

## A Guide to Donating Food from Home



The Washington State Departments of Health, Agriculture, and Ecology are eager to help you safely donate food. If you want to find more ways to help, consider donating your time, donating money, or using social media to advocate food donation to your family and friends.

To the right you will see a step-by-step guide for donating foods to a hunger relief organization.

Contact your local health department food safety office for additional advice on donating food safely. Your local WSU Cooperative Extension office is also a good source of food safety information.

- Local Health Department contacts: [www.doh.wa.gov/foodsafetycontact](http://www.doh.wa.gov/foodsafetycontact)
- WSU Cooperative Extensions: <http://pubs.cahnr.wsu.edu/locations/>



Food Safety Program  
360-236-3330

# FOOD RESCUE

## Donation Guide — Home Kitchen

### Why Donate?

Thank you for working to help support your community! There are many benefits to donating food to a local hunger relief organization (HRO) like a food bank, food pantry, or meal program:

- Help a fellow Washingtonian! One in six people in our state struggle with food insecurity.
- Reduce waste and the disposal of edible food.
- Reduce waste, greenhouse gas, and water quality impacts.

### How to Donate

HROs must follow food safety rules (WAC 246-215) to help ensure their food is safe and have limitations on the types and sources of food they can accept. Individuals should follow these guidelines to ensure food provided to HROs are wholesome and safe.

1. Review acceptable foods on the back page that may be donated.
2. Ask your local hunger relief organization in advance what food they accept and how and when to drop-off your donation.
3. Prepare and package foods safely by following this guidance:
  - [Washington State Food Worker Manual](http://www.doh.wa.gov/Portals/1/Documents/Pubs/332-036.pdf)—available online: [www.doh.wa.gov/Portals/1/Documents/Pubs/332-036.pdf](http://www.doh.wa.gov/Portals/1/Documents/Pubs/332-036.pdf)
  - [DOH Charity Food Donation Guidance](http://www.doh.wa.gov/CommunityandEnvironment/Food/FoodWorkerandIndustry/CharityFoodDonations)—available online: [www.doh.wa.gov/CommunityandEnvironment/Food/FoodWorkerandIndustry/CharityFoodDonations](http://www.doh.wa.gov/CommunityandEnvironment/Food/FoodWorkerandIndustry/CharityFoodDonations)
4. If appropriate, label with the common name of the food, any allergens listed on the package, and the name of the original processor.
5. Transport donated food safely:
  - Transport food in a clean container to prevent contamination.
  - Keep food at proper temperatures by using insulated containers to transport frozen foods.
6. Track donated items: Use a donation delivery form supplied by the HRO or provide this information to the hunger relief organization for their records: food source; quantity; how the food was kept free from contamination during storage, preparation and transport; how, where, and when the food was prepared; and how the food was kept cold.



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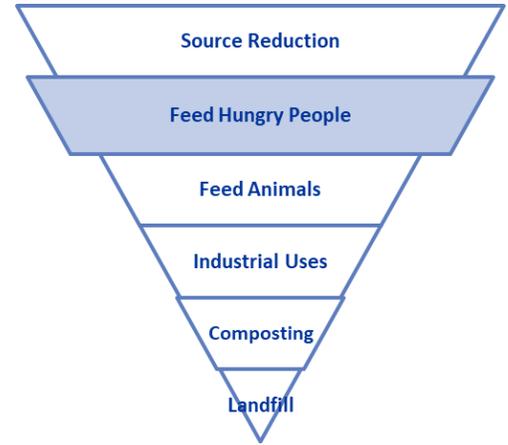


## Be Part of the Food Waste Solution!

Food waste is the largest component of our state’s municipal solid waste, with edible food making up 8% of overall garbage, as noted in the Washington State Department of Ecology 2015-2016 Waste Characterization Study. The Environmental Protection Agency developed a Food Waste Recovery Hierarchy (modified version below) which lists feeding hungry people as one of the top strategies to prevent and reduce wasted food. By donating edible food from your business, you can be part of the food waste solution and help reduce hunger in your community!

## The Good Samaritan Food Donation Act

Chapter 69.80.031 RCW, also called the “Good Samaritan Food Donation Act,” offers responsible food donors protection from criminal and civil liability if the donated food is “apparently wholesome.” This means the donor knows the food has been handled with correct food safety standards. The act does not release donors or hunger relief agencies from the duty of acting responsibly. Operate with judgment and diligence to make sure donated food is safe and wholesome.



## Food Safety—Don’t Share Foodborne Illness!

Hunger relief organizations are not allowed to accept or serve most types of home prepared foods, like soups or casseroles. These items are considered high risk for causing foodborne illness. However, several homemade foods that do not require refrigeration to remain safe may be donated. It is recommended that donors obtain food safety training, such as a Washington State Food Worker Card, to ensure donations are prepared and handled safely. See below for food safety requirements for various foods.

**Table 1. The following foods from home kitchens can be donated if stored away from pests, pets, and household chemicals while being kept in food-grade packaging and meeting the requirements in the table below:**

Food Type	Foods CAN be donated if :	Foods CANNOT be donated if:
<b>Nonperishable, Commercially Packaged Food</b> (e.g. canned, boxed)	Stored in a cool, dry, and clean area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rusty, severely damaged (dents on seams or bulging seals), or leaking cans</li> <li>• Opened or damaged packaging</li> </ul>
<b>Frozen, Commercially Packaged Foods</b>	Frozen solid	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Defrosted or refrigerated foods</li> <li>• Foods with severe freezer burn</li> <li>• Opened or damaged packaging</li> </ul>
<b>Fresh Whole Produce</b>	Store-bought or home-grown Stored in a cool, dry, and clean area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Significant decay</li> <li>• Cut produce</li> </ul>
<b>Nonperishable Baked Goods</b>	Prepared following <u>Charity Food Donation Guidance*</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Foods handled with bare hand contact</li> <li>• Contaminated, moldy, or stale foods</li> </ul>
<b>Freshly-Prepared Foods</b> (e.g. soup, casseroles)	Prepared in a donor kitchen following <u>Charity Food Donation Guidance*</u> and temperature monitored and recorded with a food thermometer.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prepared in a home kitchen</li> <li>• Vacuum packaged or home-canned foods</li> </ul>
<b>Baby Food</b>	Stored according to label	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expired infant formula</li> </ul>

\*Department of Health Charity Food Donation Guidance available online:

<https://www.doh.wa.gov/CommunityandEnvironment/Food/FoodWorkerandIndustry/CharityFoodDonations>

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