

# King County Solid Waste Division Commercial Food Waste Grant Final Report

<b>Grant Information</b>	
<i>Grantee:</i>	Divert, Inc.
<i>CPA Number:</i>	5989738
<i>Project Title:</i>	Unsold Food Reduction Alerting Program
<i>Report prepared by (name):</i>	Ben Kuethe
<i>Date report prepared:</i>	1/31/19
<i>King County Solid Waste Division Grant Manager:</i>	Karen May

<b>Project Information</b>
<p><i>Please provide an overall summary of the accomplishments of the project, based on project goals and objectives as outlined in the grant agreement. Include the following:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>a quantitative and qualitative assessment of the impacts of the project</i></li> <li>• <i>internal and external factors that contributed to or impeded the success of the project</i></li> <li>• <i>an assessment of the success of the Equity and Social Justice element of the project, if applicable</i></li> </ul> <p><i>Your grant manager will contact you if more information is needed.</i></p>
<p><b>Accomplishments</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Increased average monthly food donations for all treatment groups by 1-10%</li> <li>◆ In-store trainings and emails raised awareness of food donation</li> <li>◆ Identified opportunities for additional future retail food donations (see below)</li> </ul> <p><b>Overall Top Takeaways</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High turnover in store associates generates confusion around items eligible for food donation and best practices regarding food donation.</li> <li>• Infrequent or irregular pickups (both days and times) by Food Lifeline and other food rescue organizations causes stores to recycle food that is otherwise eligible for food donation, since many of these products are perishable and do not have extended shelf lives.             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The current process is for store associates to leave food for donation in shopping carts or banana boxes in their back rooms. Delays by the food rescue organizations cause produce, bakery, and prepared foods to spoil if they are sitting out for too long. Also, produce managers do not like produce strewn around the back room, as it clutters the area.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

- Weekends are often when stores need the most food donation pick-ups because they experience the highest traffic. However, Food Lifeline usually does not do store pick-ups on the weekends.
- A lot of the store feedback suggests there is a misunderstanding between Food Lifeline and Safeway/Albertsons stores regarding what product conditions constitute as food eligible for donation. Food Lifeline picks through items set aside for them and rejects food that stores believe should be donated. Clearly, there is a need for more transparency and conversation between the two parties.
  - Food Lifeline often rejects food that associates think is donatable, so to avoid confrontation, associates often place potentially donatable food in their Divert bin rather than setting aside for Food Lifeline, as this is the path of least resistance.
- Store management does not have the time to oversee products that are being placed in the Divert bins that otherwise could be donated.
- Store managers receive a lot of daily emails, and depending on the time of year, they don't always open/see the Divert email. However, when they do open and see emails with images of Divert bins, they typically follow up with their produce manager and receiver to understand why donatable items were not donated.

Round 1 Emails (7/1/2018) – 14/20 emails opened and addressed with department managers/associates.

Round 2 Emails (10/1/2018) – 11/20 emails opened and addressed with department managers/associates.

- Produce items at the bottom of banana boxes become mushy when other items are stacked on top, as these items are fragile and nearing the end of their lifespan.
- There are limitations on the volume of food donations that Food Lifeline can take during a single pick-up because of their small truck size.
- Store associates and managers find the Divert program intuitive and easy to use.

**Example Feedback/Follow-up Action from Emails:**

*Followed up with produce department right away- they were putting carts in the wrong place, so donation people didn't know to pick it up and the material ended up in our bins. Went over donation guidelines again with associates.*

*He printed the email and talked with the produce department - very helpful! he told them that we were watching their bins and would send emails weekly or monthly whenever we saw donatable material - trying to motivate the department to keep donatable items out of our bins.*

*Addressed issue with produce department and WILL NEVER HAPPEN AGAIN!  
A lot of turnover recently in produce so Produce Manager is going to train everyone in department tomorrow.*

*Store Manager went to talk with Dairy manager to see what the situation could be and why they didn't donate from that day.*

*Showed the photo to produce team and pointed out all the good looking tomatoes and bananas that should have been donated. Really appreciated the images so there was no room for associates to disagree.*

*Donation guidelines are too confusing. Frustrated with food banks and wasn't sure exactly what can go in the bin and what cannot, despite having the image-based training documents.*

### **Overall Percent Change in Donation Compared to Control Period**

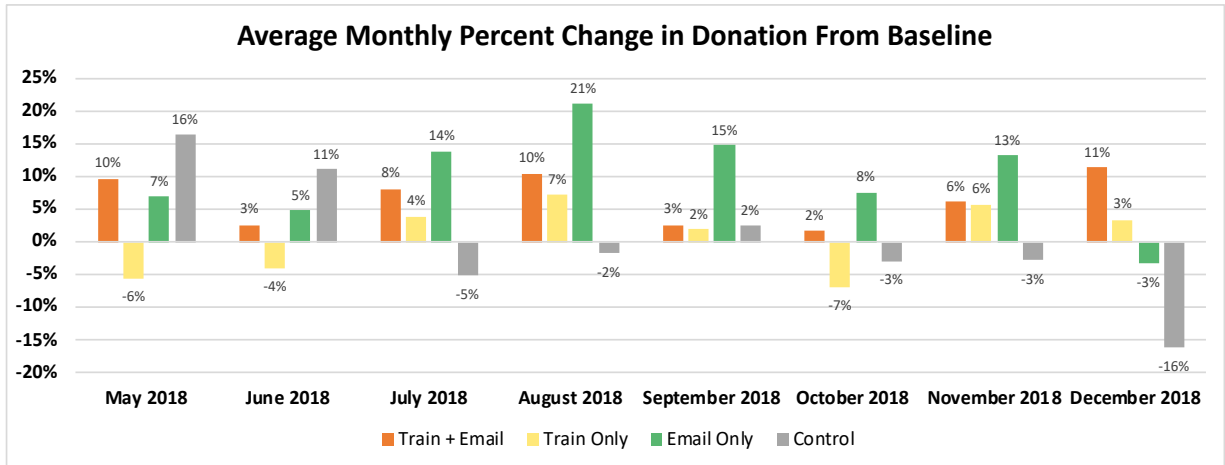
OVERALL MONTHLY AVG DONATION % CHANGE FROM BASELINE			
TRAIN + EMAIL	TRAIN ONLY	EMAIL ONLY	CONTROL
7%	1%	10%	0%

*Excludes Store 3418 for entire period due to it being an outlier and Store 3472 in December as it closed.*

### **Percent Change in Donated Food from Baseline at the Store Level (Two-Month Average)**

Store	Group	Treatment	Baseline	Baseline Avg Lbs / Month	May 2018	June 2018	July 2018	August 2018	September 2018	October 2018	November 2018	December 2018
4483	1	Train + Email	January - April	18,553	65%	-22%	-10%	1%	-12%	-12%	-28%	-11%
531	1	Train + Email	January - April	7,433	-26%	3%	15%	19%	11%	10%	20%	5%
490	1	Train + Email	January - April	7,163	12%	8%	1%	9%	-9%	-21%	9%	9%
3472	1	Train + Email	January - April	6,086	-15%	-22%	1%	2%	-11%	-15%	-48%	-88%
1600	1	Train + Email	January - April	8,068	25%	3%	-15%	3%	-8%	-29%	-3%	2%
3120	1	Train + Email	January - April	4,580	31%	24%	39%	60%	23%	19%	50%	29%
1664	1	Train + Email	January - April	7,834	9%	32%	41%	21%	3%	8%	20%	18%
3500	1	Train + Email	January - April	6,259	-18%	-1%	-3%	-6%	-10%	-6%	14%	40%
558	1	Train + Email	January - April	3,941	2%	5%	19%	28%	20%	27%	34%	-3%
555	1	Train + Email	January - April	4,920	12%	-3%	-6%	-32%	21%	37%	-6%	13%
1444	2	Train Only	January - April	5,449	14%	24%	56%	71%	54%	40%	71%	80%
3540	2	Train Only	January - April	4,906	18%	16%	16%	16%	-2%	-15%	21%	20%
1186	2	Train Only	January - April	7,328	3%	-4%	1%	3%	2%	-6%	6%	-2%
1572	2	Train Only	January - April	8,962	-22%	-3%	-14%	-33%	-42%	-36%	-27%	-28%
1555	2	Train Only	January - April	5,156	3%	-5%	-2%	4%	-4%	-14%	-12%	-29%
477	2	Train Only	January - April	6,787	-28%	-33%	-22%	-23%	-41%	-42%	-30%	-31%
3501	2	Train Only	January - April	9,990	-22%	-4%	11%	-3%	15%	11%	9%	3%
1624	2	Train Only	January - April	5,636	-6%	-13%	-10%	24%	33%	14%	31%	16%
3006	2	Train Only	January - April	7,702	-17%	-27%	-30%	-15%	-12%	-39%	-34%	-23%
1493	2	Train Only	January - April	6,723	1%	9%	33%	29%	17%	19%	21%	28%
1864	3	Email Only	January - April	14,154	4%	6%	-1%	8%	-3%	-3%	-3%	-29%
1294	3	Email Only	January - April	7,883	-15%	-27%	-33%	-30%	-26%	-22%	-3%	-14%
459	3	Email Only	January - April	7,668	9%	-26%	-18%	19%	5%	-27%	-8%	-22%
2734	3	Email Only	January - April	5,230	36%	32%	40%	52%	58%	55%	46%	36%
1142	3	Email Only	January - April	4,658	-21%	-48%	-28%	-15%	-25%	-49%	-31%	-20%
526	3	Email Only	January - April	1,951	48%	103%	141%	109%	130%	154%	104%	55%
3416	3	Email Only	January - April	7,261	-11%	-13%	13%	26%	-22%	-47%	-25%	-19%
1471	3	Email Only	January - April	3,156	33%	40%	44%	45%	26%	42%	50%	-10%
1528	3	Email Only	January - April	12,418	10%	-1%	-11%	-3%	9%	-22%	8%	8%
533	3	Email Only	January - April	9,575	-23%	-18%	-9%	-1%	-5%	-4%	-6%	-19%
792	4	Control	January - April	3,588	1%	-9%	-3%	24%	15%	7%	26%	18%
494	4	Control	January - April	6,622	19%	6%	-1%	6%	19%	10%	11%	7%
1966	4	Control	January - April	5,851	2%	-24%	-29%	-5%	-8%	-22%	9%	-5%
3418	4	Control	January - April	3,403	78%	-25%	-79%	59%	182%	133%	25%	113%
496	4	Control	January - April	7,178	11%	2%	-23%	-20%	0%	0%	15%	16%
464	4	Control	January - April	5,796	-13%	-15%	-25%	-42%	6%	25%	-11%	-16%
453	4	Control	January - April	8,693	-3%	31%	13%	-4%	-5%	-11%	1%	-7%
1563	4	Control	January - April	4,018	-24%	-6%	-11%	-10%	-11%	-33%	-37%	-46%
3319	4	Control	January - April	8,186	3%	19%	4%	0%	-2%	-14%	-23%	-40%
519	4	Control	January - April	8,396	1%	2%	4%	3%	-11%	-24%	-28%	-51%
366	4	Control	January - April	7,795	158%	89%	3%	34%	29%	37%	7%	-62%
3213	4	Control	January - April	5,532	39%	41%	28%	14%	17%	13%	13%	8%
497	4	Control	January - April	7,263	2%	-3%	-21%	-19%	-21%	-24%	-16%	-16%

## Monthly Change in Donation from Baseline



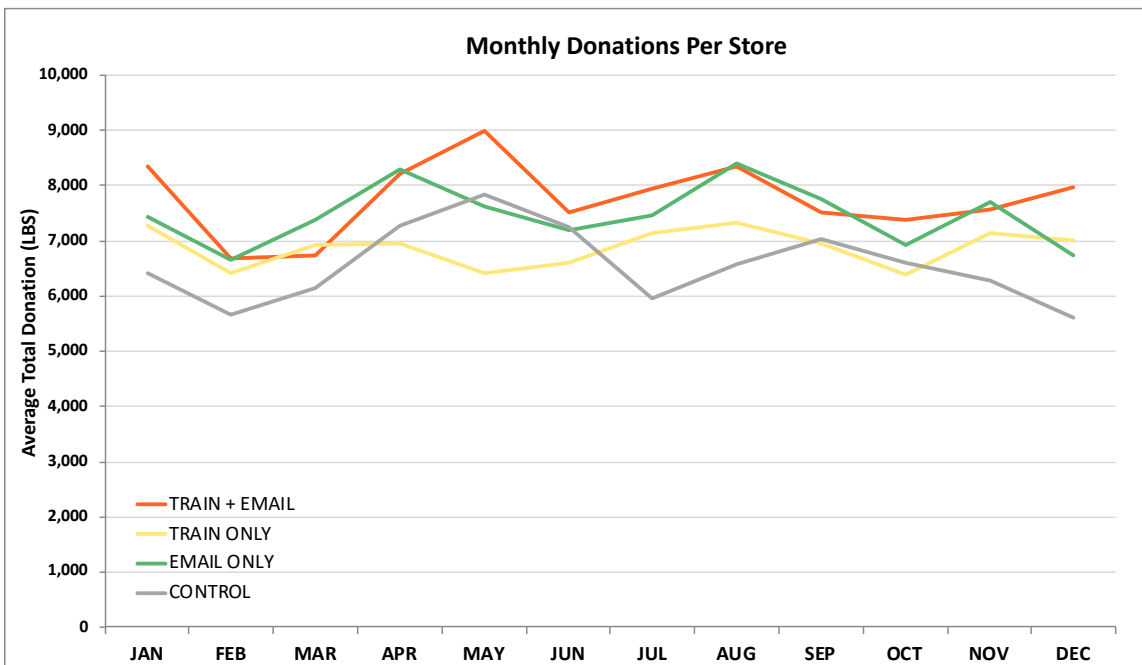
*Excludes Store 3418 for entire period due to it being an outlier and Store 3472 in December as it closed.*

## Monthly Treatment Effects

TREATMENT EFFECTS BY MONTH								
MAY			JUNE			JULY		
TRAIN + EMAIL	TRAIN ONLY		TRAIN + EMAIL	TRAIN ONLY		TRAIN + EMAIL	TRAIN ONLY	
-7%	-22%		-8%	-15%		13%	9%	
AUGUST			SEPTEMBER			OCTOBER		
TRAIN + EMAIL	TRAIN ONLY	EMAIL ONLY	TRAIN + EMAIL	TRAIN ONLY	EMAIL ONLY	TRAIN + EMAIL	TRAIN ONLY	EMAIL ONLY
12%	9%	23%	0%	-1%	12%	5%	-4%	11%
NOVEMBER			DECEMBER					
TRAIN + EMAIL	TRAIN ONLY	EMAIL ONLY	TRAIN + EMAIL	TRAIN ONLY	EMAIL ONLY			
9%	9%	16%	28%	20%	13%			

*Excludes Store 3418 for entire period due to it being an outlier and Store 3472 in December as it closed.*

**Average Donations per Month (Two-Month Rolling Average, as explained earlier)**



*Excludes S3472 in December as it closed.*

*Please provide any other information that the grant manager should know about this project.*

Sometime late Summer/early Fall of 2018, the Food Lifeline contact and lead for this project was no longer with the organization. They had already completed trainings for the experimental groups 1 & 2, so that shouldn't have affected the study.

*Please provide feedback on your experience with this Commercial Food Waste grant program. Do you have suggestions for how to improve the program?*

We thought the process went very smoothly and the King County Grant Manager was extremely responsive and helpful when needed. Leading up to the project execution, all stakeholders were able to effectively meet and mutually agree on a scope and schedule. Overall, it was a very positive experience, and we look forward to continued work with King County.