

What foods can be donated? Almost anything you prepare, or sell can be donated, including meats and dairy even if they are close to their expiration date.

Fresh, frozen, perishable and non-perishable, packaged or bulk food products that have been prepared and handled in accordance with state and local food handling guidelines. There are many different wholesome foods you can donate.

There are a few exceptions:

- Baby food or formula that has exceeded its expiration date cannot be donated
- Homemade or restaurant food without a valid health permit cannot be donated
- Food portions which have been previously served to consumers cannot be donated

Is there a Special Public Health Permit for donating or receiving surplus food? No, a Special Public Health Permit for donating or receiving surplus food is not required. However, donating and receiving surplus foods must be done in a way that minimizes food safety risks.

How can we ensure the food is safe for distribution? It is important to maintain the foods that will be donated in the same safe and reasonable manner which you hold other foods intended to be sold.

Can I be liable for donating food? You are protected! The Federal Bill Emerson Good Samaritan Food Donation Act and the California Health and Safety Code provides donors with liability protection provided the food has been handled safely and in accordance with state and local food handling guidelines and is donated free of charge to a nonprofit charitable organization or to direct individuals. The recipients must not pay for the food. There is no protection for intentional misconduct or negligence.

Are there any benefits to donating excess food?

Aside from helping provide food to people that need it, and reducing the amount of food waste going to landfills, there are other benefits to consider, including:

- Potential tax deductions for donating safe surplus food
- Reduce the frequency of trash hauling service