

# Reinvigorating the Sharing Ethic

If your garden or fruit tree is providing more than you can eat, consider taking the following action:

1. Preserve, dehydrate, make stock. Don't know how? Consider a workshop or having a Preserving Party!
2. Share with friends, family, neighbors.
3. Share (or barter) with your networks- Homegrown Guild, CropMobster, Nextdoor, freecycle, Fallen Fruit etc.
4. Harvest and deliver to a community donation drop site, pantry, food bank.
5. Attend or host a produce exchange.
6. Call a local gleaning group and ask them to harvest if you are physically unable to do so.
7. Put out a free box
8. Remember your neighborhood chickens, rabbits, goats, etc. as they would love your greens.
9. Neighborly composting schemes.
10. Petaluma Green Bins

Not everyone in our community has access to fresh produce or a yard to grow their own. If you have more space than you can cultivate, consider taking the following action:

1. Grow a Row for Hunger Relief efforts (see above for distribution options).
2. Consider planting a winter garden when pantries are most in need of fresh produce.
3. Consider a Garden Share.
4. Support efforts to create more community gardens and edible landscaping in your community.

Below is this EPA's Food Recovery Hierarchy. Petaluma Bounty believes that it is crucial to pay attention to how the values are implemented. Locally, we have concerns about prioritizing Industrial Uses above a centralized and local composting facility. Our food system relies upon green waste being turned into high quality compost.



## The following questions were asked of me for a magazine interview.

### 1. What role does Petaluma Bounty play in terms of food recovery and mitigating food waste in Sonoma County?

Petaluma Bounty has been actively engaged in food recovery since its inception in 2006 and is part of a network of community groups, volunteers, and service providers that has harvested, recovered, or redistributed over 650,000 pounds of food. It is one of the founding members of the Sonoma County Food Recovery Coalition, helped host the Community Jam Regional Conference in Sonoma County in 2016, and advocated for the strengthening of the Good Samaritan Act and balancing food safety concerns with effective risk management in community settings regarding AB 1990 during 2015 to which led to the passage of AB 1219 in 2017 that strengthens the Good Samaritan Act for food donated for public benefit.

### 2. What are the biggest challenges facing us locally when it comes to food waste?

A. Equivocating food waste with food recovery. Food waste should be offensive to all, especially when food insecurity persists in our community. Yet, although intertwined, they are not the same thing. The way Bounty sees things, food recovery is one method of ensuring community food security with an added benefit of waste prevention, not the other way around. Where recovered food goes and how it gets to the end consumer are critical factors in the conversation about food waste and community food security.

Our hope is that enthusiasm for food waste prevention can be channeled to benefit our community through direct support of food recovery efforts such as donations of food, volunteering, and monetary donations to support operations and volunteer coordination. Further, our hope is that food recovery and waste prevention efforts will benefit farmers alongside food insecure community members either through greater tax benefits, recouping losses, or other creative solutions not yet identified.

Petaluma Bounty struggles to keep a paid staff position to coordinate our volunteer food recovery work force. During years we have a paid staff member to train, support, and coordinate volunteer efforts, donations and distribution increase by 300%. It is my concern that the enthusiasm for waste reduction or prevention will overshadow the community service of food recovery and gleaning.

B. Apathy of the consumer and devaluing of food. Studies by the NRDC demonstrated that approximately 40% of all food grown gets wasted at some stage of the supply chain of our food system (on farm, processing, distribution, repackaging, sales outlets, and at home). Different stages (and scales of operation) would require different interventions or solutions. But one common factor/approach is that if we valued the food more, at every stage, we would be more motivated to prevent such a precious commodity go bad.

### 3. What are the biggest success?

Collaborating with food waste organizations to raise awareness of a shared goal to reduce food waste and redirect valuable food and organic material away from landfills. We live in a community where organizations and agencies seek collaboration to address community problems. I'm honored to work with a diverse range of partners to develop mutually beneficial goals including Sonoma County Food Recovery Coalition, CropMobster, UC Cooperative Extension, and Waste Management. I also appreciate the authenticity of the relationship building where we can identify the rubs in the systems and articulate concerns.

### 4. Ideally, what would food waste and food recovery look like in Sonoma County in five years?

Ideally, Petaluma Bounty and other food recovery organizations (Farm to Pantry, Sonoma Food Runners, and Slow Harvest) will have consistent funding sources that understand and appreciate the community service our work provides and we'll be busy in the fields doing the work we love.

Households will purchase or produce higher quality food and prevent losses.

Policies will be put in place to incentivize food loss prevention at all stages of the food system supply chain that will prioritize community food security, specifically the sharing ethic and the economic well-being of farmers.

Petaluma Bounty seeks to push forth the following values and agenda to reinvigorate the sharing ethic (Also see attached).