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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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RecyclingWorks in Massachusetts Announces Food Donation Web Page

[BOSTON] The Holidays are a time when many people take action to donate food to various food rescue organizations. Businesses and institutions have an opportunity to take this same action, sustain donations throughout the year, and get help to do it well. RecyclingWorks in Massachusetts is proud to announce that a [new web page on Food Donation in Massachusetts](#) has been released.

Food donation is beneficial in so many ways and is also one strategy that business and institutions can use to comply with the Massachusetts Commercial Food Waste Disposal Ban, which went into effect on October 1, 2014. The ban applies to approximately 1,700 Massachusetts businesses and institutions that dispose of one ton or more of food waste each week.

"We are pleased to see people and institutions thinking carefully about surplus foods and not simply opting for disposal," said Commissioner Martin Suuberg of the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP). "It is great to see increased donation of safe and wholesome food to help to feed those in need." The guidelines, housed on RecyclingWorks' website, are intended to provide clear information for businesses interested in setting up safe and effective food donation programs for surplus food.

The process to develop the guidance brought together MassDEP, Mass. Department of Public Health, Harvard Food Law and Policy Clinic, US EPA, local health agents, food donation organizations and companies donating surplus food to discuss issues around the donation of surplus food. Three stakeholder meetings were held around Massachusetts: in Springfield, Worcester and Boston, and from these meetings consensus was built around strategies and steps that can be taken to safely and effectively donate surplus food to organizations that can distribute it to those in need.

"By working closely with our partners, we were able to ensure retail food safety requirements were met and local boards of health received the support they needed to help the program run smoothly," said DPH Commissioner Monica Bharel, MD, MPH. "With these pieces in place, local business across the Commonwealth will now have all of the necessary tools to provide food to those most in need."

The guidelines include three legal fact sheets on date labeling, tax incentives, and liability protections for food donation in Massachusetts prepared by the Harvard Food Law and Policy Clinic.

"Many food businesses are concerned about donating food safely and ensuring they have legal protections when they donate foods. We created these Massachusetts-specific legal fact sheets to assuage these concerns and to encourage more businesses to donate food in a legal, safe manner. By

paving the way for more businesses to donate wholesome, healthy food, Massachusetts has become a leader in the national effort to increase food recovery and reduce food waste,” explained Emily Broad Leib, Director of the Harvard Food Law and Policy Clinic.

“For several years, RecyclingWorks has been recommending a range of strategies from prevention to composting to animal feed, helping businesses reduce food thrown in the trash. Our hotline saw a noticeable increase in requests for assistance around food donation and so developing these best practices guidelines was a response to business community’s interest in doing more donation, and doing it well. The guidance found on this page is the culmination of a stakeholder engagement process that we are very proud of,” stated Lorenzo Macaluso, Director of RecyclingWorks MA.

If you have any questions on comments about the guidelines, feel free to contact the RecyclingWorks in Massachusetts program at 888-254-5525 or info@RecyclingWorksMA.com.

About RecyclingWorks in Massachusetts

RecyclingWorks in Massachusetts, a program funded by MassDEP and delivered under contract by the Center for EcoTechnology, helps businesses and institutions create successful food waste diversion programs and maximize recycling opportunities. RecyclingWorks provides all services at no cost to Massachusetts businesses and institutions and is focused on helping businesses comply with the commercial food waste ban, and all MA waste bans. Recycling experts are available to help you navigate the requirements of the ban and to aid you in designing a successful, cost-effective food waste diversion program.

What can RecyclingWorks do for you?

- **Technical assistance tailored to your business needs**

RecyclingWorks can evaluate your current system, help design a food waste diversion program that fits your needs, provide a cost analysis of available options, work with your current hauler, provide employee training and signage, and be available for any follow-up needed.

Note: RecyclingWorks is not a waste hauler, but we can help you work with your current hauler or recommend available organics hauling services in your area.

- **Troubleshooting and customer service**

If you have any recycling or food waste questions or concerns, contact the RecyclingWorks Hotline at (888) 254-5525 or email info@recyclingworksma.com to reach our recycling experts at any time.

- **Resources and guidance**

Our website at www.recyclingworksma.com features the “Find a Recycler” database, guidance on options for complying with the organics ban, case studies of successful programs, and updated information on waste bans.

If you need help at any point or would like to learn more about the RecyclingWorks program, please call our hotline at (888) 254-5525 or email info@recyclingworksma.com to reach a Recycling Expert.