

Prepared Food Donations - Guidelines

Please see below for step by step instructions on how to properly store and donate prepared foods. Please note that your operation must meet the following requirements:

- Your establishment must hold an “A” grade from the Health Department
- Only wholesome food in proper condition will be donated

Steps:

- 1) Ensure that all product is safe for consumption prior to setting aside for donation. Separate food by type to avoid cross contact and cross contamination.
 - a. Foods that have been cooked and reheated by the donor are **not acceptable** for donation.
 - b. Foods that have been served or placed on a buffet are **not acceptable** for donation.
 - c. The product should always look and smell good – no signs of visible mold, no bad odor, etc. The packaging should also not be wet or stained.
- 2) All hot foods must be chilled to 41°F or below prior to donation. For cooling, place the donations in a clean and shallow container(s) in order to ensure temperature will reach 41°F or below within 4 hours. This container could be a sheet pan, a 200 hotel pan, or any shallow food-grade container that will help the food drop in temperature appropriately.
- 3) Be sure to follow the steps below for proper cooling (2 hour time increments, 4 hours total).
 - a. From current temperature to 70°F (21°C) in 2 hours.
 - b. And from 70°F (21°C) to 41° F (5°C) in 2 hours.



- 4) After all items have reached 41°F (5°C) transfer the food over to the container/s in which said product will be donated (unless already in designated container/s).
 - a. Food donations need to be wrapped well to prevent freezer burn. The packaging can consist of food-safe plastic bags (not garbage bags) and/or food-grade tins or totes. The packaging needs to remain undamaged in order to stay food-safe.
- 5) Freeze all freezable items such as bread, proteins, soups or any other item previously cooked. The food must remain in cold storage until picked up by Feeding San Diego (or Agency Partner).
 - a. Refrigerated items must be donated on the same day as preparation.
 - b. Frozen items may be donated up to one month past day of preparation.
- 6) Create the appropriate label and place on each individual unit. Feeding San Diego can provide you with a label template or you can use your own, as long as the following information is included:
 - Date of preparation
 - Name and location of the donor
 - Common name of food/donation (beans, rice, soup, etc.)
 - A list of ingredients or an allergen disclaimer (see below for example)



Date: _____

Food Name: _____

Allergen Warning: This container holds rescued food that may contain, have come in contact with, or have been produced in a facility which also produces milk, eggs, peanuts, tree nuts (walnuts, almonds, pecans, hazelnuts/filberts, pistachios, cashews, coconuts, pine nuts, macadamia nuts, and/or Brazil nuts), fish, shellfish (crab, crawfish, lobster, shrimp, mussels, and/or oysters), wheat, soybeans, and/or sesame seeds.

Prepared by: _____

❖ *We do ask that you donate a minimum of 20lbs or 20 meals at one time if you are requesting a pick-up. Deliveries may be coordinated with less.*