



After the Super Bowl, State Farm stadium will have tons of leftovers. Here's how that food will get to people in need fast

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Published 11:12 AM EST, Tue February 7, 2023

New York (CNN) — On Super Bowl Sunday, an army of volunteers will be ready outside and inside State Farm Stadium in Glendale, Arizona to execute a time-sensitive game plan of their own. Their mission: recover and redistribute a tremendous volume of surplus food.

Thousands of Eagles and Chiefs fans will gather on February 12 to enjoy elaborate pre-game tailgating and watch parties at or near the stadium in Glendale, where this year's Super Bowl is taking place. Tens of thousands of pounds of food will also be stored and prepared for sale to fans through concession stands.

Link to Full Story: <https://cnn.it/3XbqIGn>

Excerpt:

Food insecurity a serious problem in Arizona

It's the third time that the city of Glendale, located nine miles to the northwest of downtown Phoenix in Maricopa County, is hosting the Super Bowl.

While the mega event is expected to generate hundreds of millions of dollars for its host city, the Phoenix Rescue Mission is hoping the one-day affair will help address a more immediate need. Maricopa County, with a population of more than 4 million residents, struggles with high rates of food insecurity. In 2020, 17.4% of the population in Maricopa County faced it.

Nationally, millions of Americans experience food insecurity, meaning they don't know where their next meal is coming from. Feeding America, which operates 200 food banks across the country, said as many as 34 million people in the US - men, women and children - are food insecure, according to government estimates.

Phoenix Rescue Mission is a faith-based nonprofit on the frontlines of supporting persons facing hunger, homelessness, addiction and trauma.

"The food that we're getting from the Food Recovery Network on Super Bowl day will provide substantial help to us," said Jussane Goodman, director of community engagement with Phoenix Rescue Mission.

The mission operates a food bank five days a week. "We're providing food to 270 to 300 families a day," said Goodman. "We need all the food we can get."

The pandemic, she said, triggered an uptick in families needing food assistance. More recently, many families in the county are also struggling with job losses, higher grocery prices for food essentials and homelessness.

"Many of them are coming to us regularly just to make ends meet," said Goodman.

Arizona-based nonprofit Waste Not is partnering with the NFL's environmental program, NFL Green, to try to limit the in-stadium food waste once the game wraps up. Waste Not will be collecting food from a number of local NFL sponsored Super Bowl events in the days leading up to the game itself, and also from the stadium, said Hillary Bryant, executive director of Waste Not.

"It's a very large effort," she said.

"For context of how much food we move, our records for the last Super Bowl indicate that we and NFL Green provided nearly 70,000 meals to our partners in the Phoenix Valley, alleviating hunger for thousands," said Bryant.

The work at the stadium will begin when the game is over and the crowds disperse. "This allows the venues or food providers time to collect all food that has not been opened or touched by the public in preparation for our arrival," she said. "So much of what we do ends up being behind the scenes to the public eye."

Food and beverage collection will continue into the week after the game and will be delivered to area food banks, shelters and food assistance program, said Bryant.

"Recovering food that would normally go to waste is essential to the planet and people of Arizona," said Bryant. Waste Not partners with over 85 local nonprofits that feed vulnerable populations and provide other essential services. "This food ensures that those nonprofits can continue their missions and best serve those in the Phoenix Valley," she said.