconomic and professional backgrounds to join: membership is free.

[LEARN MORE + JOIN](#)

PILOTS



YEMENI MERCHANTS' ASSOCIATION 10-WEEK PILOT

Yemeni American Merchants Association (YAMA) educates + elevates Yemeni-American merchants & their families through education, civil rights advocacy, business, & social service support. Rethink's pilot w/YAMA provided free, dignified meals in several bodegas in Harlem and the Bronx.

COMING IN 2023: MIAMI x MCKINSEY STUDY

With the success of Rethink's Miami program having funded more than 110,000 meals in just over a year, Rethink will work with McKinsey & Co. to study the impact of our small business restaurant model on local economies and communities.



HELP US GO BEYOND 10 MILLION MEALS

Every day, one meal to one person.

A more nourished community, a more sustainable food system, and a more equitable world.

The number of people experiencing food insecurity is expected to rise to 50 million.

Yet the need is growing.

Over the next 5 years,

Rethink seeks to direct \$10M+ to MWO/LBs and leverage our network—100+ restaurants, corporate partners, chefs, CBOs—to lead a movement that provides high-quality meals for individuals and communities facing food insecurity, all while seeking to divert at least 5M of pounds of excess food.

We've taken the model of one meal to 10 million, and with continued support can ensure that better connections in our food system work toward a better future for all.

[FUND MEALS
BY DONATING](#)

THANK YOU TO OUR SUPPORTERS

With gratitude and
thanks to our
NETWORK of:

**Restaurant partners + community-based
organizations + individual & institutional donors
+ government supporters & advocates**

GET INVOLVED

MAJOR SUPPORTERS

Anonymous (3)

Athletic Brewing

Audrey Nashville

H & F Baker Foundation

The J. Baker Foundation

Michele and Timothy Barakett

Stephen Biggar

Bronx Community Foundation

Brookfield Properties

Anthony Casalena

**The Chervenak-Nunnalle
Foundation**

Clark Foundation

Julia and Jonathan Cohen

**Steven & Alexandra Cohen
Foundation**

**Consolidated Edison Company
of New York, Inc.**

Crenn Dining Group

Leah and Jacob Ditchek

William H. Donner Foundation

Cheryl and Blair Efron

Eleven Madison Park

NYC Council Member

Amanda Farias (District 18)

**Federal Emergency
Management Agency (FEMA)**

Kelly and William Fradin

Aurora and Gabriel Gelman

The Genuine Hospitality Group

Michael Goller

Anna-Maria and Stephen

Kellen Foundation

**William R. Kenan, Jr.
Charitable Trust**

Kohlberg Foundation

Jerry Lee

**Mother Cabrini Health
Foundation**

Northstar Recycling Co.

**NYS Department of
Agriculture**

Rachael Ray Foundation

Richard and Alison Ressler

**NYC Council Member
Lincoln Restler (District 33)**

Michael Rimland

James Sinclair

Marshall and Amy Smith

Ben and Blair Stein

Marian Z. Stern

Zachary Sternberg

Tracy Tang

Toast.org

Peter van der Goes

**NYC Council Member
Julie Won (District 26)**

Natasha and Dirk Ziff