



## DONATING FOOD

# RESCUE SAFE GUIDELINES

THE KEY TO SAFE FOOD RESCUE IS THE CAREFUL CONSIDERATION OF ALL ITEMS BY BOTH THE DONOR AND THE RECIPIENT ORGANIZATION. THE FOLLOWING PROVIDES SIMPLE GUIDELINES TO HELP KEEP ALL DONATIONS SAFE.

1

### SELECT YOUR FOOD

Selecting the proper foods involves learning what can be donated, like which produce, meats, and dairy is suitable, examining expiration dates, etc. and selecting between frozen or unfrozen.

2

### PREPARE YOUR FOOD

Food donation preparation is critical and involves learning about the best containers to use, labeling your food properly, avoiding mixing of different food items, and what packaging is needed.

3

### STORE YOUR FOOD

Food donation storage involves learning important information about what ideal temperatures your food should be refrigerated, and ideal temperatures for storing prepared food.

4

### TRANSPORT YOUR FOOD

Transportation of donation food requires you to be aware of contamination issues, methods to protect your food during transport, and guidelines for keeping your donated food safe.

SEE REVERSE FOR DETAILS



**FOOD COWBOY**  
Nothing Goes to Waste



1

## SELECT YOUR FOOD

### WHAT CAN BE DONATED

- Produce, Dairy, Meats
- Fresh or frozen
- Unsold and un-served
- Unopened canned/dry-packaged
- Near quality expiration dates
- Produce that is slightly bruised or soft

### WHAT CANNOT BE DONATED

- Spoiled, moldy or has a bad odor
- If packaging is torn, has holes, dents or broken seals
- With signs of infestation and spoilage
- Unpasteurized milk
- From a donor who lost power or can't guarantee continued refrigeration
- Refrigerated for over 5 days
- If it's been cooked, cooled and then reheated

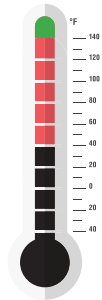
2

## PREPARE YOUR FOOD

- Food should be prepared before its expiration date
- Store in shallow, one-use recyclable aluminum pans or clear-plastic food-grade bags.
- Package donations in smaller containers
- Label all containers before refrigerating or freezing with: type of food, date prepared, date stored
- Highlight key allergen foods - peanuts, fish, etc.
- Separate raw and prepared foods to avoid cross-contamination
- Do not mix different prepared foods

3

## STORE YOUR FOOD



- Refrigerated food: 40° F or below
- Hot food: 135 o F or above
- Prepared food: never more than four hours in the danger zone of 40 o F to 135 o F
- Prepared food: should be cooled to under 40 o F within four hours
- Prepared food: refrigerated for no longer than 48 hours
- Reheated food: should be heated to 165 o F
- Store cooked food above raw food

4

## TRANSPORT YOUR FOOD

- Place food containers in food carriers and transport quickly
- Separate food from any non-food items during transport
- Transport food directly from donor to recipient agency
- Keep clean to protect food from contamination
- Use insulated food carriers to maintain the temperature of food
- Keep ice used to transport cold foods separated from the food
- Disposable aluminum pans are not designed for re-use and should be recycled
- Plastic food containers that are cracked or defective in any way should not be used
- Make sure delivery food containers and covers are washed, rinsed and sanitized before returning them to the donor
- Use gel packs or other cooling packs inside carriers to maintain cool temperatures
- Wash hands before and after working with donated food.
- Hand sanitizers are not an acceptable form of hand sanitation because they do not kill all forms of food hazards.
- All cuts or open wounds should be cleaned and covered before working with food.
- People with colds, fever or flu symptoms should not handle food