

## Guide for Restaurants to Donate Food

### Acceptable Donations For Food Pantries

- Unopened ingredients that are complete with ingredients and allergens and product has been stored safely.
- Unscooped food that has been Cooled safely. Packaged with pack date, pack location, complete list of ingredients.
  - Product must be donated and distributed in same container that it was donated in. (pantries cannot repack food.
  - Food has been safely cooled to below 41 degrees Fahrenheit and maintained for transport and distribution.

### Acceptable Donations for Mealsites

- Unopened ingredients that are complete with ingredients and allergens and product has been stored safely.
- Unscooped food that has been Cooled safely. Packaged with pack date, pack location, complete list of ingredients.
  - Food has been safely cooled to below 41 degrees Fahrenheit and maintained for transport and donation.
- Unscooped Food that has been held hot and donated and transported at or above 135 degrees Fahrenheit.
  - Food package is complete with pack date, pack location, and ingredients.

Reheating for Hot Holding – The process of making a cold food hot before placing on warming unit. Food must be heated from 41°F(5 °C) to 165 °F(74°C) within two hours.

## Cooling Hot Foods

With cooling of foods it is important to move the food temperature through the "Danger Zone" as quickly as possible to keep food safe.

**Fresh is Best** - You always take a chance that bacteria can grow and produce toxins when you cool food. **It is safest to make food fresh each day, just before you serve it.**

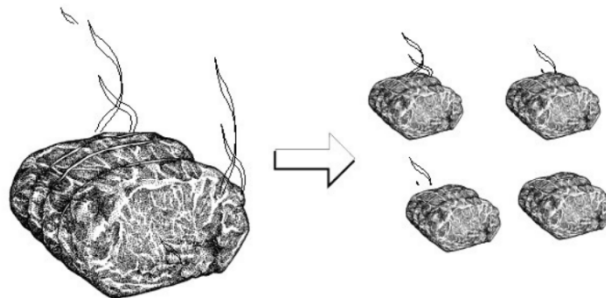
**Speed is Important with Cooling** - If you must make food in advance or save leftover food, cool it as **fast** as you can to prevent bacteria growth and toxin production.

**Reheating will not destroy toxins.**



**Cooling Solid Foods** - When cooling solid cooked foods such as roast, turkey, and solid cuts of meat, be sure to:

1. Cut large roasts and turkeys into smaller portions. This will help them to cool faster.
2. Put all meats and other hot food in the refrigerator uncovered.



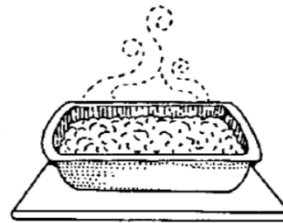
**Cooling Soft/Thick Foods** - Examples of soft/thick foods are refried beans, rice, potatoes, stews, chili, thick soup or thick sauces.

You can cool soft/thick foods by pouring food into a shallow metal pan. Use a sheet pan for very thick foods like refried beans. Cooling thick food is not easy. Whenever possible, use a flat sheet pan and spread the food out as shallow as you can to speed up the cooling.

When cooling food in shallow metal pans, be sure to:

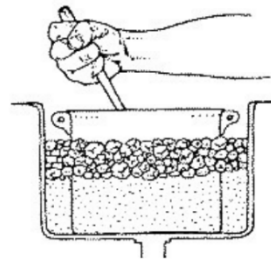
1. Pour hot food into shallow metal pans. The shallower the pan the faster the food will cool.
2. Stirring food speeds up cooling time.
3. Once food cools to 41oF (5oC), you can place food in a larger container and cover it.

**Air Movement** - Air in the refrigerator must be able to move around the food. The pans and dishes need to have space between them; do not crowd them. Do not stack pans on each other. Do not cover the food while it is cooling. A cover may be put on after the food has fully cooled.



**Cooling Liquid Foods** -You can use shallow metal pans or you can use the ice and water bath to cool thin soup and sauces. When cooling food with an ice bath, be sure to:

1. Close the drain in a large sink. Place the metal pot or pan of hot food in the sink. The sink drain must be indirectly plumbed.
2. Fill the sink with ice and cold water **up to the level of food in the pot or pan.**
3. Stir the soup or sauce often so that it cools all the way to the center. Ice paddles or cooling wands can be used to speed up the cooling process.
4. Add more ice as ice melts.
5. The food must reach 41oF(5oC).



**Remember** You can choose several ways to cool food. No matter how you cool the food, it must drop from:

**2 hours** 135oF (57oC) to 70oF (21oC) within two hours and then the temperature must drop from 70oF (21oC) to 41oF(5oC) within four hours.

**4 hours**



Use a food thermometer to check the temperature while it is cooling. If it isn't cooling fast enough you will need to do something else to speed up cooling.



**Date Marking** **Ready-to-eat** potentially hazardous foods must be date marked with either the preparation date, use-by date, or date the commercial package was opened.

**7 days** The food can be stored for 7 days when the refrigerator maintains **41°F (5°C)** or colder. Food older than 7 days must be discarded.

**1 day** Food used within one day is not required to be date marked.

**Pests** Cockroaches, flies, mice and rats can carry disease and cause damage. Prevention and control of these pests is essential.

Keep the inside and outside areas clean. Outside garbage must be contained in watertight containers with lids remaining closed when not in use. Exclude flies, especially during the warmer months, by screening open doors and windows screened with 1/16th of an inch mesh.

Pests can come into the facility through small holes or gaps under the door to the outside. A mouse can slip through a space of 1/4 inch. Block their entry by eliminating small holes and gaps under and around the door.

If you find pests inside your facility, contact a licensed pest control service.





## Hospitality Establishment Donations

These donations include, but are not limited to, product from restaurants, caterers, hotels, retail establishments and convenience stores' ready-to-eat or hot deli sections. It does not include whole produce. If you are interested in receiving donations, please visit our [Fresh Alliance website](#) or email us at [FreshAlliance@OregonFoodBank.org](mailto:FreshAlliance@OregonFoodBank.org).

Please note: This is a more complicated process than accepting shelf-stable manufactured goods and may require additional food safety training or certification. Please consult with Oregon Food Bank or your Regional Food Bank before accepting donations of perishable and prepared foods from these types of donors. All donations from retail and hospitality sources must be provided by a regulated food business and must be in compliance with local food handling regulatory requirements. In addition, they must:

- Be transported, received, stored and held at appropriate temperatures (0°F or below for frozen, 41°F or below for chilled, 135°F or higher for hot foods).
  - The person or business transporting the food must use a passive system (thermal blanket/cooler with ice packs) or visibly active temperature retention system (refrigeration unit) to maintain temperatures within the allowable limits.
  - Sample temperatures must be taken and documented at the time of pickup and delivery.
  - The log on [page 46](#) must be maintained for pickup and delivery temperatures, as well as for calibrating thermometers.
- Be from environmental contamination during display and/or services.





- Not include foods previously served to the public (e.g., exposed to the public on a self-service buffet or on bulk displays exposed to the public).
- Be first-generation surplus foods, i.e., not previously reheated for second-time service.
- Be packaged in first-use food grade packaging.
- Be labeled correctly, with the label to include:
  - The name and location of the agency.
  - The name and location of the donor.
  - The food description (e.g., lasagna, chicken noodle soup, etc.).
  - The date of the donation.
  - An allergen disclaimer statement that includes the following:

“Allergen Warning: This container holds rescued food that may contain, have come into 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), wheat, soybeans and/or sesame seeds.”

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## Handling Retail Donations from Perishable Food Drive Operations

If your agency holds or is a recipient of a food drive in which perishable items are specifically requested (e.g., turkeys, hams, milk), you must comply with applicable food safety regulations that require cold chain documentation. Food industry partners, such as grocery stores, convenience stores, food manufacturers, and distributors all manage their cold chain (temperature monitoring and documenting) according to local and national regulations. If someone else is hosting the food drive, you must ensure they will comply with these rules. It's best to have a meeting before the food drive to confirm all parties are aware of their responsibilities.

