



DONATING FOOD? KEEP FOOD SAFETY IN MIND



Food donations are a vital resource for many individuals and families in need. However, ensuring the safety of donated food is critical to prevent foodborne illnesses. Here are some essential tips for proper food safety when donating food:

1. Understand Donation Guidelines

Many food banks and pantries have specific requirements for the types of food they accept. Check with the organization to confirm their needs and restrictions. Typically, they prefer:

- Non-perishable items such as canned goods, dry pasta, and rice.
- Unopened, undamaged packaging with clear expiration dates.

2. Check Expiration Dates

Expired food can pose a health risk. Ensure all donated items are within their "best by" or "use by" dates.

3. Inspect Packaging

Damaged or compromised packaging can lead to contamination. Avoid donating items with:

- Broken seals.
- Bulging or dented cans.
- Torn or punctured bags.

4. Avoid Home-Prepared Foods

While homemade meals and canned goods are prepared with good intentions, they are often not accepted due to safety concerns. Commercially prepared and packaged items are safer choices.



5. Store and Transport Food Safely

If donating perishable items (when allowed):

- Use insulated coolers with ice packs to maintain proper temperatures.
- Keep refrigerated items below 40°F and frozen items at 0°F until delivery

6. Label Clearly

Clearly label food items with contents and ingredients, especially if donating bulk items. This is vital for individuals with allergies or dietary restrictions.

7. Practice Personal Hygiene

When handling food donations:

- Wash your hands thoroughly.
- Avoid donating if you are sick or have open wounds.

8. Know the Rules for Prepared Foods

If donating prepared foods from an event or commercial kitchen, ensure they meet your local health department standards. Food should:

- Be prepared in a licensed facility.
- Be stored at proper temperatures during transport.

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SAFETY TIPS WHEN
DONATING FOOD**



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