

From Cardinals Games to College Campuses



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A Closer Look at Where OFS Sources Rescued Food

There's nothing like a great hot dog enjoyed during an exciting Cardinals game. But after the final inning, what happens to the food that isn't sold?

Thanks to partnerships with Delaware North, which operates at Busch Stadium, and Levy Restaurants, which operates at The Dome and Energizer Park, surplus food from major events regularly makes its way through Operation Food Search's distribution system to local families. It's the kind of partnership that has defined our work from the beginning.

OFS has its origins in food rescue, starting in the late 1970s as an effort to get excess produce from grocery stores into the hands of people facing

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hunger. More than 45 years later, we remain true to our roots as a rescue food bank. In addition to our search for innovative ways of reducing food insecurity in the long term, a great deal of our work is centered around meeting the immediate need for food in our community. That means getting food from farms, grocers, manufacturers, and restaurants onto the dinner tables of people who need it — before it goes to waste.

According to the United Nations Environment Programme, one trillion dollars' worth of food is thrown away every year. That's 30% to 40% of the global food supply. As daunting a number as that is, there is great work being done to reduce food waste. Consumers are becoming more aware of the importance of not wasting food, and businesses are intentional in their efforts to divert food to organizations like Operation Food Search.

Some of our biggest food donors, such as Schnucks and Dierbergs, are well known to our community. But many people may not be aware of the variety of businesses that donate food to us in support of our mission to heal hunger.

From Stadium to Table

Donating food requires commitment and effort. To our partners at venues like Busch Stadium and The Dome, the value of doing so is clear.

“It never hurts to help for one day.
It might be you that needs help.”

Justin Warren
Warehouse Manager
The Dome at America's Center

A Long History of Breaking Bread

Food manufacturers have been a part of the solution for a long time, as well. Pepperidge Farm (and parent company Campbell's) has been donating bread to Operation Food Search for more than 25 years. Representatives from Pepperidge Farm bring back excess product from grocery stores to their warehouse, and OFS drivers pick up the bread twice a week.

“I'm proud that through Pepperidge Farm, I'm able to help donate snacks and bread to those in need,” says Richard Robinson, Fenton depot manager. “Seeing our products go beyond the shelf and make a difference for families is incredibly rewarding.”



Volunteers pack Pepperidge Farm donations.

Beyond the Basics

OFS is grateful for a large number of new partnerships, as well. Ronnoco Beverage Solutions, a national brand based in St. Louis, dates back to the 1904 World's Fair. Today, the company donates coffee to OFS, providing a commodity rarely available to people working to stretch their grocery budgets.

“Coffee becomes a luxury item when you're unsure where your next meal is coming from,” says Sasha Thomas, OFS agency advocate. “Our partner



Ronnoco Beverage Solutions donations

agencies are glad to be able to provide it to the community when they can.”

Another St. Louis-based company, rootberry, is now donating frozen plant-based meals to OFS. The opportunity to offer a variety of food for different nutritional preferences is key to our ability to serve diverse needs.

“At rootberry, we believe everyone deserves access to food that is both nutritious and genuinely enjoyable,” says Theron Pajares, operations lead at rootberry. “Partnering with Operation Food Search allows us to help reduce food waste while getting wholesome, high-quality meals into the hands of people who need them most.”

Campus Contributions

Food rescue partnerships aren’t limited to businesses. Local universities are finding creative ways to help. This spring, Washington University in St. Louis students donated unused meal points to fund the purchase of OFS’s most-needed food items. The university’s Dining Services worked with Sodexo, the university’s food services manager, to provide more than 46,000 pounds of shelf-stable food — roughly 55,000 meals.

“The passion, dedication, and generosity demonstrated by our students, team, and campus partners made this initiative a tremendous success,” says Tiffany De La Roche, director for Dining Services at Washington University in St. Louis. “Seeing everyone come together to help neighbors facing food insecurity was both inspiring and rewarding.”



Donations through Washington University St. Louis and Sodexo, the University’s food services manager

Good for People and the Planet

Food donations like these do double duty, helping neighbors access needed nutrition while keeping good food out of the landfill. That generosity matters more than ever now, given rising costs of food and fuel.

“Even though fuel costs for rescuing food have increased by more than 30% over last year, OFS has remained committed to getting rescued and donated food to the families and individuals we serve,” says OFS Director of In-Kind Donations Matt Kasate.

That commitment depends on partners like these — the businesses and organizations who make the time and effort to reduce waste and help OFS ensure families and individuals have the food they need to thrive.

Does your business or organization have surplus food? Contact Matt.Kasate@OperationFoodSearch.org.

Build-A-Benefit: Your FUNdraiser, Your Way

Some of the most creative support for OFS starts far from our warehouse — at a lemonade stand, a trivia



Students4STL raise funds at a soccer game.

night, or mile 87 of an ultramarathon (It's true: one supporter ran 100 miles through Forest Park and raised more than \$35,000 to heal hunger!)

Community FUNdraisers are events hosted by people like you, and no idea is too big or too small. One very young donor asked for donations for OFS instead of birthday gifts, a group of students rallied people to contribute at a school soccer match, and Up-Down Arcade donated proceeds from playing video games to help fight childhood hunger.

Building your own benefit is simple: pick an activity, connect with OFS, rally your people, and make an impact. We'll help with ideas, resources, and a custom donation link with a QR code for your event.



Ready to get started? Learn more at
operationfoodsearch.org/host-fundraiser/
or reach out at events@operationfoodsearch.org.

What's Cooking in the Teaching Kitchen } Buffalo Cauliflower

FEATURED RECIPE

Buffalo Cauliflower

Scan to View Recipe →



Craving game-day flavor without the game-day guilt? This crispy, air-fried Buffalo Cauliflower brings all the tangy, spicy satisfaction of the classic wing — no chicken required. It's a simple, budget-friendly way to add more vegetables to your table, straight from our Teaching Kitchen to yours.

To learn more about group cooking classes, contact our Culinary Nutrition Education Manager Jason Goldman at jason.goldman@operationfoodsearch.org.



Operation Food Search
COFFEE CONNECTION
Conversation & Tour

**Nov 10, 2026
8:30 - 9:30 a.m.**

Learn more about hunger and food insecurity in the St. Louis region and OFS's work to help create a hunger-free tomorrow. View upcoming dates and RSVP at OperationFoodSearch.org/CoffeeConnection

