



**CONTRA COSTA
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Donating Food Safely

Whole produce, canned goods, dry foods, and similar uncooked, prepackaged products have no requirement for temperature control, and anyone can donate them.

Prepared foods and meals must be donated by restaurants, hotels, food processing facilities, food distributors, catered events, and similar approved sources with commercial food health permits.

When an approved source donates food:

- No previously served food may be donated
- Cold foods should always remain at 41°F or below
- Frozen foods must always remain at 0°F or below
- Hot foods must always remain at 135°F or above
- Donated food must be protected from potential contamination with sanitary, food-grade containers
- Ensure transport vehicles are clean and vermin-free

Transporting Donated Foods

If possible, use portable coolers or a refrigerated vehicle to transport foods that must stay cold. If refrigerated transport is not available, use thermal blankets.

If no temperature control is available during transport, label cold, frozen or hot foods "process immediately." These foods should not be used if they were out of temperature control for more than 30 minutes during transport.

Receiving and Storage of Donated Foods

The food donor should check to ensure proper temperatures at the time of transfer to the receiving facility or food transporter.

The receiving venue should also check temperatures upon receipt of donated food and note the time received (See "Food Donation Agreement Form").

If you or your organization receives donated food to store or share, remember:

- Inspect the food upon receipt to ensure it is wholesome and in good condition

- Make sure the food is from approved sources, has been stored safely and held at appropriate temperatures
- You should store the food in a way that protects it from contamination
- Make sure your handwash facilities are always available, clean and unobstructed for your staff and volunteers
- All potentially hazardous food must be stored or held at approved temperatures
- Use accurate probe thermometers to measure food temperatures, and sanitize them properly between uses
- Maintain proper temperatures in your refrigeration units and make sure they have accurate thermometers
- Your equipment and utensils should be of food-grade quality, smooth, easily cleanable and non-absorbent
- Food handlers should be aware of basic food safety measures as they related to their duties