Excess Food at 2016 WMPO Will Feed Local Hungry

Written by Taylor Seely
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Rain at the Waste Management Phoenix Open doesn't have to be buzzkill this year, thanks to a partnership between the Scottsdale-based M Catering and local nonprofit, Waste Not.

When the weather at last year's WMPO took a turn for the worst and ladies were swapping out strappy heels for rubber rain boots, or avoiding the event all together, what they didn't realize was the decrease in attendance directly led to 30,000 pounds of delicious food being donated to hungry locals, which for Arizona, is one in every six people.

The Waste Not organization, which operates out of one Scottsdale office and six trucks on the road six days a week, picks up perishable food items from grocery stores, restaurants, catering companies, and more and distributes it the same day to any one of its 100-plus recipients, like Boys & Girls Club, UMOM New Day Center and more.

For this year's WMPO, Waste Not trucks will meet at the M Catering facility each night to collect the high-quality, prepared food that wasn't distributed to the public and likely feeds thousands of needy people.

Dee Mitten, executive director of Waste Not, says one pound of food equates to about one meal, and while there's no way to ensure beating 2015's record-breaking 30,000 people fed, as much of it depends on weather conditions, she is hopeful.

"It's kind of good news, bad news when it rains," Mitten says. "The crowds are less, (so) there will be a lot of excess food that we can use."

 Above all, Mitten says Waste Not is grateful for M Catering's commitment to making the food available to them.

Michael Stavros, the director of business development for M Catering, says it's a "rewarding experience" to donate the food to those in need. "It's going to people who so need it…rather than simply wasting (it), helping us translate our food comes first philosophy into the community comes first philosophy."