Case Study: Palisades and Eaton Fires

Executive Summary



The Palisades and Eaton fires impacted more than 150,000 people in Los Angeles (LA) County in just a few hours. This crisis resulted in a food emergency not only for the evacuated families but also for food-insecure communities in LA County whose regular food assistance was interrupted. To support LA County communities through this crisis, Abound Food Care (Abound) collaborated with three Orange County-based food-repurposing kitchens — Monkey Business Cafe, Orange Coast College's culinary program, and Bracken's Kitchen — to provide 3,600 meals to impacted communities. Abound coordinated meal production by three food-repurposing kitchens, provided meal storage in a network of five solar-powered refrigeration units (SPRUs), and coordinated food and meal distribution by community feeding partners. Ultimately, over 20,000 pounds of food was sourced and distributed.

Palisades and Eaton Fires of 2025

The Palisades and Eaton fires of January 2025 displaced more than 150,000 people from their homes. This displacement left these communities acutely food-insecure and in need of emergency meal service. In response, many LA-based charitable feeding organizations mobilized and redirected their food and meal services to communities displaced from the burn area. While this mobilization was essential to meeting the immediate needs of displaced individuals and families, this mobilization also left a service gap in LA. Many charitable feeding organizations were suddenly unable to fully support their usual service populations, leaving severely food-insecure communities, like Skid Row, without the food assistance they rely heavily upon.

Solar-Powered Refrigeration Unit (SPRU) Network Ready to Assist

Abound maintains an existing network of five SPRUs across Orange County (OC) in areas at risk of being cut off from their basic needs by disaster. SPRUs are resilient in a disaster because they are disconnected from the power grid, accessible via pallet jacks, and equipped with combination locks for easy access. This existing SPRU network was immediately available to help with the Palisades and Eaton fire disasters.

Solution

To meet the needs of families and individuals displaced by the fires, as well as food-insecure communities caught in a sudden service gap, Abound:

- Partnered with local food-repurposing kitchens to prepare nutritious, ready-to-heat-and-eat meals and stock them in Abound's network of SPRUs.
- Coordinated transportation logistics to provide 3,000 ready-to-heat-and-eat meals directly to individuals and families displaced by the fires.
- Partnered with Monkey Business Cafe to provide 600 hot meals out of their food truck to communities in LA's Skid Row left without their usual charitable feeding services because of increased need by the fire victims.

Having Abound's SPRUs stocked with nutritious, ready-to-heat-and-eat meals meant that meals were available to rapidly deploy and meet the urgent need brought on by disaster. Over the following year, Abound continued to provide ready-to-heat-and-eat meals to nonprofit organizations supporting communities impacted by the fires, as well as bi-weekly deliveries of fresh produce, protein, and nonperishable foods. Over 20,000 pounds of food were sourced and distributed.



About Abound Food Care: As an insider with multi-sector experience, we have the unique skills and knowledge to solve complex food system problems to empower nonprofits to feed more people. We optimize the food system with our scalable solutions that align public, private, and nonprofit resources and stakeholders. Our solutions include edible food recovery, food donation coordination, solar powered refrigeration units, and regional programs and alliances. Regional programs can be tailored with additional services, including grant management and administration, enhanced procurement, coordinated logistics, and repurposing kitchens. Since our inception, Abound Food Care has empowered thousands of stakeholders to create healthier communities with better food access and less food waste.