



Second Harvest

Northern Lakes Food Bank

FOOD DONATION GUIDE

Meat / Poultry / Fish

Examples: Beef, poultry, pork, fish, packaged meats, deli meats

- Original sealed packaging must be intact
- Labeled and include sell-by date
- Separated by species to avoid contamination
- Stored in freezer in boxes labeled for donation
- Frozen when donated - freeze within 24 hours from sell-by date

Do Not Donate / Unacceptable to Donate:

- Defrosted product
- Product with severe freezer burn
- Unfrozen protein or protein that was frozen after expiration
- Product with compromised internal packaging, loss of sanitary barrier protection
- Sushi or any seafood intended for raw consumption

Dairy / Frozen Food

Examples: Butter, cheese, eggs, fruit juice, milk, pudding, sour cream, yogurt, creamer, frozen dough, frozen fruit, ice cream, frozen entrees, frozen vegetables

- Internal packaging must be intact - lids not required (can send lids in for credit and donate product with internal packaging intact)
- Stored in cooler at 40°F or 0°F as required
- Stored in cooler or freezer in boxes labeled for donation
- Must be dated
- May exceed “sell by”, “use by” and expiration dates. Please see Dairy-Refrigerated Donation Guidelines for details
- Broken eggs must be discarded

Do Not Donate / Unacceptable to Donate:

- Opened product
- Undated Product
- Melted or defrosted product



Fresh Produce

Examples: Whole fresh vegetables, lettuces, greens, whole fruits, bagged or packaged fruits / vegetables, bagged salad mixes / stir-fry mixes, fruit / vegetable trays

- Fresh whole produce must be placed in boxes, bags or food grade packaging
- Suitable for human consumption
- Stored in cooler at 40°F in boxes labeled for food donation
- May exceed “sell-by” dates
- Bagged or packaged produce must have internal packaging first

Do Not Donate / Unacceptable to Donate:

- Internal packaging compromised
- Product not suitable for human consumption
- Moldy, rotten, leaking product

Deli / Prepared Food

Examples: Entrees, soups, side dishes, fried chicken, sliced cheeses, sliced cold cuts, sandwiches, vegetable / fruit trays

- Product must have food grade packaging in direct contact with food
- Stored at 40°F or 0°F as required
- Stored in the cooler or freezer boxes, dated and labeled for donation
- Containers must be securely closed and separated by food type
- Containers must have an ingredient list OR the label provided by Second Harvest which lists all potential allergens, donor name and date packaged.

Do Not Donate / Unacceptable to Donate:

- Food that has been previously reheated
- Food that has been served to the public (on a buffet)
- Containers that are not properly labeled will not be accepted

Grocery / Non-Perishable

Examples: Canned goods, shelf stable jars, boxed pre-packaged foods

- Cans or internal packaging must be intact with labels that include product identification, ingredients, weight, distributor and food source
- Stored in boxes labeled for donation in a cool, dry, clean area
- May exceed “sell-by” dates
- Must be suitable for human consumption

Do Not Donate / Unacceptable to Donate:

- Opened, punctured, bulging, or seriously damaged cans (serious rust or side-seam dents)
- Open, punctured, damp, stained or damaged packaging on boxed / pre-packaged foods that results in loss of sanitary barrier

