



FOODCYCLE LA

Thank you for signing up to help us reduce food waste and feed the hungry! Because the population we serve are often more vulnerable and immune-compromised (think women, children and elderly), we need to make sure the food we deliver is safe for consumption. Below is a set of guidelines that all volunteers and donors need to know to ensure safety of the population we serve.

Safe Food Donation Guidelines

What Kind of Foods Can Be Donated?

Dry goods, non-perishables

- Commercially canned, boxed, and otherwise packaged foods
 - Canned soups, stews, and sauces
 - Canned fruits and vegetables
 - Canned meats and fish like tuna, salmon, spam.
 - Unopened jars of peanut butter and jam
 - Boxed meals like pasta, rice, macaroni and cheese
- For canned goods there should be no bulge in the container indicating spoilage. A dent in the can is OK.

Bulk foods

Items in quantities larger than would be used for individual consumption, and need to be broken down for individual distributions.

- **Required packaging: Bulk foods can only be repackaged in a licensed facility**
 - New smaller portions must be packaged in sanitized or new food grade containers and labeled with:

- food item including brand name
 - ingredients in descending order by volume

- date of repack
 - distributor of original product, e.g. name of grocery store
- **If a facility is not licensed to repack bulk goods, the foods must be in their intact, original packaging.**

Perishables

- **Prepared food**
 - **Foods prepared in a home kitchen may not be donated.**
 - any type of prepared food that has been prepared and properly chilled to **41F or below or frozen** at a commercial food service establishment **and has not been served** may be safely donated
 - Chilled prepared products must be received and maintained at a temperature of 41F or below.
 - **Required packaging: Securely sealed, food grade packaging,** e.g. sandwiches wrapped in clear plastic wrap or foil.
 - The maximum time hot foods can be left out at room temperature is 4 hours.
 - **All donated prepared food should be properly labeled with a Foodcycle LA Food Label (provided by Foodcycle LA) that contains the following information:**
 - the name of the food
 - any potential allergens such as dairy, eggs, fish, Crustacean shellfish, tree nuts, wheat, peanut and soybeans
 - date prepared
 - “use by” dates
 - storage temperature
 - Instructions to “Reheat quickly to internal temperature of 165F or above”
 - donor name and contact information.

Perishables contd.

- **Produce**
 - any type of fresh **whole** fruit or vegetable (packaged or loose)
 - Whole (uncut, unpeeled) fruit and vegetables **do not** require time/temperature control.
- **Dairy products (milk, cheese, butter, eggs) –**
 - Commercially packaged milk, cheese, yogurt, ice cream, eggs and egg products, etc.
 - **Dairy products must be maintained at a temperature of 41 °F or below.**
 - **Required packaging: Foods must be in their intact, original packaging.**
- **Fresh meat and Seafood**
 - Needs to have been USDA approved. Fresh meat and seafood must be maintained at a temperature of 41F or below.
 - Meat products that have been vacuum packed will still need to be maintained at a temperature of 41F or below.
 - **Required packaging: Foods must be in their intact, original packaging.**
 - **Raw meat and seafood must be transported in a separate container from other donated food items to avoid cross contamination**

Bakery items

- Items from commercial sources that have not been previously served to the public.
- **Most** bakery items do not require time/temperature control., unless they are filled with something perishable like cream or meat.

Frozen foods

- any type of commercially packaged frozen food such as peas, berries, ravioli, waffles, etc.

- Frozen products must be maintained at a temperature of 0°F or below at all times, including during transportation.
- **Required packaging: Foods must be in their intact, original packaging.**

Food Transporter Safety Information

Your supplies should include:

- Hand sanitizer and disposable gloves
- A thermometer if you are transporting cold perishables or prepared foods (supplied by Foodcycle LA)
- For Prepared Foods - Foodcycle LA supplied food labels to record temperature and time at pick up/drop off
- Pen
- Thermal bags, coolers or insulated blankets to maintain temperature of food.

Things to remember during your pick up:

- **Never pick up food if you are sick**
- Pull long hair back and/ or wear a hat or hairnet
- Wash hands with hot water and soap before handling food
- Don't eat, drink or smoke near the food you pick up
- Wear single use food safe gloves if you are handling food directly
- Wear a waterproof bandage with single use food safe gloves if you have an open wound
- Use safe leakproof pans and **never put pans containing food on the ground.**
- Do not mix hot and cold food in the same containers.
- **Any hot/cold foods - use a Foodcycle LA thermometer to record temperature when it was received.**
- Put ice packs on top in containers when transporting temperature controlled foods.
- **Protect food from any potential contamination – keep your car clean and do not expose food to dirt, insects, animals or other contaminants while you are transporting it.**
 - A plastic sheet is helpful for protecting your car and the food

- **If you are ever concerned about whether food has been properly handled be sure to let the recipient know about your concerns and let them decide.**

Food Donor Safety Information

THANKS TO THE GOOD SAMARITAN ACTS ACROSS THE US AND CALIFORNIA, BUSINESSES ARE FULLY PROTECTED FROM LIABILITY WHEN DONATING FOOD.

The Bill Emerson Good Samaritan Food Donation Act passed in 1996 is a Federal Law that protects all food donors from both Civil and Criminal liability when donating “Apparently Wholesome” food, including “any raw, cooked, processed, or prepared edible substance, ice, beverage, or ingredient...for human consumption”, to non-profit organizations in “Good Faith” (with no malicious intent).

California’s Good Samaritan Act of 2017 clarifies and expands food donation under the Emerson Act to include donations fit for consumption beyond its labeled shelf life date.

- Federal Liability Protection: [Bill Emerson Good Samaritan Food Donation Act](#)
- State Liability Protection: [California Good Samaritan Act](#)
- [More federal Info from US Government regarding food donations](#)

Expiration dates

With the **exception of baby food**, “use by”, “sell by”. or “best by” dates typically do not refer to food safety but are a measure of food quality. Many foods quality will decline after these dates but they are still safe to donate.

Food donors will need to provide the following information for perishable foods

- Source of the food
- How the food was kept free from contamination during storage, preparation and transport
- How, where, and when the food was prepared
- How the food was maintained at the proper temperature
- If/how long the food was out of temperature control

Sample Label: **Product name:** Meat Lasagna
 Potential Allergens: Wheat, Dairy
 Date Prepared: 4/1/2019 Held at 140 degrees
 Received at 3PM 4/1/2019
 Use by 4/5/2019
 Storage Temp: Refrigerate at 41 degrees or below or
 freeze
 Serving Info: Reheat to internal temperature of 165 or
 above
 Donated and prepared by: Bristol Farms Market
 Phone number: (XXX) XXX-XXXX

FOODS THAT CANNOT BE DONATED

- Products that show any sign of spoilage – mold, “off” smell
- Foods that were previously served to consumers
- Foods in swollen, bulging, rusted cans
- Containers that have been opened
- Products exposed to environmental contamination such as fire
- Alcohol
- Foods cooked at home
- Baby food that passed the “best by” date