

Simple Steps to Donate Your Healthy Surplus



**A GUIDE FOR
FOOD DONORS**

For the hundreds of thousands of New Yorkers visiting food pantries and soup kitchens each month, the challenge is twofold: gaining access to an adequate supply of food and ensuring that those foods are healthful. Diet-related chronic conditions, including diabetes, heart disease and obesity, disproportionately affect low-income communities, in part, because residents of these neighborhoods have less access to healthy food.

Why send food to the landfill when it can help a family? By donating your company's surplus wholesome foods, you can help struggling New Yorkers while benefiting your bottom line. This guide provides information on how your organization can easily donate food to New York City's food pantries and soup kitchens.



To learn more about how and where to donate food contact:

**Food Bank For New York City:
Food Sourcing Manager,
212-566-7855 x 2250,
foodsourcing@foodbanknyc.org**

**City Harvest:
Manager, Food Sourcing,
646-412-0754,
fooddonations@cityharvest.org**

Please note: If you currently donate to Food Bank For New York City, City Harvest, or another emergency food program, you can continue to work with that organization for your donations.

Develop a food donation policy

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Take into account which nutritious foods you commonly throw away, your available storage space, how to safely handle foods to be donated and the best days and/or times for pick-up. A healthy food donation policy works best when the commitment starts at the top and key personnel feel empowered to implement it.

Identify healthy foods to donate

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Many foods, such as produce, meat, and dairy, may not be accepted by reclamation centers. By donating them, your company will help food pantries and soup kitchens provide balanced and nutritious meals to New Yorkers in need. Post the "Healthy Food Donation Checklist" to give staff specific donation recommendations.

Call to donate

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The Food Bank For New York City and City Harvest are available to safely and efficiently pick up and distribute your surplus food to over 1,000 food pantries and soup kitchens. They can also help you donate food directly in your community. These organizations will work with you to create the optimal donation system and schedule for your business.

Frequently Asked Questions About Food Donation

What legal protections exist for donating food?

Federal and New York State Good Samaritan laws exist to address food donations. The federal law is “to encourage the donation of food and grocery products to nonprofit organizations for distribution to needy individuals by giving the Model Good Samaritan Food Donation Act the full force and effect of law.” The New York State law addresses liability for canned and perishable food for donation. To review the laws, refer to the enclosed “Good Samaritan Laws” document in this toolkit.

Is donating food profitable for my company?

Donating food can generate potential tax deductions. Consult with your tax advisor for more information. By keeping edible food out of the dumpster, you can also reduce your company’s trash disposal fees. Emergency food programs can reverse a broader range of foods than reclamation centers can, including perishables.

We already donate bakery goods, but are concerned about donating perishable foods. Should we be?

Emergency food programs like Food Bank For New York City and City Harvest follow the same food safety practices as food companies. They have refrigerated trucks and warehouse facilities designed to keep perishable foods at the proper temperature. These organizations are committed to ensuring that they, and their member food pantries and soup kitchens, practice the highest level of food safety.

What if we have limited storage/refrigerator/freezer space to store foods to be donated?

Emergency food programs can schedule frequent pick-ups to free up valuable storage space.

Will donating food require a lot of staff time?

It only takes a few minutes to set aside wholesome surplus food for donation instead of throwing it away. Emergency food programs can work with your company’s staff to develop easy, efficient donation procedures.

Food Donors Should Follow Basic Food Safety Protocols When Donating Surplus Food

- Employees and staff handling food should follow proper hand washing and hygiene practices. Hands should be washed thoroughly for at least 20 seconds before handling food.
- Do not allow potentially hazardous prepared food to stay in temperature danger zone (42° F - 139° F) for more than two hours.
- Avoid cross-contamination of foods by keeping raw food (particularly meats) away from cooked or ready to eat food.
- Store items to be donated in a designated area that follows safe food storage protocols to avoid contamination.
- Work with the recipient organization to ensure food is received and transported safely and maintained at a proper temperature.

The Following Foods Should Never Be Donated:

- Dented, swollen, leaking or rusty cans;
- Dry goods that show evidence of moisture;
- Any food with packaging that is not intact;
- Any food showing signs of spoilage or decay (such as mold or a bad odor).

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