

Too Good to Waste!

A Safe Food Handling for Donation Checklist for Markets, Restaurants and Businesses Preparing or Serving Food in the County of San Diego

Why Donate Food? In addition to disposal cost savings and potential tax deductions for your business, you can help reduce food insecurities and the amount of food waste going to the landfills.



Checklist for Safe Handling

- Keep cold food refrigerated at 41°F or below and frozen foods at 32°F or below
 - If possible, freeze food before donating
 - Always examine food for any signs of decay, spoilage, mold or odors
 - Label, package and store food products separately to prevent cross contamination
 - Never donate items that have been thawed and refrozen
 - Never donate items that have been cooked, cooled and reheated
 - Keep packaged items in their original packaging
 - Examine canned and dry packaged foods' packaging for tears, holes, dents, broken seals, infestation and spoilage
- Check the expiration dates and follow these general guidelines:

Food	Do Not Donate After
Milk	4-7 days past stamped date
Yogurt	7-10 days past stamped date
Soft Cheese	1 week past stamped date
Hard Cheeses	3-4 weeks past stamped date
Luncheon Meat	4-6 days unopened, 3-5 days if opened
Powdered Milk	6 months past date if refrigerated
Eggs	3-5 weeks past stamped date
Dry Cereal	6-12 months unopened
Food in Jars	12 months past stamped date
Canned Foods: Acidic (tomato products)	12 months
Canned Foods: Non-Acidic	3 years
Bread Products	7 days after date if refrigerated at first
Rice/Pasta (dry)	1 year after receiving

Call the county's recycling hotline for information on food donation, a free audit, or assistance with starting up a program. ¡Se Habla Español!

Learn more online at: www.sandiegocounty.gov/gov/dpw



(1-877-713-2784)

Donation Safety Measures

- Businesses that wish to donate food must have a public health permit
- Foods that have been previously served to a consumer cannot be donated
- Donated foods should be immediately served and consumed if an organized event or charitable organization does not operate under a public health permit
- Food must be protected from potential contamination at all times through the use of sanitary, food-grade containers, and by ensuring that transport vehicles are clean and free of vermin
- Typically, the following items are not acceptable for donation: Protein salads including potato, chicken, egg and seafood, gravies, sauces and dressings, shellfish and crustacea

Donations consisting of whole produce, canned goods, bread and pastries without cheese, custard, jelly or cream fillings, dry foods and other similar, packaged, safer products can be delivered anytime with no requirement for temperature controls or delivery times.

Handling Potentially Hazardous Foods (PHFs)

- Prior to donation and transport, cold foods must be kept in the safe temperature range of 41°F or below, hot foods at 135°F or above, and frozen foods at 32°F or below
- If a refrigerated vehicle is available, foods should be held below 41°F while in transport
- If refrigerated transport is not available, the food items should be labeled “Process Immediately,” and must not be out of the safe temperature zone for more than two hours
- Temperature should be checked to ensure food designated for donation has the proper temperatures prior to transport

Labeling

- All food designated for donation should be labeled with the following information:
 - Name of product
 - Date and time prepared
- Use the Food Donation Delivery Form provided with this checklist for donating all foods

