



# REPORT



## Food Collections at the time of COVID-19

9 OCTOBER 2020 / ONLINE MEETING



## Overview

### Target

- The skill-sharing session “Food Collections at the time of COVID-19” was organized by the European Food Banks Federation on 9 October 2020 and took place virtually.

- **47**  
participants During the meeting, 47 Food Bank representatives from 21 countries had the opportunity to discuss the topic of Food Collections during these challenging times.

### Objective

- Learning from the experience of those Food Banks that have already tried their hand at new and old ways of organizing food collections, the participants had the opportunity to take ideas and to tell their personal experience.

This skill-sharing session was hence an opportunity to take stock of the situation in the different countries and exchange experiences, sharing challenges and ideas, going beyond traditional food collections and looking for a more comprehensive cooperation between Food Banks, retailers and donors.



# Programme

9h30 - 09h45	<b>Welcome</b> / Agenda and expectations from participants	Angela Frigo, Secretary General, FEBA
09h45 - 10h45	<b>Sharing experience</b> / Learning from Food Banks	With the contribution of: Mrs. Alexandra Gruber / Wiener Tafel, Mrs. Suzanne Delaney / FoodCloud, Mrs. Meritxell Jimenez / FareShare and Mrs. Claudia Vihma / Toidupank
10h45 - 11h45	<b>Questions and Answers</b> / Plenary Session	
11h45 - 12h00	<b>Wrap-up and conclusions</b>	Jacques Vandenschrik, President, FEBA



## Welcome to our virtual skill-sharing session!

Angela Frigo welcomed all participants, with a special mention of the two guests from the European Commission.



Angela Frigo, Secretary General, FEBA

The idea of this skills-sharing session on Food Collections was warmly welcomed by FEBA membership, counting 47 participants.

Every year, usually at the end of November-early December, many FEBA members organize a national Food Collection in collaboration with retailers. During this occasion citizens are invited to make a gesture of solidarity purchasing food when they are grocery shopping and donating this food to Food Banks.

Food Collections are only made possible by the collaboration of thousands of supermarkets and retailers and the mobilization of hundreds of thousands of volunteers and millions of citizens.

Based on the information collected by FEBA, 15 Food Banks in Albania, Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, Estonia, France, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Lithuania, Portugal, Spain, Switzerland and UK have organized and are organizing Food Collections from 10-22 August to the first week of December.

“Today, European Food Banks are up and running: they are carrying out their activity while they are managing double amounts of food and experiencing a growing food demand of 30% at European level, with a range going from 6% to 90%.”

FEBA, European Food Banks today, commitment, creativity, and openness to change / September 2020



To keep track of all the Food Collections organized or being planned by its Members, FEBA created a **specific webpage** which is constantly updated.





# Sharing experience / Learning from Food Banks

## Wiener Tafel / Food Collection: 10-22 August



The Food Collection in Austria took place from 10 to 22 of August 2020. It was organized in LIDL stores without any volunteers. Clients could buy voucher cards at the cash desk and LIDL doubled the amount for the benefit of Wiener Tafel.



Alexandra Gruber, Managing Director,  
Wiener Tafel

Wiener Tafel started organizing Food Collections two years ago in 15 LIDL stores in the Vienna region and then they expanded with 200 stores in the entire country.

They used to have elderly and school-age children as volunteers and, therefore, due to the COVID-19 situation, they had to reconsider their organization. Consequently, they contacted LIDL to build together a digital Food Collection. The digital Food Collections with cards were already organized last year by Food Banks in Germany (Tafel Deutschland e.V.) and Switzerland (Swiss Food Bank) in cooperation with LIDL.



I want to use this opportunity to thank from the bottom of my heart all donors that took part in the “Tafel collection week” and collected food at LIDL.

In total, more than 60,000 food and hygiene products worth over € 50,000 have been collected, according to Mario Milic from Lidl Austria.

Customers in the supermarkets could choose between a variety of 7-8 products ranging from 30 cents to 2 euros (at retailer prices).

LIDL decided to double the number of donated products and organized the transportation to the warehouse of Wiener Tafel. One week after the collection, the food was delivered to the warehouse in Vienna and then transferred to the local Food Banks in the country.



LIDL managed the promotion and Wiener Tafel enforced it through their social media channels.

**250** stores were involved

for a total of more than

**60,000**

food and hygiene products collected (worth over 50,000 €).

The feedback both from LIDL and from Wiener Tafel was extremely positive.



Wiener Tafel would like to continue the path on these digital Food Collections without volunteers, as long as the pandemic crisis goes on.

When the pandemic is over, engaging one volunteer at the entrance of each supermarket could be a further development of this food collection to involve even more consumers.







## FoodCloud / Food Collection: 17-20 September



FoodCloud was part of “Food for Ireland”, a big national food appeal in over 400 stores that took place in Ireland from 17 to 20 September. Trolleys were present in the stores where people could drop donations of food products.

The COVID-19 pandemic led to unprecedented increase in the need for food provision nationally with a demand doubled to 55-60 tonnes weekly. In Ireland over 262,000 people receive the Pandemic Unemployment Benefit and over 370,000 people receive the Temporary COVID-19 Wage Subsidy Scheme (TWSS). In this context, The National Forum of Family Resource Centres study found a 69% increase in need for food parcels.



*Suzanne Delaney,  
Partnership Director, FoodCloud*

FoodCloud decided to set “The Food for Ireland Appeal” with the aim of ensuring the continuity of supply of ambient products to communities impacted by COVID-19.

It was a campaign for the retailer, a collective action to their retail partners to “Get on their Green Shirts” and reach out to their customers all over Ireland. FoodCloud played the role of the distribution partner.

**FOOD FOR  
IRELAND**  
Working Together to Feed the Nation



# 43 tonnes

food collected during the  
“Food for Ireland Appeal”

# 150,000 tonnes

food donated from retail  
partners

In Ireland there are five big retailers and FoodCloud cooperate with all of them.

Due to the frame time, they were able to involve four of them in the campaign (Aldi, Tesco, LIDL and Eurospar). It was the first ever national in-store trolley Appeal where shoppers could donate ambient stock across over 400 retail outlets in September. Consumers could choose ambient products over six categories: breakfast, cooking sauces, hot drinks, rice and pasta tinned/soup, beans, fruit, and tomatoes.

The food was then delivered to FoodCloud Hubs in Dublin, Cork, or Galway in which 320 corporate volunteers logged, sorted, and packed goods for redistribution in the month of October.



FoodCloud’s ambition was to collect 120 tonnes of food, corresponding to 285,000 meals (equivalent to approximately 2 trolleys per store). In total they were able to collect 43 tonnes of food (the total amount collected in store from all the retailers was 14 tonnes and they did receive donated food stock to the value of €150,000 which was equal to 29 tonnes of food).

As regards the Marketing and Communication, they engaged a PR company and Retail Action Group to facilitate the collective meetings with Retailers. The plan included earned media (press release, influencer engagement, photocall), owned media (retailers amplified through own website, social media channels), paid media (radio ad/partnership, paid social media posts) and in store engagement (trolley wraps, posters, instore announcements, t-shirts).



*The coverage through tv crews, online newspapers, targeted newsletters, national radio broadcast was quite spectacular, and the campaign reached 4,974,892 people (on a population of 5 million).*



## FareShare / Food Collection: 20-22 August



FareShare organized a Food Collection in Tesco shops between 20 and 22 of August. The Food Collections in the UK are always in collaboration with Tesco, the main retailer in the country with 2,000 stores, with which FareShare has a long-lasting partnership.



Meritxell Jimenez, FareShare

The partnership encompasses a lot of areas, not limited to Food Collections. The most important areas of collaboration with Tesco are: store surplus recovery program developed in collaboration with FoodCloud (award winning programme, entering its 6th year, more than 60 million meals, 1.3 million food donations, 12.000 charities supported) and collection points (started in 2012, 76 million meals, 6,400 charities benefited).

After the COVID-19 pandemic FareShare tripled its capacity of food redistribution (3 million meals per week; 1 million before the pandemic). Therefore, FareShare and Tesco organized a Summer 2020 Food Collection in August. Summer was never considered an appropriate moment for a Food Collection but FareShare and Trussell Trust welcomed the idea of this additional collection.



The Summer Collection was held in 790 large Tesco stores (268 FareShare, 522 Trussell Trust) without involving any volunteer. Even if there were no volunteers in store, they had "Virtual Volunteers" who drove the success of the social campaign, raising awareness of the event and FareShare across social media (Marcus Rashford's support was big and had a big return in terms of awareness and popularity!).

Food collected in stores was shipped to Tesco distribution centres in cages where it was weighed and then transported to FareShare Regional Centres. FareShare received 75 tonnes of ambient food, equating to 179,000 meals.

Tesco promoted the Food Collection through press and media coverage as well as a huge social campaign (124 papers across the UK, including Metro newspaper, 180 local radio stations, reaching 7 million people). The campaign ended up being the Tesco's best social campaign to date with a 26% engagement rate on shopping list post.

Moreover, Tesco Clubcard customers were able to donate their points to FareShare via the Clubcard website and in-store and FareShare received a total of £4.000,00 in 1 month.



**790**  
stores  
hosted the Summer  
Collection

**75 tonnes**

of ambient food collected during the  
Summer Collection, equivalent to

**179,000**  
meals

Marcus Rashford Retweeted



Have you been saving your @tesco Clubcard points for something special? Why not donate them to FareShare – just £5 can help us provide up to 20 meals for people in need. Every £ can make a real difference for people experiencing food insecurity this winter  
[secure.tesco.com/clubcard/donat...](https://secure.tesco.com/clubcard/donat...)







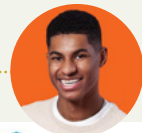
### 2020 Christmas Food Collection

FareShare is planning to organize a Christmas Food Collection on 16-21 November 2020. Tesco, in collaboration with Trussell Trust and FareShare decided to bring volunteers in store having done a Risk Assessment of their duties & Virtual Volunteers on social media. Every volunteer will receive personal equipment and they will limit the numbers of volunteers in store (1 volunteer in medium stores and no more than 2 in big stores). Tesco is keen to use the same mechanic of the Summer Food Collection.

Moreover, Tesco will allow online donations via FareShare website or a combined text to donate and they will be run by Tesco. They will also drive shoppers into store & raise awareness of Food Collection by using an Ambassador and they are planning announcements in-store on public address system.

### Some data about the 2019 Christmas Food Collection

- Organized in Tesco small stores (not manned) on 18-23 November 2019;
- In Tesco big stores (with volunteers) took place on 21-24 November 2019;
- Volunteers in store: +2,200 in 409 stores across the UK
- Food donations: 261 tonnes transported to our Regional Centres
- Media Campaign: Print, Digital & Radio
- Social Media campaign: 30% of the volunteers recruited through social media
- Perfect engagement activity for Food/Corporate Partners
- Staff Engagement



**Marcus Rashford** @MarcusRashford  
Imagine going to bed at night with a full stomach, preparing for a good sleep, knowing there are 1.1M helpless children who are probably wide awake listening to their stomachs grumbling or their parents sobbing, whose life could be significantly improved by one decision...(1)



## Estonian Food Bank / Food Collection: 11-12 September



Claudia Vihma, Toidupank

The Food Collection was organized in a normal way, with volunteers in the shops, and took place on 11 and 12 September. The retailers involved were Coop, Maxima, Prisma and Rimi, Selver.

In Estonia they traditionally organize Food Collections twice a year (December and April). Due to the emergency, from 12th of March to 1st of May all public gatherings were prohibited so they cancelled the Food Collection in April.

They decided to organize the Food Collection in coordination with Estonian Health Board in September involving 49 stores and 15 Food Banks. Even if they engaged volunteers of all ages (included children), they did not ask schools to participate as usual.

The decision of organizing a Food Collection was pushed by the necessity to increase food stocks. With coordination from the Estonian Health Board they tried to minimize the risk of their volunteers getting infected by providing gloves, masks and disinfectants,



**49**  
stores

and 15 Food Banks  
took part in the Food  
Collection

**22,400** kg  
of food collected

practicing physical distancing between donators and volunteers and decreasing the number of stores (but increasing the engagement with various organisations for volunteer recruitment). The overall feedback was positive with 22,400 kilos of collected food (10,000 less than usually).

For the future they are thinking to organize a Food Collection in December adopting a hybrid solution (Food Collection in stores and online), creating a solid network of volunteers beforehand and involving different organizations beforehand in the recruitment process.



# Questions & Answers/ Plenary Session



## Banque Alimentaire (Luxembourg) asbl / Luxembourg

They are planning to organize a Food Collection in November. They will not print flyers, but they are planning to install videos to be shown to consumers in the supermarkets.

## Federação Portuguesa dos Bancos Alimentares / Portugal



Federação Portuguesa  
dos Bancos alimentares  
contra a fome

The Federação Portuguesa dos Bancos alimentares contra a fome (FPBA) usually organizes a food collection in May. Due to the COVID-19 this year it was not possible to organize it in the traditional way (i.e. volunteers in the supermarkets inviting citizens to purchase food for the Food Bank).

However, FPBA organized a food collection with vouchers with the result of 498 tons of food collected and an online food collection which resulted in 339 tons of food. They did not have volunteers. Moreover, they are thinking to repeat the experience of Food Collections at the end of November (they will also involve franchising stores).



## Federación Española de Bancos de Alimentos / Spain

They usually organize a Food Collection (Gran Recogida) at the end of November (22,000 tons of food collected on average). For this year they decided to make it virtual since the COVID-19 situation is uncertain and they do not want to expose volunteers to risk.

They collected food with supermarkets in May to test the procedure (they had vouchers and cards and the customers could choose the products to be donated). They promoted the campaign, but they did not push it too much. The response was much better than expected. In November they will repeat this experience.

# Acknowledgement

The European Food Banks Federation takes this opportunity to gratefully acknowledge the European Commission for concretely supporting the capacity building of FEBA and its membership.

A deep appreciation to Alexandra Gruber, Suzanne Delaney, Meritxell Jimenez and Claudia Vihma for dedicating their time to our meeting, sharing their experiences and testifying that Food Collections are feasible, even though in new and ingenious approaches, even in these times.

Last but not least, many thanks to all the participants who actively contributed to the success of the skill-sharing session!



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