Agency Partner Satisfaction Survey
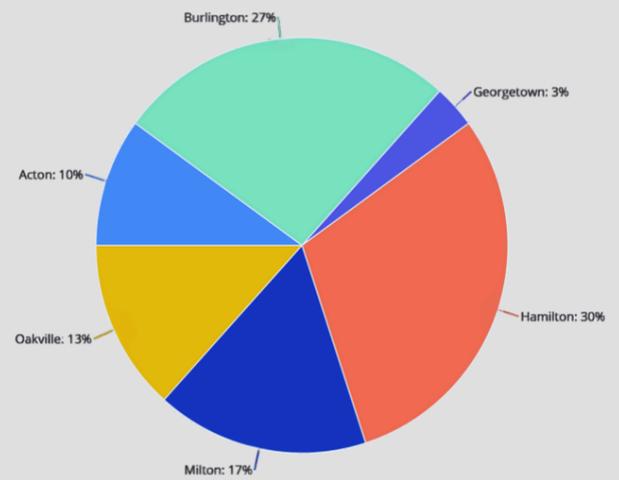
Food for Life

Findings from our Agency Satisfaction Survey - Fall 2024

At Food for Life, we are committed to delivering exceptional service and adapting to the changing needs of our Agency Partners

In October 2024, we conducted a Satisfaction Survey, inviting our Agency Partners to share their perspectives. A total of 30 representatives from 24 Agency Partner organizations participated voluntarily. **The survey explored key areas such as agency resources and capacity, satisfaction with our services, food sourcing for programs, the impacts and challenges of using rescued food from Food for Life, and new opportunities to use rescued food in community programming.**

The participating agencies represented a variety of sectors: *Shelter, Residence, Housing* (27%), *Food bank, Pantry, Meals* (23%), *Multi-service Organization* (23%), *Community Development and Social Services* (17%), *Faith-Based* (7%), *School, Camp, Daycare* (3%). No Agency Representatives from *Public Institutions* (e.g. libraries) responded.

Burlington: 27%
Georgetown: 3%
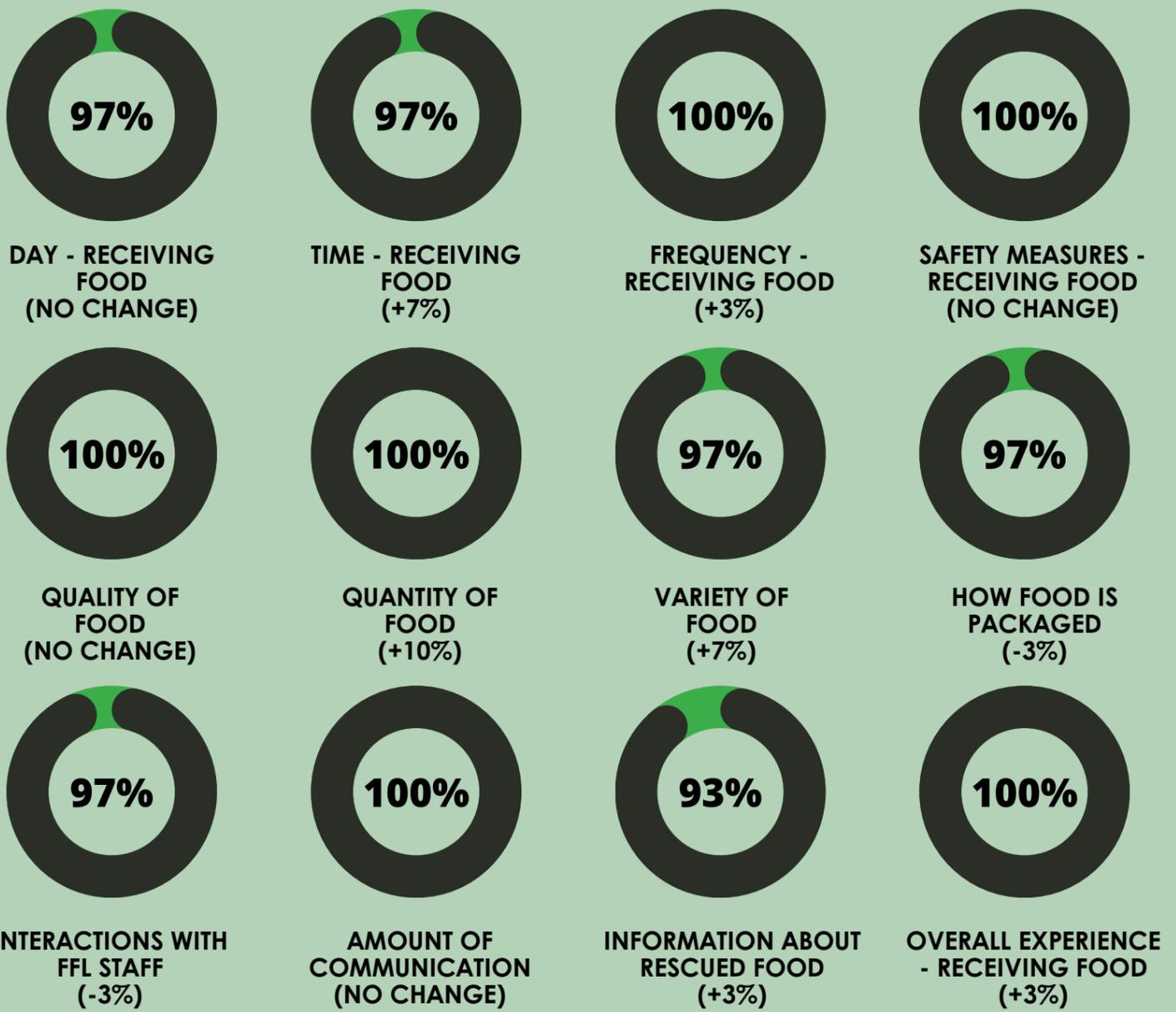Acton: 10%
Hamilton: 30%
Oakville: 13%
Milton: 17%

Total Complete Responses by Municipality (n=30)

Agency Partner Satisfaction with Food for Life's Service

*Percent of surveyed Agency Representatives who responded as either 'Very satisfied' or 'Satisfied' to the below prompts about receiving rescued food from Food for Life
*Brackets below titles represent April 2024 data for comparison

97%	**97%**	**100%**	**100%**
DAY - RECEIVING FOOD (NO CHANGE)	TIME - RECEIVING FOOD (+7%)	FREQUENCY - RECEIVING FOOD (+3%)	SAFETY MEASURES - RECEIVING FOOD (NO CHANGE)
100%	**100%**	**97%**	**97%**
QUALITY OF FOOD (NO CHANGE)	QUANTITY OF FOOD (+10%)	VARIETY OF FOOD (+7%)	HOW FOOD IS PACKAGED (-3%)
97%	**100%**	**93%**	**100%**
INTERACTIONS WITH FFL STAFF (-3%)	AMOUNT OF COMMUNICATION (NO CHANGE)	INFORMATION ABOUT RESCUED FOOD (+3%)	OVERALL EXPERIENCE - RECEIVING FOOD (+3%)

Food for Life's Agency Partners' indicate high levels of satisfaction with our service

Key strengths of our service include:

- Quality and quantity of food provided
- Frequency of partners receiving food
- Amount of communication provided
- Safety measures taken while receiving food
- The overall experience Food for Life provides

Areas for improving Agency satisfaction include:

- Ensuring delivery or pickup times meet partners' needs
- Providing more information about rescued food
- Improving food variety and how food is packaged

Areas for improving Agency satisfaction by municipality:

- **Acton:** No noted areas for improvement
- **Burlington:** Improve how received food is packaged
- **Georgetown:** No noted areas for improvement
- **Hamilton:** Increase the amount of information provided about rescued food
- **Milton:** No noted areas for improvement
- **Oakville:** Improve delivery/pickup day and timing, food variety, rescued food information, and staff interactions

Areas for improving Agency satisfaction by organization type:

- **Multi-Service Organizations:** Improve delivery/pickup day and timing, food variety, rescued food information, and staff interactions
- **Food Bank, Pantry, Meal Agencies:** Improve how received food is packaged
- **Shelter, Residence, Housing Agencies:** Increase amount of information provided on rescued foods
- **Community Development and Social Service Agencies, Faith-based Agencies, School, Camp, Daycare Agencies:** No noted areas for improvement

100%

Overall Agency experience of being a partner of Food for Life

100% of our Agency Partners are 'Very satisfied' (77%) or 'Satisfied' (23%) with their experience of being a partner with us

*All percentages displayed in document have been rounded. Percentages displayed with arrows on bar graphs indicate statistically significant data points for the sample at a 95% confidence level.

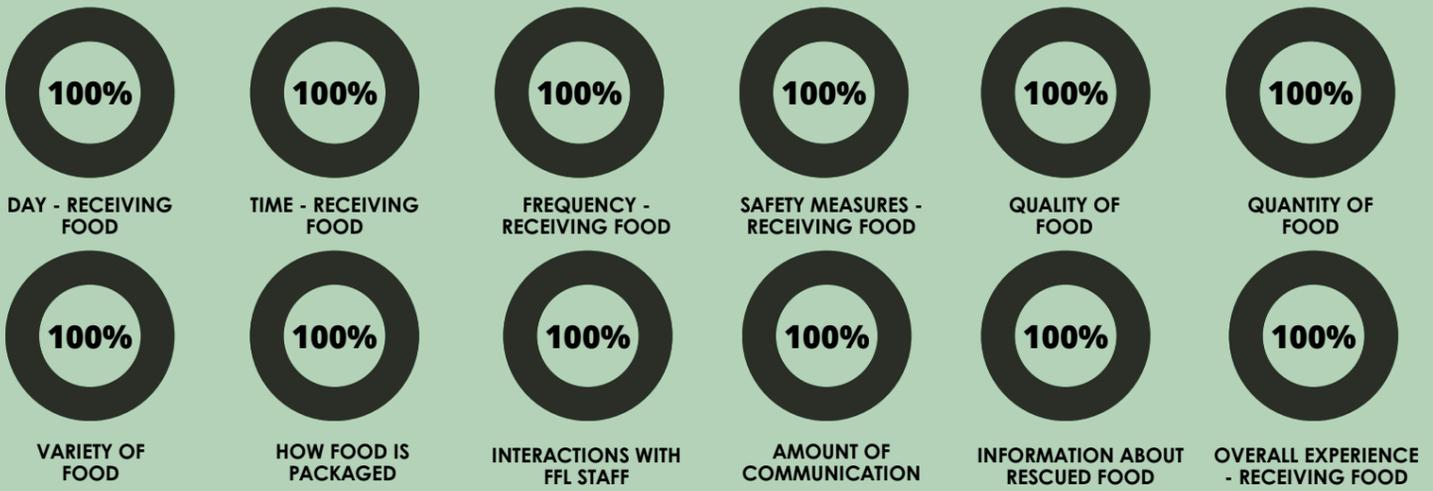# Agency Partner Satisfaction Survey

Food for Life

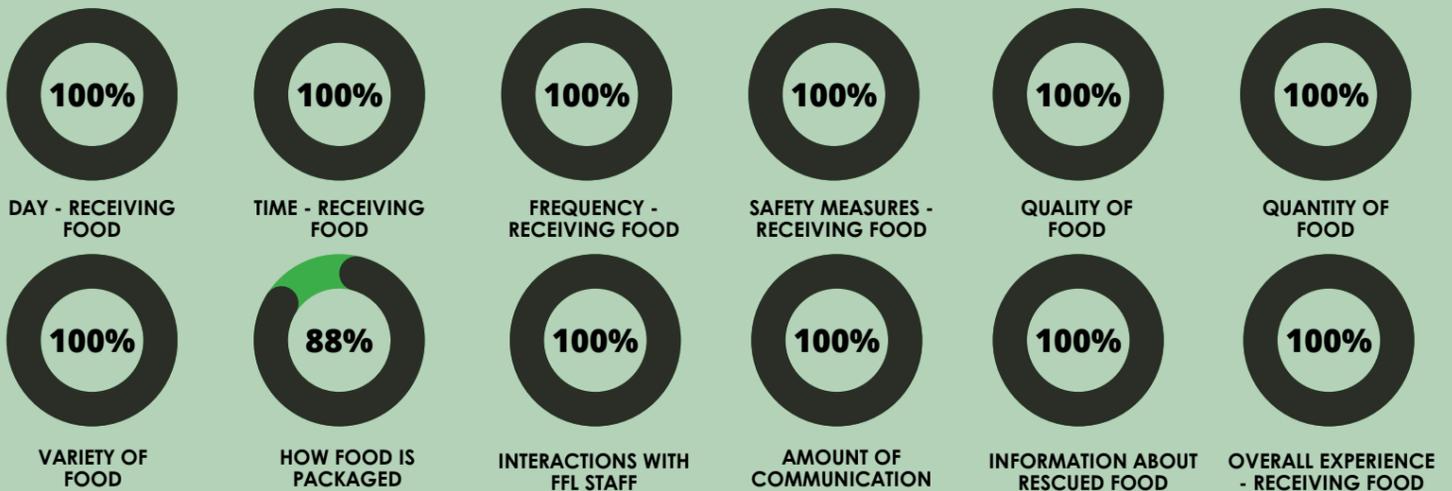## Findings from our Agency Satisfaction Survey - Fall 2024

Agency Partner Satisfaction with Food for Life's Service by Municipality

Percent of surveyed Agency Representatives who responded as either 'Very satisfied' or 'Satisfied' to the below prompts about receiving rescued food from Food for Life
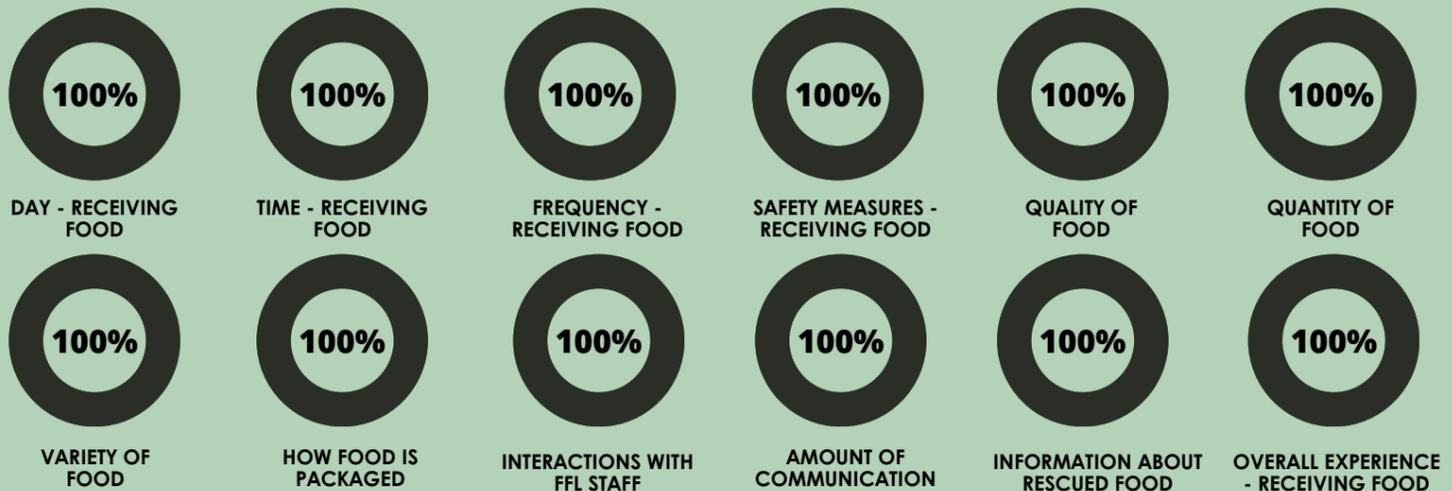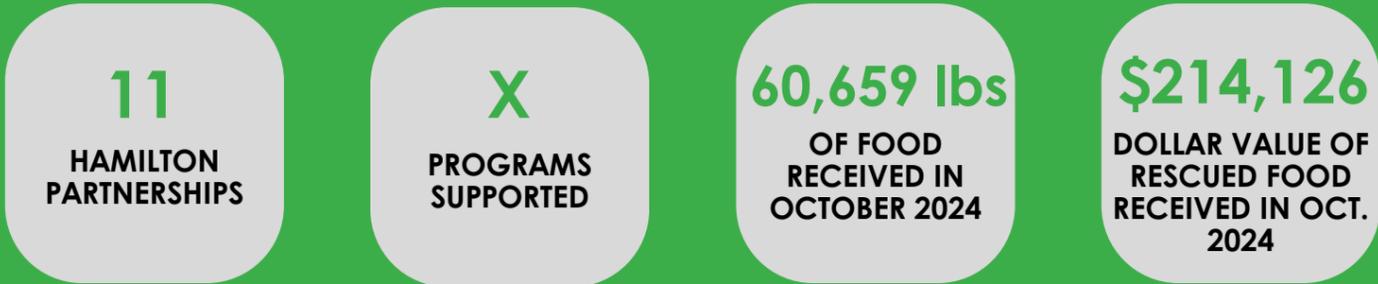
Acton Agency Satisfaction (3 Agencies: n=3)

100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
DAY - RECEIVING FOOD	TIME - RECEIVING FOOD	FREQUENCY - RECEIVING FOOD	SAFETY MEASURES - RECEIVING FOOD	QUALITY OF FOOD	QUANTITY OF FOOD
100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
VARIETY OF FOOD	HOW FOOD IS PACKAGED	INTERACTIONS WITH FFL STAFF	AMOUNT OF COMMUNICATION	INFORMATION ABOUT RESCUED FOOD	OVERALL EXPERIENCE - RECEIVING FOOD

3 ACTON PARTNERSHIPS

X PROGRAMS SUPPORTED

1,218 lbs OF FOOD RECEIVED IN OCTOBER 2024

$4,300 DOLLAR VALUE OF RESCUED FOOD RECEIVED IN OCT. 2024

Burlington Agency Satisfaction (7 Agencies: n=8)

100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
DAY - RECEIVING FOOD	TIME - RECEIVING FOOD	FREQUENCY - RECEIVING FOOD	SAFETY MEASURES - RECEIVING FOOD	QUALITY OF FOOD	QUANTITY OF FOOD
100%	88%	100%	100%	100%	100%
VARIETY OF FOOD	HOW FOOD IS PACKAGED	INTERACTIONS WITH FFL STAFF	AMOUNT OF COMMUNICATION	INFORMATION ABOUT RESCUED FOOD	OVERALL EXPERIENCE - RECEIVING FOOD

15 BURLINGTON PARTNERSHIPS

X PROGRAMS SUPPORTED

26,502 lbs OF FOOD RECEIVED IN OCTOBER 2024

$93,552 DOLLAR VALUE OF RESCUED FOOD RECEIVED IN OCT. 2024

Georgetown Agency Satisfaction (1 Agency: n=1)

100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
DAY - RECEIVING FOOD	TIME - RECEIVING FOOD	FREQUENCY - RECEIVING FOOD	SAFETY MEASURES - RECEIVING FOOD	QUALITY OF FOOD	QUANTITY OF FOOD
100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
VARIETY OF FOOD	HOW FOOD IS PACKAGED	INTERACTIONS WITH FFL STAFF	AMOUNT OF COMMUNICATION	INFORMATION ABOUT RESCUED FOOD	OVERALL EXPERIENCE - RECEIVING FOOD

3 GEORGETOWN PARTNERSHIPS

X PROGRAMS SUPPORTED

6,225 lbs OF FOOD RECEIVED IN OCTOBER 2024

$21,974 DOLLAR VALUE OF RESCUED FOOD RECEIVED IN OCT. 2024

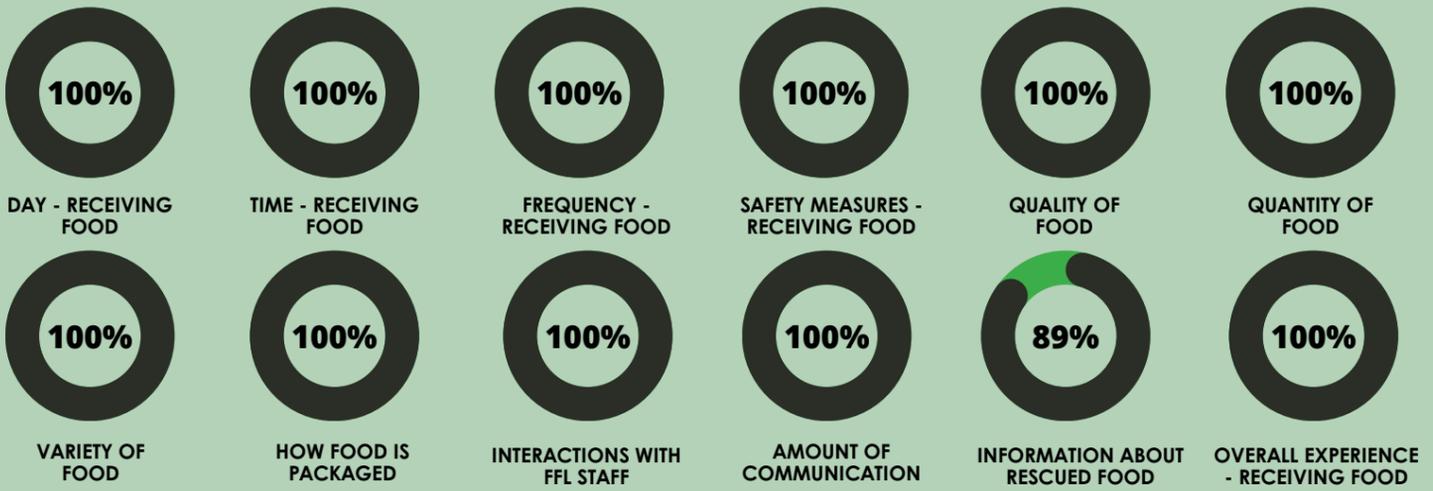# Agency Partner Satisfaction Survey

Food for Life

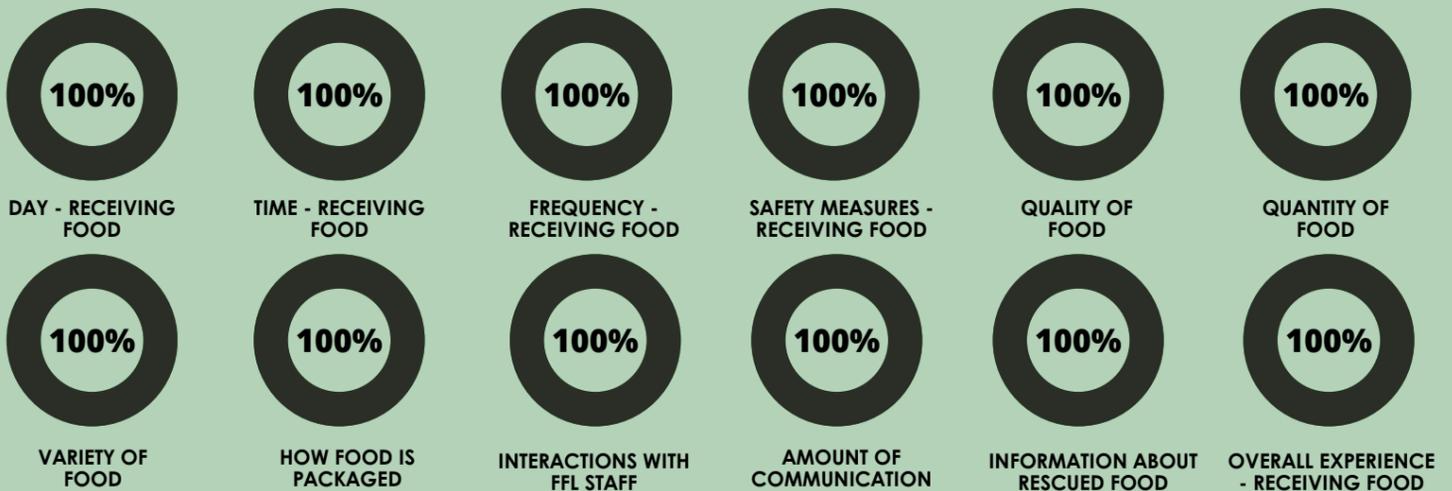## Findings from our Agency Satisfaction Survey - Fall 2024

Agency Partner Satisfaction with Food for Life's Service by Municipality

*Percent of surveyed Agency Representatives who responded as either 'Very satisfied' or 'Satisfied' to the below prompts about receiving rescued food from Food for Life
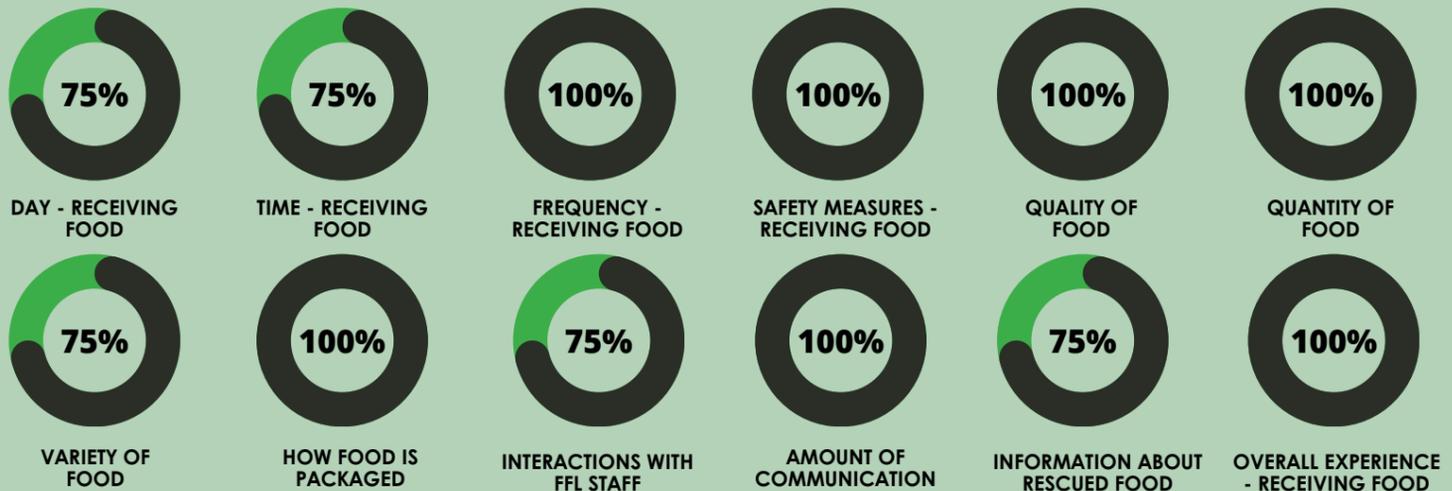
Hamilton Agency Satisfaction (7 Agencies: n=9)

100% DAY - RECEIVING FOOD	100% TIME - RECEIVING FOOD	100% FREQUENCY - RECEIVING FOOD	100% SAFETY MEASURES - RECEIVING FOOD	100% QUALITY OF FOOD	100% QUANTITY OF FOOD
100% VARIETY OF FOOD	100% HOW FOOD IS PACKAGED	100% INTERACTIONS WITH FFL STAFF	100% AMOUNT OF COMMUNICATION	89% INFORMATION ABOUT RESCUED FOOD	100% OVERALL EXPERIENCE - RECEIVING FOOD

11 HAMILTON PARTNERSHIPS	**X** PROGRAMS SUPPORTED	**60,659 lbs** OF FOOD RECEIVED IN OCTOBER 2024	**$214,126** DOLLAR VALUE OF RESCUED FOOD RECEIVED IN OCT. 2024

Milton Agency Satisfaction (3 Agencies: n=5)

100% DAY - RECEIVING FOOD	100% TIME - RECEIVING FOOD	100% FREQUENCY - RECEIVING FOOD	100% SAFETY MEASURES - RECEIVING FOOD	100% QUALITY OF FOOD	100% QUANTITY OF FOOD
100% VARIETY OF FOOD	100% HOW FOOD IS PACKAGED	100% INTERACTIONS WITH FFL STAFF	100% AMOUNT OF COMMUNICATION	100% INFORMATION ABOUT RESCUED FOOD	100% OVERALL EXPERIENCE - RECEIVING FOOD

6 MILTON PARTNERSHIPS	**X** PROGRAMS SUPPORTED	**2,200 lbs** OF FOOD RECEIVED IN OCTOBER 2024	**$7,766** DOLLAR VALUE OF RESCUED FOOD RECEIVED IN OCT. 2024

Oakville Agency Satisfaction (4 Agencies: n=4)

75% DAY - RECEIVING FOOD	75% TIME - RECEIVING FOOD	100% FREQUENCY - RECEIVING FOOD	100% SAFETY MEASURES - RECEIVING FOOD	100% QUALITY OF FOOD	100% QUANTITY OF FOOD
75% VARIETY OF FOOD	100% HOW FOOD IS PACKAGED	75% INTERACTIONS WITH FFL STAFF	100% AMOUNT OF COMMUNICATION	75% INFORMATION ABOUT RESCUED FOOD	100% OVERALL EXPERIENCE - RECEIVING FOOD

| **6** OAKVILLE PARTNERSHIPS	**X** PROGRAMS SUPPORTED	**13,720 lbs** OF FOOD RECEIVED IN OCTOBER 2024	**$48,432** DOLLAR VALUE OF RESCUED FOOD RECEIVED IN OCT. 2024

Agency Partner Satisfaction Survey

Findings from our Agency Satisfaction Survey - Fall 2024

Sources of Food & Demand for Service

Percent of surveyed Agency Representatives (Sources of rescued food multi-select question type)
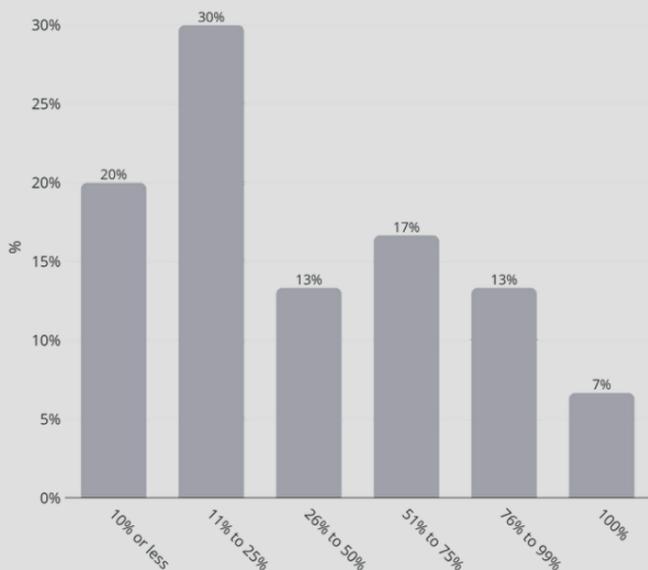
### Percentage of Food for Agency Programming - Food for Life

The most commonly reported percentages of food used for agency programming from Food for Life fall within **'11% to 25%'** (30%), **'10% or less'** (20%) and **'51% to 75%'** (17%). Additionally, 13% of partners reported that Food for Life provides **'76%-99%'** of their food, while another 7% reported receiving **'100%'** of their food from Food for Life.

- Hamilton and Milton show the highest reliance on Food for Life with some agencies indicating **'100%'** (H-11% & M-20%), while Acton and Burlington agencies were more likely to select **'10% or less'** (A-33% & B-38%)
- There is variability in the reported percentages of food Food for Life provides within each agency type, but overall, *School, camp, daycare,* and *Community Development and Social Service* Agencies, have the highest reliance on Food for Life, while *Food Bank, Pantry, Meal,* and *Shelter, Residence, Housing* Agencies have the least reliance
- Agencies that receive **10%-75%** of their food from Food for Life are less likely to report experiencing challenges with rescued food
- Agencies that receive **76%-100%** of their food from Food for Life are more likely to report challenges in general, specifically with quantity, variety, and delivery/ pick up times

Percentage of Food for Agency Programming - Purchased

The percentage of food for programming that Agency Partners' purchase varied considerably overall. The most commonly reported ranges are **'51% to 75%'** (30%), **'26% to 50%'** (23%), and '**We don't currently purchase food**' (17%)

- Acton, Burlington, and Georgetown have the highest selections of purchasing **'51% to 75%'** of their food for programming (A-33%, B-50%, & G-100%), while Hamilton and Milton have the highest selections of **'We don't currently purchase food'** (H-22% & M-40%)
- *School, Camp, Daycare* and *Community Development and Social Service* Agencies are most likely to report not purchasing food for programming (S-100% & C-40%), while Shelter, Residence, Housing Agencies are more likely to report purchasing **51% or more** (S-88%)
- All other agency types exhibit high variability in purchased food for programming
- Agencies who purchase **51% or more** of their food for programming are more likely to not report challenges with receiving rescued food from Food for Life
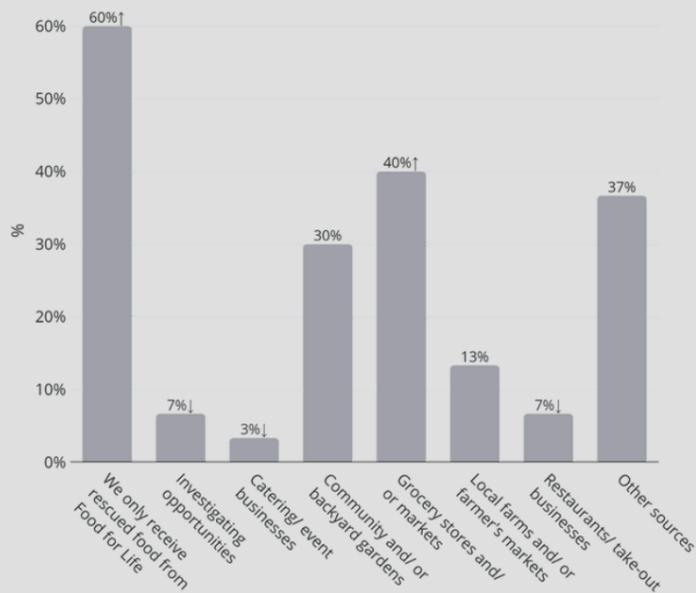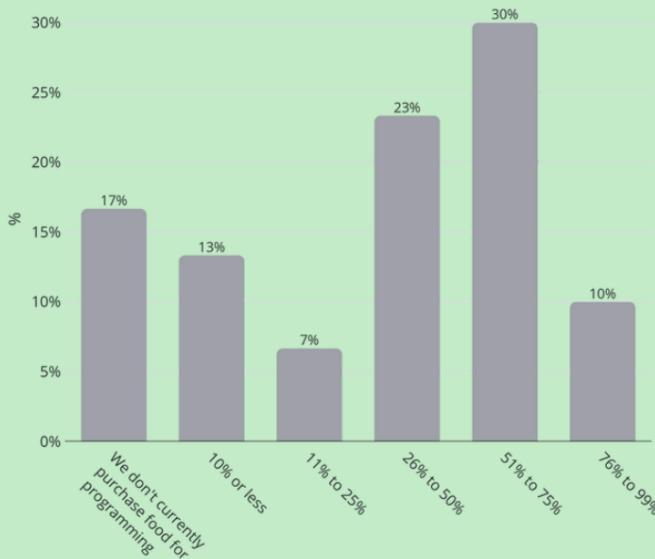
### Sources of Rescued Food Used for Programming

A majority of Agency Partners reported **'We only receive rescued food from Food for Life'** (60%), but many supplement this with other sources and less are **'Investigating opportunities'** (7%) for additional options. **'Grocery stores and/ or markets'** is the primary additional source for rescued food (40%), followed by **'Community and/ or backyard gardens'** (30%).

- Acton and Hamilton receive rescued food from a variety of sources (A-5 sources & H-6 sources)
- Burlington, Milton, and Oakville utilize less sources of rescued food, noting 4 additional sources or less, while Georgetown only accesses rescued food from Food for Life
- *School, Camp, Daycare* and *Faith-based* Agencies receive all of their rescued food from Food for Life (**100%**)
- All other agency types show variability within each category, with some agency's in each agency type utilizing various other sources of rescued food, while others only receive rescued food from Food for Life
- Other sources of rescued food that were mentioned include: local bakeries, sharing food with faith-based groups, and other food rescue organizations including Second Harvest, and Harvest Hands

Increase in Demand for Service

Almost half (40%) of Agency Partners reported experiencing an **'11% to 25%'** increase in demand for service(s), and 20% are experiencing a **'26% to 50%'** increase. Less (13%) are reporting **'We have not seen an increase in demand for our service(s)'**, and 10% are reporting a **'76% to 99%'** increase in service.

- Each municipality showed variability in increase in demand for service, but overall Hamilton and Milton are most likely to report no increase in demand for service(s) (H-22% & M-20%), while Burlington is most likely to report a **'76% to 99%'** increase (25%)
- Each agency type also showed variability in increase in demand for service within each category, with some agency's in each agency type reporting no increases and others reporting increases of varying percentages
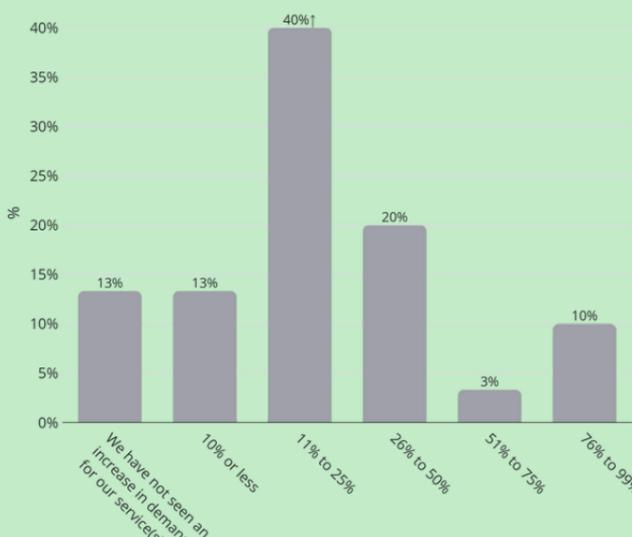
"A Mom who accesses our Food for Life community fridge shared how much having access to fruits and vegetables has meant to her in terms of being able to model healthy eating habits for her children. Being able to offer her children the recommended number of fruits and vegetables daily in their diet was symbolic to her, of not failing her children. She shared this with me and had tears in her eyes while she spoke."
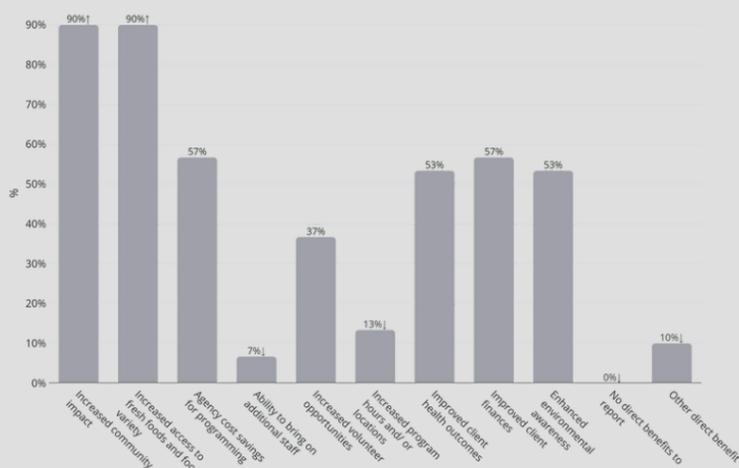
Agency Partner Satisfaction Survey

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Impacts & Challenges with Receiving Rescued Food

Percent of surveyed Agency Representatives who selected the below prompts as 'Impacts' or 'Challenges' about receiving rescued food from Food for Life (Questions were multi-select question type)

### Agency Benefits & Client Impacts of Receiving Rescued Food from Food for Life

The top impacts of receiving rescued food from Food for Life include: **'Clients have increased access to fresh foods and food variety'** (90%), **'Increased community impact (e.g. able to serve more people or give more food to those you serve)'** (90%), **'Agency cost savings'** (57%), and **'Clients have mentioned economic benefits (e.g. better able to make debt payments, afford other necessities, etc.)'** (57%). 'Ability to bring on additional staff' (7%) and 'Increased program hours and/ or locations' (13%) are the least selected impacts. None of our Agency Partners selected 'No direct benefits to report' (0%), highlighting the positive impacts of receiving rescued food from Food for Life on both the agency and their clients.

- Hamilton and Oakville selected the most impacts (H-10 impacts & O-9 impacts), whereas Burlington and Georgetown selected the least (B-7 impacts & G-7 impacts)
- Milton is less likely to report **'Increased community impact'** (60%), **'Agency cost savings'** (40%) and **'Increased volunteer opportunities'** (20%) and Hamilton and Oakville were the only municipalities to report **'Ability to bring on additional staff'** (H-11% & O-25%) and **'Increased program hours and/ or locations'** (H-33%)
- Each organization type reported varying levels of impacts, with all selecting 6 or more impacts except *School, Camp, Daycare* Agencies, who only selected **'Increased community impact'**

Receiving rescued food from Food for Life helps Agency Partners strengthen their community impact by expanding access to fresh, diverse foods, enabling them to serve more people, and support the economic stability of their clients.

Agency Challenges with Receiving Rescued Food from Food for Life

Almost half (47%) of agency partners reported **'No challenges with receiving rescued food'**. The highest selected challenges include: **'Quality is not up to the standards of shareable food'** (30%), **'Lack of variety in items received'** (20%), and **'Clients mentioned poor food quality/ past best before date'** (17%). The main challenges reported focus on improving food quality and inspection processes, increasing variety to better meet client needs, and providing education on Best Before dates.
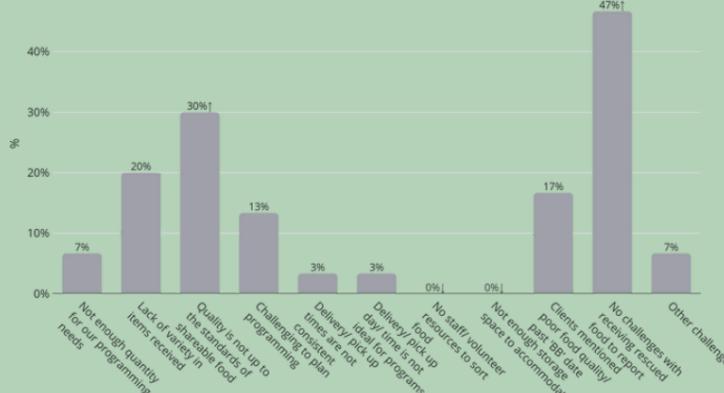
- Acton, Burlington, and Oakville are most likely to report challenges with **quality and variety**, Hamilton was the only municipality to report **'Not enough quantity'**, and Burlington, Hamilton and Milton are most likely to report **best before date challenges**, while Georgetown indicated no challenges
- *Community Development and Social Service* Agencies and *Food Bank, Pantry, Hamper* Agencies are most likely to report **quality challenges** (CD-60% & FB-57%), *School, Camp, Daycare*, and *Multi-service Organizations* are most likely to report **lack of variety** (S-100% & M-43%), and *Community Development and Social Service* Agencies and *Multi-service Organizations* are most likely to report **best before date challenges** (CD-40% & M-29%)
- *Faith-based* Agencies reported no challenges (100%)

Food for Life is committed to tackling the challenges of receiving rescued food by improving food quality, increasing variety, and providing better information on the acceptability of food past its Best Before date. Our goal is to ensure that communities and agencies receive nutritious, diverse, and high-quality food that upholds dignity and meets their expectations.

> "Being a partner of Food for Life and receiving rescued food has had a significant and positive impact on both our agency and the community we serve. The food we receive helps us to stretch our resources further, allowing us to provide nutritious meals to individuals and families who might otherwise struggle to afford fresh and healthy options. This partnership enables us to meet an essential need—food security— and offers stability to those who rely on us."

Agency Partners shared open comment feedback about the impacts and challenges of receiving rescued food, opportunities to enhance utilization of rescued food, and how our service benefits their agency and community

Impact on Clients and Communities:
- Rescued food provides essential, high-value, and nutritious options for seniors, families, and individuals experiencing food insecurity, offering stability and reducing financial strain
- Agencies appreciate the opportunity to introduce clients to new foods and offer more meal options, expanding nutritional diversity and fostering better health while experiencing agency cost savings
- The availability of rescued food enables organizations to serve more people, supporting both everyday needs and special programming like community dinners

Community Engagement:
- Food for Life's service helps build a sense of community by encouraging shared meals, trust-building, and positive social connections among clients and volunteers
- Agencies value the commitment and hard work of Food for Life staff, with many noting the transformational impact of rescued food on their ability to connect with clients
- The partnership with Food for Life provides a consistent and reliable source of food, creating a broader network of support that strengthens the community and helps combat food insecurity

Sustainability and Waste Reduction:
- Food for Life supports sustainability by reducing food waste and repurposing quality food to meet community needs
- Agencies educate clients on food sustainability, meal planning, and creative use of rescued food, promoting healthier eating habits
- Rescued food contributes to environmental sustainability goals, with agencies highlighting the positive impact on waste reduction and resource conservation

Opportunities for Expanding Use of Rescued Food:
- Agencies are interested in expanding their meal offerings to serve more clients on different days and developing programs like snack distributions and life skills programs
- There are opportunities to incorporate new items, such as fish, Halal products, and more protein options, to serve diverse dietary needs
- Creative ideas for utilizing rescued food include cooking demonstrations, baby food-making classes, and other educational programming to teach clients new ways to prepare meals

Suggestions for Improvements:
- Food Quality & Variety: Agencies suggest improving sorting to minimize spoilage and offering more variety, particularly in fresh produce and protein items. Frozen meat packaging should be addressed to avoid difficulty in separation
- Delivery & Logistics: Enhancing communication about deliveries, including creating portals to check available food and ensuring timely, consistent delivery schedules. Some agencies also request multi-location delivery to better serve their communities
- Additional Food Donors: Agencies would benefit from Food for Life increasing partnerships with additional food donors to diversify food offerings

Overall, agency partners are extremely grateful for the support provided by Food for Life, with many expressing deep appreciation for the impact on their ability to serve their communities and clients. There is a shared sense of being part of a larger network committed to tackling food insecurity and impactfully supporting community health and wellbeing.

"We now feel as though we are all a part of a larger network of partners working together to multiply the impact of how far reaching the value of rescued food can go! So grateful to be a spoke in the wheel of overall health, wellness and belonging!"