

Two B.C.-based grocery chains partner with FoodMesh to ensure no food in its stores go to waste

Fresh St. Market and IGA Stores of BC stores are diverting 100% of its edible but unsaleable perishable food to the vulnerable in communities across B.C.

August 19, 2021, Burnaby, B.C. - Fresh St. Market and IGA Stores of BC have launched an enterprise-wide food recovery program at its stores across British Columbia to divert 100 per cent of its edible but unsaleable perishable food away from landfill to its highest end-use.

In partnership with FoodMesh, Fresh St. Market and IGA Stores of BC will donate edible food they can no longer sell to local charities, who in turn, share the food amongst a number of other charitable organizations – 199 in total across B.C. These charities use the food donations they receive for their food security programming, to help feed those in our communities who need it most. Donations come from all store departments, and include fresh produce, dairy, meat and seafood, bakery and deli products.

Already the stores' food donation program is yielding impressive results. Since the partnership with FoodMesh began over a year ago in April 2020, Fresh St. Market and IGA Stores of BC have diverted 563,004 KG of food from landfills and saved an additional 1,069,708 KG of CO₂ from entering the atmosphere.

“Whether it’s because a product is off-spec or too close to its sell-by date, historically retailers have been forced to throw away their unsalable food, even though there is nothing actually wrong with it,” explains Jessica Regan, Chief Executive Officer and Co-Founder of FoodMesh. “This is happening while one in eight Canadians are food insecure - a number that has risen due to the effects of COVID-19. We’re grateful to IGA Stores of BC and Fresh St. Market for taking a stand against reducing their food waste and ensuring the food they can no longer sell is shared with those in our communities who need it, and we are thrilled to be able to help them do it.”

“We are proud to have been part of the FoodMesh program for the past year providing perishable food to people in need, directly in the communities we serve,” said Mark McCurdy, Vice President Retail Operations and Brand Strategy for Fresh St. Market and IGA Stores of BC. “Supporting FoodMesh is something our stores and staff take very seriously, ensuring no food goes to waste.”

CityReach Care Society in Vancouver is one of the donation recipients. “Each week we receive healthy and nutritious food donations from Fresh St. Market,” says Sharon Dong, Director, Food for Families, CityReach Care Society. “In addition to keeping our planet green, the donations help us add quality, quantity and variety to support our vulnerable families. Thank you so much!”

About Fresh St. Market

Family-owned, operated and based in British Columbia, Fresh St. Market offers a public market food and shopping experience inspired by top markets and eateries in North America. Inside its six locations, customers will find a wide variety of locally sourced foods, fresh produce, a significant amount of organic foods, specially curated foods and uniquely dedicated food destinations within the store. Current locations include Marine Drive, West Vancouver, two Surrey locations in Fleetwood Village and Panorama Village,

Whistler Village North, Vancouver House at Howe and Pacific and its newest store is in Kamloops. Additional Fresh St. Market stores are being planned in more B.C. communities with more announcements in the near future. www.freshstmarket.com.

About IGA Stores of BC

Since 1955, IGA Stores of BC has become more than a grocery store. It's a name that's built around community, and a gathering place where fresh has always been fresh and business has always been done with a handshake. Some things have changed over the years, but the quality of our products and our commitment to creating an inviting local shopping experience has stayed the same.

About FoodMesh

Mesh Exchange (dba FoodMesh) is a Vancouver-based Certified B Corporation, dedicated to reducing unnecessary food waste and feeding more. It provides digital solutions that unite all elements of the food supply chain to help organizations quickly and easily divert their surplus food to the people in our communities who need it most.

About CityReach Care Society

CityReach Care Society is a non-profit organization serving thousands of vulnerable individuals, children, and families across Greater Vancouver. Specializing in meeting tangible needs through food security initiatives, CityReach provides a network of support through a variety of programs and community events. With Hope at its core, CityReach is seeing lives changed and helping people prosper.

Related links

Video: [How Soul Food in Vancouver is using the donations they receive from IGA's Robson Street location](#)

Blog post: [Food is medicine](#) - *How Cedar Feast House Catering is helping support vulnerable communities in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside with the help of IGA on Broadway*

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