

Donating Food During Disasters



Foods That Can Be Donated

Food from permitted establishments that is unused, including raw, or prepared food, ice or beverages.

Packaged foods with the seal intact, non-perishable cans, undamaged boxes of pasta, crackers, or cereal, pre-packaged baked goods, or bottled water.

Foods That Cannot Be Donated

Food that has been prepared in a home or other non commercial setting, or food that has been previously served.

Canned food that is heavily dented on the seal or rim, packaged food that is damaged, food that has been exposed to fire or floodwater.

Requirements for Donated Food

Food that requires refrigeration must not be donated beyond the original use-by date, or past 7 days from preparation or opening.

Cold foods must be received, stored, and transported below 41° F. Hot foods must be received, stored and transported above 135° F.

When food is received, it should be inspected for package integrity, and checked for any visible signs of spoilage or contamination.

Food that requires temperature control should be monitored during transport, receiving, storage, and service, and any food that is out of temperature for more than 2 hours should be thrown away.

Special Considerations



Consider cultural preferences and dietary practices when communicating about donated food. If necessary, provide translations or culturally appropriate materials for diverse communities. Respect religious or cultural dietary restrictions and preferences.

Access to healthy food options is often limited in underserved communities, often contributing to health disparities and inequalities. By providing education and resources for healthy eating, communities can address these disparities and promote health equity by empowering individuals to make healthier choices regardless of socioeconomic status or geographic location.

