Food: *Too Good to Waste!*

Everyone Wins with Food Donation at Schools

Did you know that 1 in 5 children in San Diego County are food insecure?
They do not always have enough food for an active, healthy life and often are worried about where their next meal will come from.

Schools Can Help!

Food Donation entails saving perfectly good, edible, yet unsold or unconsumed, foods and making them available either to other students or a charitable organization.

Good Samaritan Laws protect donors who donate foods in good faith. The federal *National School Lunch Act* authorizes schools participating in the school lunch program to donate surplus foods.

New Legislation in California is requiring food donation as part of its statewide recycling strategy. The State is removing barriers to make it easier than ever for schools to implement a food rescue and donation program.

Foods Suitable for Donation include packaged (or easily packed) items such as sandwiches, hamburgers, snacks, pre-sliced and packaged fruits and vegetables, whole fruits and vegetables, non-perishables expired or close to expiration, and baked goods. Unopened juice and milk can be donated as well. Refer to page two of this document for additional resources on safe-food handling.

Quick Tips to Get Started

Perform an Audit to determine the quantity and nature of edible foods that might be eligible for recovery and donation.

Establish a Share Table for students to donate their unopened foods for other students to freely take. Any foods leftover on the share table can be donated to a charity as well.

Identify a Charity who will collect your food at an agreed upon schedule and sign a contract. Establish a means for tracking the types and amounts of foods donated.

Identify and Allocate Storage Space Including shelf space, a refrigerator and freezers to store food until it can be picked up.

Additional Resources

Food Donation Start-Up Guide

Oakland Unified School District's School Food Donation Program provides a detailed program guide to starting a food donation program at school including "lessons learned."

New Legislation

SB 557 and AB 1219 clarifies food donation and share tables at schools and strengthens provisions in the Good Samaritan Act.

SB 557 exempts schools from California Retail Food Code provisions that generally prohibits unused or returned food from being offered again. SB 557 authorizes schools to establish share tables and if still unconsumed, allows schools to donate that food.

AB 1219 authorizes food facilities to donate food directly to end recipients for consumption.

Share Tables

Refer to the CDE's Nutrition Services Division Management Bulletin "The Use of Share Tables" for guidance on implementation of SB 557.

The University of Arkansas also prepared a fun, quick info-guide on Share Tables in the National School Lunch Program and is meant to eliminate confusion from the federal perspective.

Local Food Banks

Contact Feeding San Diego or the San Diego Food Bank, San Diego County's largest hunger relief organizations. They can connect your school with a partner agency near you.

Safe Food Handling

County of San Diego's Food Donation Guide available from the Department of Environmental Health on safe food handling requirements and guidelines.