

Too Good to Waste!



A Food Donation Guide for Organizations in the San Diego Region



Source Reduction First!

Following are some tips for restaurants, markets and other businesses/organizations serving or selling food. Preventing food loss before it happens is the safest, easiest, and most cost effective method to minimize waste.

Step 1: Conduct an assessment of the food you're throwing away

- Use helpful tools developed by the U.S. EPA (epa.gov) to conduct an audit of the food you're wasting. Other useful websites and software programs can be found online.
- Try tracking wasted food for a couple of days (pick one busy day and one less busy day), and based on results...

Step 2: Implement strategies to reduce waste

- Adjust your menu or sales inventory to reduce foods that are frequently wasted.
- Change food preparation methods to minimize waste, such as reducing portion sizes.
- Maximize use of the food you serve. For example, leftover bread can be made into croutons and unserved vegetables and trimmings can be made into a soup stock or sauce.
- Store food in sealed, labeled containers and at proper temperatures to reduce spoilage.
- Serve leftover or surplus food (while always following food safety guidelines!) to employees.
- Put items nearing their expiration date on sale.
- Rotate perishable stock at every delivery.



Call the County of San Diego's Recycling Hotline for information on food donation, a free waste audit, or assistance with establishing a recycling or food donation program: 1-877-R-1-EARTH (1-877-713-2784).



Food past its expiration date? It's probably still servable...

Unless it's infant formula, there's a good chance that food products past their expiration date are still donatable. Canned and packaged foods with expired dates can be donated along with produce and prepared foods.

Contact your local food bank to learn more.

Food Donation Tips

Partner with a Pantry

The key to a successful food donation program is developing a good working relationship with your local food bank or pantry. In addition to providing food safe containers for hot or cold items, they may also pick-up your donations for free.

Ask the pantry or food bank you're working with for a contact name of a similar business donating food and talk to them.

Start Small

- Begin by donating the easiest, most accessible items such as packaged or canned foods past their expiration dates.
- Once up and running, strive to establish a consistent, organized schedule of pick-ups (or deliveries if you decide to transport donations yourself).

Track Results

- Tracking pounds of food donated (provided for free by most food donation organizations) can allow you to calculate disposal cost savings, reduction in greenhouse gas emissions, and social benefits to your community.
- Online programs and software are available to help you track source reduction (and save money) too!

Donating Food Safely

Donating food in a responsible manner begins with overall safe food handling. For additional information, visit www.sandiegocounty.gov/deh.

Food Handling Safety

- Always keep food at safe temperatures and out of the danger zone... Cold food should be kept below 41°F, frozen food at 32°F or less, and hot food 135°F or higher.
- Ensure every refrigerator has an accurate thermometer placed near the door on the top shelf.
- After heating, cooking or hot holding, potentially hazardous foods must be rapidly cooled from 135°F to 70°F within two hours, and from 70°F to 41°F within four hours.
- Rapidly reheat food using cooking equipment or the microwave to an internal temperature of 165°F within two hours.
- Always practice proper hand washing to avoid cross contamination.

Package and Cool Perishables

Store perishable foods in food-safe containers and keep refrigerated or frozen.

Be Safe & Keep Track!

If you have questions about donating food safely, ask your inspector or contact the County of San Diego Department of Environmental Health at (858) 505-6900 or visit www.sandiegocounty.ca.gov/deh

The County of San Diego has developed a food donation delivery log and a checklist for safe handling of donated foods.

Ask your inspector for a copy or visit www.sandiegocounty.ca.gov/deh



Bill Emerson Good Samaritan Food Donation Act

“A person or gleaner shall not be subject to civil or criminal liability arising from the nature, age, packaging, or condition of apparently wholesome food or an apparently fit grocery product that the person or gleaner donates in good faith to a nonprofit organization for ultimate distribution to needy individuals.”

Protection from Liability

California Health and Safety Code Section 114433
“No food facility that donates food shall be subject to civil or criminal liability or penalty for violation of any laws, regulations, or ordinances... for a violation occurring after the time of donation.”

California Civil Code Section 1714.25
“(a) Except for injury resulting from negligence or a willful act in the preparation or handling of donated food, no food facility that donates any food that is fit for human consumption at the time it was donated to a nonprofit charitable organization or a food bank shall be liable for any damage or injury resulting from the consumption of the donated food.”

Potential Tax Deduction Too!

The Internal Revenue Code (IRC) section 170 "Allowable Deduction for Charitable Donations to ordinary Income Property" encourage donations by allowing C corporations to earn an enhanced tax deduction for donating selected surplus property, including food.

Why Donate Food?

In addition to saving on disposal costs and potential tax benefits for your business, you can help reduce food insecurity and the amount of food waste going to landfills.



Too Good to Waste!

A Safe Food Handling Checklist for Markets, Restaurants and other Food Establishments Interested in Donating Excess Food Within San Diego County



Food facilities are protected from liability when donating food in good faith. The California Health and Safety Code (CA H&SC) allows donations of food to nonprofit charitable organizations as follows:

CA H&SC - Section 114432: Any food facility may donate food to a food bank or to any other nonprofit charitable organization for distribution to persons free of charge.

CA H&SC - Section 114433: No food facility that donates food to a food bank or other nonprofit charitable organization for distribution to persons free of charge shall be subject to civil or criminal liability or penalty for violation of any laws, regulations or ordinances . . . for a violation occurring after the time of donation.

Food donations may be monitored and recorded using the sample "Food Donation Delivery Form" found on the reverse side. This sample template is a suggested format that you may utilize or you may customize a similar one to fit your needs.



Checklist for Safe Handling

Temperature Control

- Cold perishable foods should be kept in refrigeration at or below 41°F and hot foods should be kept at or above 135°F. Food temperatures should be maintained within these ranges before and during transportation to the recipient.
- Pasteurized milk and pasteurized milk products in their original, sealed containers are able to be kept in refrigeration at or below 45°F.
- If possible, freeze food to below 32°F before donating.
- After properly heating, cooking or hot holding of food, be sure to rapidly cool it from 135°F-70°F in the first two hours and then from 70°F-41°F within the next four hours.

Safe Food Handling

- Ensure that hands are thoroughly washed with warm water and soap before handling food and/or utensils and when switching from raw animal products to ready-to-eat foods and as often as necessary to remove all contamination.
- Always examine food for any signs of decay, spoilage, mold or odors. For canned and dry packaged food, check the packaging for tears, holes, dents, bulging cans, broken seals, and vermin infestation.
- Refrain from donating food that has been previously served to a consumer.
- Donated food should be covered and protected from contamination before and during transportation. Transportation vehicles should be maintained clean and vermin free.
- Keep packaged items in their original packaging whenever possible.
- Avoid storing raw meats and/or foods containing major food allergens with or on top of ready-to-eat foods. *Note: Major food allergens include milk, eggs, fish, crustacean shellfish, tree nuts, wheat, peanuts, and soybeans.*
- Ensure the name of the food item and its date and time of preparation are clearly labeled. Food should be labeled "Process Immediately" for instances where refrigerated transport is not available.

For more information, contact the County of San Diego, Department of Environmental Health - Food and Housing Division at (858) 505-6900 or visit www.sandiegocounty.gov/deh.

Record of Food Donation Delivery

Perishable Food Item(s)	Amount (lbs.)	DONOR Temperature at holding	Time Taken	RECEIVER Temperature at receipt	Time Taken	DONATION Accepted	
						YES	NO
			AM PM		AM PM		
			AM PM		AM PM		
			AM PM		AM PM		
			AM PM		AM PM		
			AM PM		AM PM		
			AM PM		AM PM		
			AM PM		AM PM		
			AM PM		AM PM		

Use additional pages of this form if more lines are needed to list items.

Facility Making the Food Donation:	
Address	Public Health Permit <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
Contact Name	Phone # ()

Transported By (if different than donor or recipient):	
Address	
Contact Name	Phone # ()

Facility Receiving the Food Donation:	
Address	
Contact Name	Phone # ()

I acknowledge that the food item(s) listed above meet the temperature holding requirements for potentially hazardous foods, as defined in Section 113871 of the California Retail Food Code.

Signed By (representative of business donating food) _____

Date: _____



Food Donation Resources

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



The County of San Diego Recycling & Household Hazardous Waste Hotline

(1-877-713-2784)

Learn more online at:

www.sandiegocounty.gov/dpw

www.sandiegocounty.gov/deh

**Ready to donate right now?
Great, pick up the phone!**

Feeding San Diego (858) 452-3663

San Diego Food Bank (858) 527-1419

North County Food Bank (760) 761-1140

Why Donate Food?

In addition to saving on disposal costs and potential tax benefits for your business, you can help reduce food insecurity and the amount of food waste going to landfills.

What Foods can be Donated?

Almost anything you serve or sell, including canned and packaged foods with use by dates*, produce, and prepared foods can be donated.

Contact your local food bank or pantry for a complete list.

*Infant formula cannot be served after its use by date.



Hierarchy of Best Management Practices

