

Rethink Food

2023 IMPACT REPORT

THE POWER OF COMMUNITY



A WORD FROM OUR CEO

In 2023, Rethink Food celebrated its **sixth anniversary**. We kicked off the year reaching an incredible milestone of **providing 10M meals** and were honored to receive proclamations from NYC Mayor Eric Adams and NYC Council Speaker Adrienne E. Adams—**declaring March 27 'Rethink Food Day.'**

Our commitment to our home city has never been so important as **New York City welcomed more than 100,000 new neighbors last year**, and both the City and our partners have observed a dramatic rise in the need for meals—turning to our organization and services to support this growing demand. At Rethink Food, we are committed to ensuring everyone who chooses New York as their home can access a dignified, high-quality meal.

During the pandemic, we learned that small businesses and local restaurants were well-equipped to provide healthy food that accommodates religious sensitivities in their community. This year, we had the opportunity to apply our approach and learning to help the city respond to the influx of asylum seekers. Through our model of leveraging local restaurants and MWBEs, **we can double jobs** in our local communities, increase **tax revenue by 25% and dollars spent locally by 33%**, all while bringing thoughtfulness, passion, and hospitality to the food service we provide, which has historically been left out of emergency and supplemental food programs.

Over the last 3 years, Rethink Food has harnessed the generosity of individuals, corporations, and foundations—using philanthropic funding to support small businesses in feeding people and improving food quality. We are grateful to the City of NY for allowing us to engage local business partners through government contracting as part of its most recent asylum seeker response. **It's been rewarding to see the impact of our model on newly arrived-New Yorkers** and how our partners have responded with such expedience, dedication, innovation, and pride. Much work still needs to be done, but we are excited and ready to meet the challenge.

Since 2017, generous partners and supporters like you have brought us closer to our goal of creating a more sustainable and equitable food system—helping us provide over **20 million meals to vulnerable communities through 237+ community-based organizations, direct over 85 million dollars to 165+ small local restaurants and food establishments, and recover close to 2.3 million pounds of excess food to convert into meals—saving 5.7 million lbs. of CO2 and over 52 million gallons of fresh water.**

Partnership is at the core of achieving our mission, and again this year, we've seen the power of community that makes New York City so unique. We are so grateful for your ongoing support of Rethink Food and those we serve.

I hope you enjoy reading about some of our accomplishments this past year and take a moment to acknowledge what we've accomplished together. It is a **testament to our community's commitment and dedication to our mission**, and we could not have done this without you.

Thank you for your support and belief in our work.

MATT JOZWIAK
FOUNDER & CEO

A NOTE FROM OUR CO-FOUNDER

DANIEL HUMM CO-FOUNDER OF RETHINK FOOD, AND CHEF & OWNER OF ELEVEN MADISON PARK

Since celebrating Eleven Madison Park's 25th Anniversary in 2023, I have been reflecting on how this journey with Rethink Food has changed my life and the way that my team and I approach our business.

The pandemic opened my eyes to the ways our food system is broken and the urgent need for change. After closing to the public at the height of the pandemic in 2020, we converted our restaurant into a commissary kitchen for Rethink Food: using our skills, time, and resources to cook meals for food insecure New Yorkers. **This was a transformative experience for me and everyone on my team. After years of pursuing excellence in our craft, we were now also using our language of food to make a real, tangible impact in our community.**

When we re-opened Eleven Madison Park in 2021, I knew that we could not continue to operate as the same restaurant as we had been in years prior. Not only had the world changed, but so had our perspectives as chefs and citizens, and we needed to pursue a new, more meaningful goal.



Chef Daniel Humm and Matt Jozwiak

We decided to go all in, re-opening with a fully plant-based menu, while also building on our work to support underserved communities.

As we move into a new year, we are continuing to leverage our platform in the realm of fine dining to move the needle as much as we can towards a more sustainable and equitable future—from donating excess ingredients to Rethink Food to supporting the Queensbridge community with nutritious meals through every guest served at Eleven Madison Park and every product purchased at Eleven Madison Home.

I am honored to be part of such a purpose-driven team and I am incredibly proud of everything we have built together so far. This commitment has been essential to Eleven Madison Park's mission for the last three years, and I am excited to continue the work in 2024.

THE FACTS



Food inflation is still outpacing all other inflations.

Last year through May, compared to the same period in 2022*, sales of fresh eggs by volume fell 4.7%, milk dropped 3.9%, and fresh root vegetables fell 3.5%. In that time, prices of fresh eggs jumped 48.2%, milk rose 5%, and fresh root vegetables rose 14.7%.

In March 2023, 30 million people lost their SNAP benefits across the U.S. when pandemic-era benefits ended.

1.5 million New Yorkers spend an average of \$160 monthly, leaving them to choose between necessities like rent, utilities, prescriptions, and food.

New York City welcomed over 100,000 new neighbors last year—totaling over 160,000 asylum seekers since the spring of 2022.

Community organizations across the city have reported a dramatic increase in the need for food that is stretching their resources significantly—some seeing a “90% increase in first-timers”.

*according to Circana, which tracks US retail sales

2023 IN NUMBERS

\$39,430,000+

DIRECTED TO SMALL LOCAL RESTAURANTS AND BUSINESSES ACROSS NYC—TOTALING \$40,468,000+ ACROSS ALL CITIES OF OPERATION*.

8,965,000+

MEALS SERVED ACROSS NYC—TOTALING OVER 9,180,000 MEALS ACROSS ALL CITIES OF OPERATION*.

53

RESTAURANT AND FOOD BUSINESS PARTNERS ACROSS NYC—OVER 91% OF WHICH ARE WOMEN- OR MINORITY-OWNED.

88

COMMUNITY PARTNERS ACROSS NYC THAT SERVE RESTAURANT MEALS TAILORED TO COMMUNITY NEEDS.

685,000+

POUNDS OF FOOD RESCUED—SAVING 15,770,000+ GALLONS** OF FRESH WATER AND 1,714,000+ POUNDS** OF CARBON DIOXIDE***.

*New York, Miami, San Francisco, Nashville, and Washington D.C.

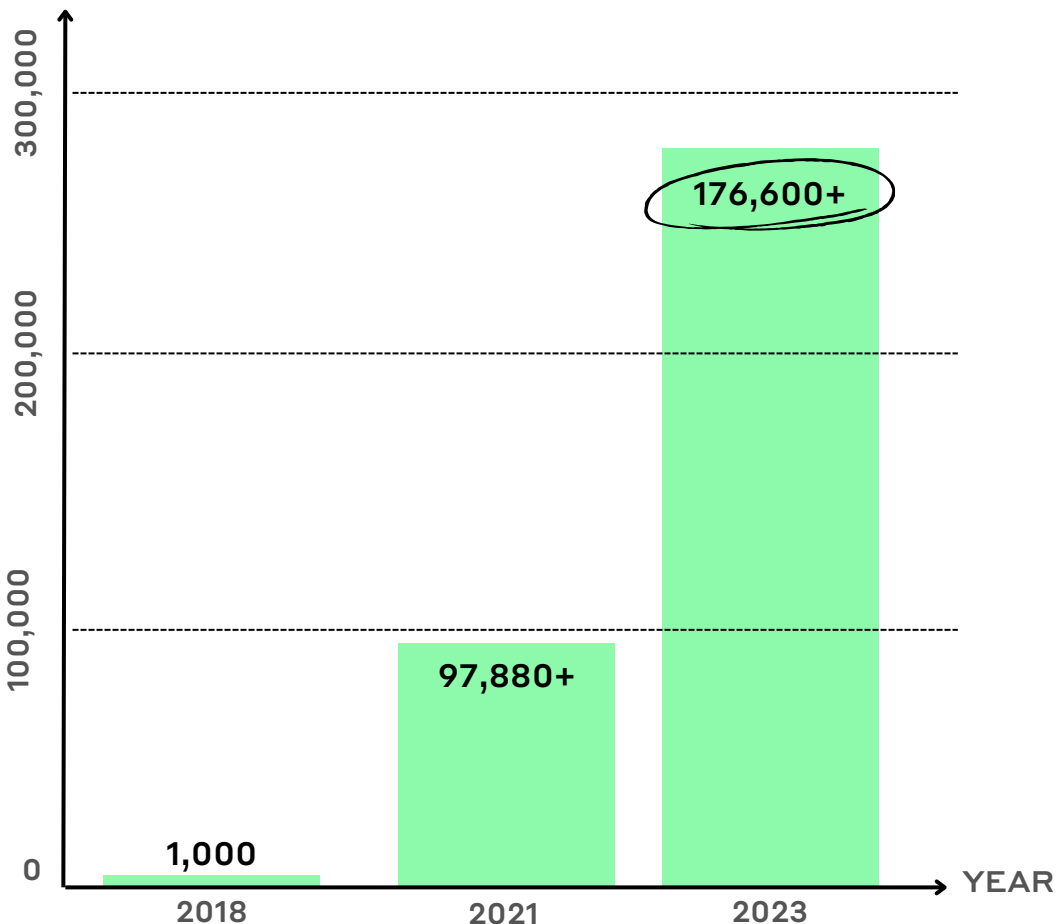
Based on 1lb of excess food = 2.5 lbs of CO2 and 23 gallons of fresh water | *This does not include the CO2 emissions from our program.

HOW WE'VE GROWN SINCE 2017

Since our funding 6 years ago, Rethink Food has built extensive experience in hospitality and culinary emergency relief—leading to the following impact:

\$85+ million directed to 165+ restaurants and food businesses, 20+ million meals provided to 237+ community partners, and close to 2.3 million pounds of excess food used—saving over 5.7M lbs of CO2 and over 52.7 million gallons of fresh water.

AVERAGE MEALS/WEEK



2023 HIGHLIGHTS

1. Leveraging hospitality and culinary emergency relief experience + local network of restaurant partners to provide high-quality meals to asylum seekers in partnership with the City of New York

As part of New York City's response to the continued arrival of asylum seekers, Rethink Food has been collaborating with the City of New York and New York City Health + Hospitals since February 2023 to provide high-quality meals to asylum seekers with the help of its network of longstanding local restaurant partners.

This work builds upon Rethink Food's extensive expertise in hospitality and culinary approach to emergency response that was born out of an unprecedented COVID-19 pandemic with the creation of our meal restaurant—serving close to 100,000 meals a week at its peak—and previous work in 2022 with the City and New York State to provide fresh, no-cost meals to asylum seekers arriving at Port Authority.

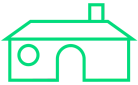


New York Times → A win-win for restaurants and migrants: Subsidized free meals.

NBC → Big changes coming to food NYC serves to migrants at one Manhattan shelter.

Pix 11 → Migrant families celebrate new traditions in New York City.

OUR IMPACT SERVING OUR NEWEST NEIGHBORS



Served **~ 20 sites** across all of New York City's five boroughs.



Provided **up to 155,460 meals per week—totaling over 8,900,000+ meals since the beginning of the partnership.** Restaurant partners are crafting three nutritious meals daily within the NYC Department of Health's nutrition and food safety guidelines. Meals are culturally appropriate and reflect the tastes and needs of the community—including South American, halal, vegetarian, gluten-free, and plant-based food options, as well as special accommodations for holidays such as Greek Orthodox Easter and Ramadan.



Rethink Food also provides a full suite of community-based meal provisions and food services—from managing the logistics, operations, transportation, proper storage, and serving of meals to picking up excess food to redistribute it through our network of community partners.

2. Milestone achievement



On March 27, we invited supporters and partners from our network to celebrate everyone's efforts in reaching 10 million meals provided since 2017. We were honored to receive **proclamations from NYC Mayor Eric Adams and NYC Council Speaker Adrienne E. Adams** and to have Executive Director of the Mayor's Office of Food Policy Kate MacKenzie present the mayoral proclamation, declaring March 27 'Rethink Food Day.'

How did we reach such a milestone? ➔ Hear it from our community [here](#).

3. Latest research

In partnership with McKinsey & Company, we developed a report that examines the economic, social, and environmental impact of Rethink Food's work with local restaurants in New York City to address food insecurity. Compared to alternate models of engaging large catering companies to provide meals at scale, our model has a greater economic impact on local communities and small businesses, including:



- **A HIGHER SHARE OF LOCAL SPENDING.**
- **A HIGHER SHARE OF SPEND WITH OTHER SMBS.**
- **INCREASED EMPLOYMENT GENERATED PER WEEK.**

The findings from the report will help us further guide program development and contribute to conversations with stakeholders addressing food insecurity.

➔ **Read the full report [here](#).**

4. Award

Rethink Food has been named a 2023 Gamechanger in ESG by CohnReznick, one of the leading advisory, assurance, and tax firms in the United States.

The program recognizes U.S.-based organizations embracing environmental, social, and governance principles to drive value for their stakeholders and improve business resiliency. Applications were reviewed and scored by an independent panel of judges who are leaders in ESG and sustainability.



We are truly impressed by the caliber of applications we received for the 2023 Gamechangers in ESG Awards program. By sharing their stories, we hope others will be inspired to incorporate and advance sustainability principles in their organization. To this year's winners, congratulations on behalf of CohnReznick – you are exemplars of changing the game through ESG.

DAVID KESSLER, COHNREZNICK CEO

POLICY IMPACT

In December, Rethink Food's ceo Matt Jozwiak and 5 of our restaurant meal partners—Brain Food, Gyroking, Marlow Bistro, Collective Fare, and Chefscape—who provide meals to asylum seekers at shelter sites across the city, were invited to testify at the NYC Council Oversight hearing on the Role of Small Businesses in Shelter Food Procurement.

Thank you Contracts Committee Chair Julie Won, Small Business Chair Julie Menin, and Economic Development Chair Amanda Fariás for convening stakeholders that are supporting asylum seeker food contracts and shining light on the importance of bringing together nonprofit providers that work with small businesses to provide culturally celebrated meals. ➔ **Watch Rethink Food's hearing [here](#).**



In 2023, Rethink Food has also engaged with government officials to drive lasting change in our food system:

DOUBLED

City Council funding from 2022, securing \$95K in 2024 expense allocations,

including \$50K for our first citywide initiative through the Welcome NYC Initiative, thanks to CM Fariás' advocacy on our behalf.

ADVOCATED

for the FDIA alongside WW's Healthy Coalition, NRDC, and Harvard Food Policy Clinic.

RECEIVED

recognition by the NYC Mayor's Office at the Food and Culinary Staff Appreciation event at Gracie Mansion.

PROGRAMS

Building hyperlocal connections with our restaurant meal program



In addition to our collaboration with the City, we have continued to pursue sustainable paths for our restaurant meal program that has provided in 2023 alone **over 1,520,000+ nutritious, dignified meals to vulnerable communities and directed over \$4,670,000 to small restaurants and food businesses across all cities of operation*** to support building their restaurant and feeding their neighbors.

During the pandemic, we learned that small businesses and local restaurants were well equipped to

provide culturally celebrated, healthy food that accommodates religious sensitivities to their community. Through our model of leveraging local restaurants and MWBEs, **we can double jobs in our local communities, increase tax revenue by 25% and dollars spent locally by 33%, all while bringing thoughtfulness, passion, and hospitality to the food service we provide, which has historically been left out of emergency and supplemental food programs.**



News 12 → Eleven Madison Park, once voted the best restaurant in the world, fights food insecurity in Queens.

In-house food service expertise with our sustainable commissary kitchen

Each week, our Culinary Team receives ~11,500 lbs of donations and transforms them into nutritious, dignified meals for our food-insecure neighbors. The variability of each day's donations requires an open mind, strong cooking techniques, and creativity. For us, a meal is not just a meal—it's a conscious culinary experience meant to serve our neighbors with dignity and respect.

2023 Impact

Over 685,000+ lbs of food donated from 50+ partners across the food system =

- 356,000+ meals prepared with the utmost care and devotion for our neighbors across New York City—totaling over 1,780,000 meals since our founding in 2017.
- 1,712,500 lbs of CO2 diverted.
- 15,755,000 gallons of fresh water saved.



In addition to converting excess food into meals, we've worked to build better connections across our food system in different ways throughout the year—including:

WELCOMING VOLUNTEERS

and guiding them through a day of transforming excess food into community meals. Thank you to all the volunteers, including partners Brookfield Properties, Morgan Stanley, Jamestown, KeyBank, Shake Shack, Nike Communications, and many more, who joined us to support our operations. You are an essential part of Rethink Food's work.

LEADING TOUR & TASTINGS

of how we operate for corporate partners, key stakeholders—such as Council Member Julie Menin—and family and individuals. The experience includes a meal similar to those we make for our neighbors and a tasting of some of the soups, dips, and snacks made for free from donated ingredients. Every ticket purchase will provide 20 nutritious meals for our neighbors. ➔ [Book a Tour & Tasting.](#)

Other 2023 achievements across our programs

Restaurant Meal Program

CONGRATULATIONS TO RETHINK FOOD CO-FOUNDER CHEF DANIEL HUMM AND THE ENTIRE TEAM AT ELEVEN MADISON PARK FOR RECEIVING A PROCLAMATION FROM NYC MAYOR ERIC ADAMS AS AN ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF THEIR COMMITMENT TO BEING A LEADER IN THE PLANT-BASED MOVEMENT AND ACHIEVEMENTS IN RETHINKING THE RESTAURANT MODEL TO CREATE A MORE SUSTAINABLE AND EQUITABLE FOOD SYSTEM.

The mayoral proclamation was presented by Executive Director of the Mayor's Office of Food Policy Kate MacKenzie—officially declaring November 11th 'Eleven Madison Park Day' in New York City. We were honored to celebrate this achievement and have Rethink Food founder and ceo Matt Jozwiak speak of Daniel Humm and Eleven Madison Park's longstanding commitment to sustainability and food equity since our founding in 2017.

We commemorated Chef Humm and Eleven Madison Park not only for their contributions to New York City's most vulnerable communities in need of high-quality, culturally celebrated meals but also for their commitment to advancing the world of plant-based diets by bringing it to the world stage through changing the menu at Eleven Madison Park and showing how plant-based eating has the potential to be climate-friendly, healthy and elevated.



THROUGHOUT THE YEAR, RETHINK FOOD PROVIDED RAPID RESPONSE FOR SPECIAL MEAL REQUESTS—FROM CULTURAL CELEBRATIONS TO NEEDS THAT ARISE DURING EMERGENCIES:

- In partnership with NYC Council Member Amanda Farias's office, Rethink Food worked with restaurant partner MARINA DEL RAY to provide 300 fresh and culturally relevant meals per day from June 13–16 to Bronx NYCHA residents affected by a local fire.
- Following a gas leak in early June, Bowery Mission was left unable to prepare meals for their local community. Rethink Food provided 300 meals from Tacombi and 600 meals from Agape Food Rescue beyond regular meal deliveries.
- Longstanding restaurant partner Brain Food provided Ramadan meals for the Bronx Borough President's Iftar dinner. Mahnoor Jaura, Community

Health Liaison at the Office of the Bronx Borough President Vanessa Gibson, wrote: "...wanted to express my deepest appreciation and gratitude for your support and participation in making last night's Iftar a successful one, we could not have done it without you. The food was absolutely amazing... tons of folks inquired where the food came from and could not praise it enough."



GROWING OUR SELF-SUSTAINING MODEL IN NEW YORK AND MIAMI BY LAUNCHING NEW PARTNERSHIPS THAT INCORPORATE FUNDRAISING FOR MEALS INTO THEIR OPERATIONS

IV Purpose and SAGA in New York City have become Rethink Certified, leveraging their establishment to support our mission financially!

The River Oyster Bar in Miami is also joining a well-established local partnership with Chef Michael Schwartz and The Genuine Hospitality Group that has raised in 2023 alone the equivalent of 66,500+ meals for food-insecure individuals and families in Miami-Dade County by adding a 2% donation surcharge to their menu—totaling 131,000+ meals since the beginning of our partnership in 2021. The River Oyster Bar offers an opt-in match donation: when diners donate 0.5% on their check, the establishment matches it, totaling a 1% donation to Rethink Food.



Commissary Kitchen



AS PART OF THE KETEL ONE 'GARNISHED WITH GOOD' INITIATIVE, THIS YEAR'S U.S. BARTENDER OF THE YEAR RENATO M. TONELLI PARTNERED WITH RETHINK FOOD TO CREATE THE IMPERFECT APPLLETINI— a cocktail made from using leftover apples donated to Rethink Food in an effort to minimize food waste and maximize the impact of imperfect produce. But that's not all—even the leftover pomace that remains after juicing is turned into fruit leather, apple sauce, and as a nutrient densifier to help bulk up other food and ingredients as part of our community meals. A 100% cyclical project! Congratulations to Renato for receiving one of the top three highest scores. You can check out his sustainable cocktail recipe [here](#).

THIS HOLIDAY SEASON, OUR COMMISSARY KITCHEN LAUNCHED ITS FIRST HOLIDAY RECIPE E-COOKBOOK.

This special edition celebrates our vision of mindful eating inspired by simple classic comfort recipes crafted by our culinary team from converting donated excess food into nutritious, high-quality community meals. The e-cookbook was (and is still!) available to anyone by download for a suggested donation of \$10 to support our efforts to collect excess food and produce more community meals.



CULINARY DIRECTOR KEN BAKER WAS NAMED TO CUNY'S 40 UNDER 40: RISING STARS IN NYC FOOD POLICY,

celebrated with a ceremony on June 8th. Congratulations to chef Ken as well as Rethink Food partner organization leaders Shayna McCormick HAYNA (Rap4Bronx) and Susana Camarena (Tacombi) for being named to the list! Read more [here](#).



PARTNERSHIPS

Partnerships are vital to the success of our mission, and again this year, we had the opportunity to forge **new impactful partnerships** through which resources and meals are provided to serve better food-insecure communities—such as Orion Infrastructure Capital, SpotOn, Good Start Packaging, Tribeca Rooftop, and Chelsea Market. We are beyond thankful for all of our longstanding and new partners' support.

Special features

→ **WHOLE FOODS MARKET**

We are proud to partner with Whole Foods Market since 2018. Six locations across NYC are now donating their excess food to our Commissary Kitchen to prepare community meals.

Together, we have rescued over 242,900 lbs of viable excess food—saving 607,250+ of CO2 and over 5,500,000+ gallons of fresh water.



Supporting our work in other meaningful ways:

- After donating a refrigerated van to support our work, Whole Foods Market hosted a **Stuff the Van** event during which our van was filled with fresh grocery and produce items to raise awareness for Hunger Action Month.
- During the holiday season, customers had the opportunity to round up the register of their local store as part of its Give Local campaign to support Rethink Food—totaling over \$2,799.



→ **CHELSEA MARKET**

We kicked off 2023 with the first (of many...) excess food donation pickups from Chelsea Market, helping us bring nutritious meals to communities across NYC. **Since the beginning of our partnership, Chelsea Market has donated over 8,826 pounds of viable food to our commissary kitchen team to convert into community meals—resulting in saving 22,065+ of CO2 and over 202,998+ gallons of fresh water.**

RETHINK REUNIONS

Earth Month

This April 2023, we invited a group from the Rethink Food Network young professionals group to volunteer at community-based organization Bowery Mission. We also hosted a table at Citizens Hall at Manhattan West as part of our longstanding partnership with Brookfield Properties.



Manhattan West Food Fest

We were thrilled to be part of this event alongside 8 other vendors—including Black Fox Coffee Co., Citizens, Daily Provisions, and more—to share our mission and offer a delicious upcycled bite prepared by our Commissary Kitchen from donations by our Whole Foods partner. All beverage proceeds from the festival were donated to Rethink Food + we rescued any viable excess food to be turned into community meals.

Pride: The Brunch + Pride Fest

On June 18th, Rethink Food celebrated this year's NYC PRIDE with a special appearance at PRIDE: THE BRUNCH and PRIDE FEST. Rethink Food's very own Culinary Director, Ken Baker, was one of four chefs selected and featured at this year's Brunch to celebrate food, innovation, and community. Chef Ken was honored for culinary excellence in the LGBTQIA+ community and provided an exclusive dish, "Rethinking Shepherd's Pie", for guests. For the second year in a row, Rethink Food was the official excess food partner for Pride Fest—meaning that we collected all viable excess food from vendors to transform it into nutritious community meals at our commissary kitchen. In addition, we hosted a booth inviting people to donate and get involved.

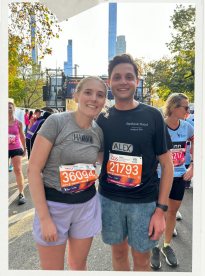


Bringing Manhattan West restaurants and businesses together

Rethink Food and Brookfield Properties hosted several restaurant and food and beverage partners from Manhattan West for a lunch talk at Eleven Madison Park to celebrate and further our work in New York City. Together, we discussed the collective impact of the first Rethink Certified Campus at Manhattan West, restaurants and businesses' role in supporting their neighbors, and how we can create a sustainable path for businesses and local communities by transforming excess food into nutritious meals. In partnership with Manhattan West, Rethink Food is repurposing donated excess food from its restaurant and F&B tenants into nutritious, dignified meals for New Yorkers impacted by food insecurity since May 2022. This collective effort has rescued +30,500 lbs of excess food, diverted +76.2,000 lbs of CO2, and saved +702,000 gallons of water.



Thank you!



2023 TCS NYC Marathon

Rethink Food was proud to be a charity partner for the second year for such an awe-inspiring event in our home city. Thank you to our partner Keybank for your sponsorship and continued support in our mission to create a more sustainable and equitable food system. Congratulations to our team of six incredible runners who surpassed their goal and have helped provide over 8,000 meals to our neighbors across NYC.

ALSO IN THE NEWS...

The Weather Channel
➔ Rethinking food waste to balance food insecurity.



Life is short by Justin Long podcast ➔ with co-founder Daniel Humm.

We couldn't have done
it without your
generous *support.*

Thank you

to all our donors,
partners, supporters,
and volunteers.



Get involved
Support our mission

