Grocers Feed the Hungry Partner Agency Handbook

About store donation programs

Store donation programs are when grocery retailers agree to donate non-perishable and perishable products such as meat, deli, dairy, produce and bakery items to a food recovery organization for distribution to clients in need. These items are no longer able to be sold by the retailer for a variety of reasons, but are still within safety guidelines to consume, and would otherwise be thrown away.

National corporate donors as well as local donors, partner with either Feeding America or Sacramento Food Bank & Family Services (SFBFS) directly, to get paired with community food recovery organizations for grocery recovery. The benefits of oversight from Feeding America and SFBFS are to ensure proper vetting of organizations on items such as proper food handling, distribution, and reporting, as well as assisting to foster good relationships between the donor and the agency to encourage donations of good quality and volume. SFBFS refers to this program as Grocers Feed the Hungry (GFTH).

Agency requirements to qualify for the GFTH program

For an agency to be paired with a GFTH donor and maintain their involvement, they must:

- Be an agency in good standing and be up to date on all SFBFS required documentation.
- Be current on Feeding Reports submitted to SFBFS.
- Distribute food to community at least once a week.
- Have reliable transportation and staff or volunteers available on a consistent basis.
- Be located within a 30 minute drive of store.
- Commit to the GFTH program 52 weeks a year.
- Agree to pick up all donated product, except for alcohol, medications of any kind, rotten food/produce, or opened / unpackaged items.
- Adhere to all GFTH agreement procedures and protocols, including, but not limited to, maintaining proper equipment for food pickup, food safety, communication of relevant issues, and reporting.

Building a good store relationship

To ensure the best quality and highest volume of donations, it's important to create and maintain a professional, respectful relationship with the store staff, manager, and receivers that the agencies interact with.

- Make a good first impression. Arrive when expected and respect the receiver's time.
- Protect the donor's brand by treating all donations, regardless of item, with respect.
- Agencies should ensure that they have adequate number of staff or volunteers to receive product in a timely manner.
- Agencies should do their best to be patient with the receiver as there are often other vendors arriving at the same time. Alternatively, the receiver should not make the agency wait an unreasonable amount of time to assist with the donations.
- It's important to give full attention to the task at hand by avoiding phone calls or having side conversations.
- The receiver should approve of all donations before the agency takes possession of any product.
- All donations should be picked up on the scheduled day and agreed upon time. If agencies are unable to pick up donations on any given day, the receiver needs to be notified as far in advance and as soon as possible. If they are unable to hold over the donations until the next pickup, that needs to be communicated with SFBFS to make other arrangements for uninterrupted pickups.
- Issues that should be reported directly to SFBFS are below. SFBFS will escalate the issue with either Feeding America and the corporate donor, or directly with the store.
  - Volume, quality, or food category issues that are not easily solved or arranged with the store staff.
  - Store personnel conflict issues.
  - Take and send pictures of consistently unusable food being donated for documentation.

Safety at the grocery store

The receiving area of most grocery stores is a busy scene of product, vendors, and staff. Agencies should take care in avoiding hazards and dangers that could lead to injury or damage.

- Watch for moving equipment such as pallet jacks, forklifts, and carts.
- Step carefully in areas that appear wet.
- Lift all donations with care by bending at the knees or using equipment to aid when possible.

Equipment

To follow all the best practices for the GFTH program, agencies should have access to equipment that aids in picking up donations and storing them safely for distribution.

- Transportation: having reliable transportation and the ability to maintain and secure insurance for the vehicle is key to the program. The agency's vehicle should have adequate space to keep the integrity of the product intact, such as keeping cold/frozen food at safe temperatures, dry food from getting wet, and soft food from getting crushed.
- The agency's facility must have adequate refrigerator and freezer space to accommodate all temperature sensitive items.
- Helpful items to bring to pickups include clean, empty milk crates, banana boxes or totes to keep food categories separated and secure in transport.
- Ice chests (or insulated carriers) along with reusable freezer ice packs, and/or insulated thermal blankets, are ideal for additional temperature safeguarding.
- A surface measuring device such as an IR gun, a digital internal thermometer or a dial face internal thermometer are also necessary to check any temperatures that an agency is concerned about.
- A scale is required to weigh all donations for reporting to SFBFS. Guessing or estimating weights is not permitted, so an accurate scale is needed. Simple rounding up or down to the nearest pound is allowed.

Receiving and sorting food

If time allows sorting food before transport is a best practice to ensure that all cold food remains at safe temperatures. Make sure all food is secure in your vehicle to maintain its integrity.

If the agency has more than one GFTH store to pick up donations from, a system should be put in place to ensure that they are separated by store for correct reporting. Creating a laminated card or cards with store names on it that can easily be put into banana boxes is an option for keeping track.

When arriving back at the agency facility, food should be sorted (if not already) and weighed by food category according to the Bill of Lading. All waste should be weighed and logged in its food category, then discarded. The weights will be recorded on the bill of lading for easy reporting. Food should be safely stored for upcoming food distribution. A separate bill of lading should be used for each store and each day of pick up.

Using temperature logs is a way for agencies to document that they are doing their due diligence to ensure the cold holding chain of custody in the event of a food borne illness. When in any doubt of how long food has been potentially over the temperature threshold, and agency should use the temperature log.

Reporting and accountability

Reporting weights accurately and on time is crucial in making the GFTH program a success. Weights reported to SFBFS are then reported to Feeding America. Feeding America reports those weights to the corporate donor. The corporate donors will then cross reference this data with information they receive directly from the stores, so accuracy is paramount. If inaccurate or delinquent weight reporting by an agency persists, eligibility from the program can be suspended or lost.

- Daily weight reporting is preferred, but all weights must be submitted weekly to remain in good standing.
- Do not submit one total for a week of multiple pickups. Each day must be entered separately as its own pick up.
- Report all weights by 8pm each Wednesday (for the previous week of Thursday – Wednesday.)
- If an agency makes a mistake or an omission, please contact SFBFS immediately so it can be corrected internally.

Ending a store partnership

If either the agency or SFBFS decides to end an agency's partnership with a grocery store, a 30-day notice should be given by either party. There may be occasion for SFBFS to reassign stores based on equity for food access in the county, or the agency may not have the capacity to pick up any longer, along with a multitude of other possible reasons for reassignment.

Termination of an agency in the program will be immediate in the following circumstances:

- Consistently no reporting accurately or on time.
- Not keeping donations safe for consumption.
- Not using donations for their intended purpose, including redistributing food or exchanging food for profit.

Please reach out to SFBFS if you are struggling with any of the GFTH procedures and protocols so we can work together to find a solution.

Weight reporting instructions on PWW

Go to www.sacramentofoodbank.org

Please create a SEPARATE ENTRY for each day that you have picked up donations. Do not combine weights into a weekly total.

Bill of Lading Instructions

The Bill of Lading or (BOL) is a document used to record product weights. This should be completed on site by your agency **at every grocery pick-up**.

Some donors may request a copy of this form so have multiple copies of this form on hand.

PRODUCT	QTY/LBS	PRODUCT	QTY/LBS
Bread and pastries		Other frozen food (non-meat)	
Dairy and egg products		Non-food items	
Produce		Non-perishables (unsorted)	
Deli, prepared and perishable		Totals	
Frozen meat, fish, poultry		Waste	

Below are examples of each category applicable to the BOL

PRODUCT	QTY/LBS	PRODUCT	QTY/LBS
Bread and pastries	**Enter total weight for:** All packaged bread, pastries, and products from the bakery section in the store.	Other frozen food (non-meat)	**Enter total weight for:** All frozen non-meat products (vegetable, fruit, frozen entrees etc.) from the freezer section in the store
Dairy and egg products	**Enter total weight for:** All dairy products (milk, yogurt cheese, almond milk, soy milk, coffee mate, pudding etc.)	Non-food items	**Enter total weight for:** All clothes, household supplies, cleaning supplies, etc.
Produce	**Enter total weight for:** Misc. produce all vegetables and fruits	Non-perishables (unsorted)	**Enter total weight for:** All beverages, water, baby food and mixed unsorted consumable goods
Deli, prepared and perishable	**Enter total weight for:** All packaged ready to eat meals (sandwiches, salads with dressing, entrees, luncheon meats, etc.) from the deli section in the store	Totals	**Enter Total weight for:** All categories
Frozen meat, fish, poultry	**Enter total weight for:** All frozen meats, poultry and seafood and fresh meat products from the freezer section in the store	Waste	**Enter total weight for:** Food received that is not suited for distribution

Bill of Lading

Date _____ Time in _____ Time out _____

Agency _____ Driver _____

Store/Donor _____ Store Contact _____

Address _____ Phone _____

Special Instructions: _____

_____

PRODUCT	QTY/LBS
Bread and pastries	
Dairy and egg products	
Produce	
Deli, prepared and perishable	
Frozen meat, fish, poultry	
Other frozen food (non-meat)	
Non-perishables (unsorted)	
Non-food items	

 ALL WASTE IS ENTERED INTO ITS PROPER CATEGORY, THEN DISCARDED

Comments: _____

_____

Pick-up person's signature _____

Agency's Leadership Approval Signature _____

PACE OFFICE - 1951 Bell Avenue Sacramento, CA 95838 • (916) 925-3240 • All GFTH forms can be found on the SFBFS website sacramentofoodbank.org • Grocers Feed the Hungry Tool Kit

Temperature Log
SFBFS - Grocers Feed the Hungry Time/Temperature Log

Pick up Date _____ Agency
_____

STORE DONOR NAME & PRODUCT ITEM DISCRIPTION	TEMP AT TIME OF PICK UP	TRANSIT TIME	TEMP AFTER TRANSPORT	AGENCY STORAGE TEMP

Use cold packs, ice chests, and cooling blankets to minimize time in "temperature danger zone," during transit with the goal of keeping all perishable foods cold and safe for consumption. Always report all issues and questionable products that you deem unfit for human consumption for any reason to your Agency Person in Charge.

41°F
5°C
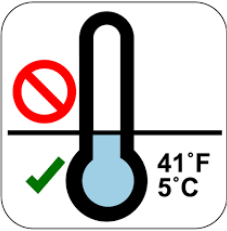
CDSS "Best if used by" guide

"BEST IF USED BY" GUIDE

The "Best If Used By" date is intended to tell you how long the product will retain best flavor or quality. **The term is not a safety date.** "Best If Used By" dates are intended as useful guidelines. Some foods may deteriorate more quickly and other foods may last longer than the times suggested. A number of factors can shorten the useful life of a food product, such as improper handling and inadequate storage temperatures. The inventory control method of "first-in-first-out" [FIFO] should be practiced by those responsible for managing commodity inventories and distribution at the State and local level. Length of storage period is in relationship to pack date. Suggested temperatures do not preclude contamination by rodents and insects, assuming storage in original unopened containers. Store foods off the floor, and away from walls to allow for circulation of air. Products kept past the "Best If Used By" date are not necessarily "out of condition." **Food products may be eaten after the "Best If Used By" date if the product has been properly stored, handled, and the primary container is in good condition** .

	Recommended Maximum Storage Period In Months			
	Frozen	Refrigerated	Dry Storage	
COMMODITIES	0° F or below (-18° C)	40° F (4° C)	70° F (21° C)	90° F (32° C)
BEANS & PEAS				
Beans, cnd	–	72	36	18
Beans, Dried	–	24	12	9
Beans, Refried, cnd	–	72	36	18
Beans, Vegetarian, cnd	–	48	24	12
Lentils, Dried	–	24	12	9
Peas, Black-Eyed, cnd	–	72	36	18
Peas, Black-Eyed, Dried	–	24	12	9
DAIRY (Cheese is located on the last page)				
Milk, Nonfat, Dry	–	24	12	3
FRUIT				
Apple Slices, cnd	–	48	24	12
Apple Slices, Frz	18	–	–	–
Apple Juice, cnd	–	–	9	–
Applesauce, cnd	–	48	24	12
Apricots, cnd	–	48	24	12
Apricots, sliced, Frz	18	–	–	–
Blackberries, Frz	18	–	–	–
Blackberry Puree, Frz	18	–	–	–
Blueberries, Frz	18	–	–	–
Cherries, cnd	–	9	3-4	2-3
Cherries, Frz	24	–	–	–
Cherries, Dried	–	–	12	–
Cranberries, Dried	–	–	6-12	–
Cranberry Juice Concentrate	–	–	9	–
Cranberry Sauce Cnd	–	–	12-18	–
Date Products	–	5	–	–
Date Products, Frz	12	–	–	–

COMMODITIES	Recommended Maximum Storage Period In Months			
	Frozen	Refrigerated	Dry Storage	
	0^0 F or below (-18" C)	40^0 F (4" C)	70^0 F (21" C)	90^0 F (32" C)
Fig Nuggets	–	24	–	–
Figs, Whole, Dried	–	9	3-4	2-3
Fruit Cocktail, cnd	–	48	24	12
Orange Juice, Concentrate, Frz	24	–	–	–
Orange Juice, Single Serve, Frz	9	–	–	–
Peaches, cnd	–	48	24	12
Peaches, Sliced Freestone, Frz	18	–	–	–
Pears, cnd	–	36	18	9
Pineapple, cnd	–	48	24	12
Plum/Prune Puree	–	–	9	–
Plums, cnd	–	36	18	9
Prunes, Pitted, Dried	–	18	9	5
Raisins	–	18	9	5
Raspberry Puree, Frz	18	–	–	–
Strawberries, IQF, Frz	15	–	–	–
Strawberries, Sliced, Sweetened, Frz	15	–	–	–
GRAINS & CEREALS				
Cornmeal	–	24	12	6
Flour	–	24	12	6
Macaroni, Spaghetti, Rotini (Spirals)	–	72	36	18
Macaroni N' Cheese, Frz	6	2 weeks	–	–
Oats, Rolled, Quick	–	24	12	6
Rice, Brown	–	6	3	–
Rice, White, Enriched, Parboiled	–	30	20	10
Rice, White, Enriched, Regular	–	48	24	12
Wheat, Rolled, Quick	–	24	12	6
MEATS, POULTRY, FISH				
Beef Roasts, Ready to Cook, Frz	12	–	–	–
Beef, cnd with Natural Juices	–	60	36	18
Beef, Ground, Bulk, Frz	9	–	–	–
Beef, Ground, Patties, Frz	4	–	–	–
Chicken Meat, Cooked, Diced, Frz	6	–	–	–
Chicken Parts, Cooked, Breaded, Frz	4	–	–	–
Chicken, cnd, Boned	–	60	36	18
Chicken, Cut-up, Frz	8	–	–	–
Chicken, Thighs & Drumsticks, Frz	8	–	–	–
Chicken, Fajita	6			
Egg Mix, All Purpose	–	–	12 - 15	–
Eggs, Pasteurized, Whole, Frz	12	–	–	–
Ham, Cooked, Frz	6	–	–	–
Ham, Water Added, Chilled		4		
Pork Sausage, Frz	3	–	–	–
Pork, cnd with Natural Juices	–	60	36	18

COMMODITIES	Recommended Maximum Storage Period In Months			
	Frozen	**Refrigerated**	**Dry Storage**	
	0° F or below (-18° C)	40° F (4° C)	70° F (21° C)	90° F (32° C)
Pork, Ground, Frz	9	–	–	–
Pork, Fresh Ham Roast, Boneless	6-12	–	–	–
Salmon Nuggets, Frz	6	–	–	–
Salmon, Pink	–	72	36	18
Tuna, Chunk Light, cnd in Water	–	72	36	18
Turkey Breast, Deli-Style, Frz	4	–	–	–
Turkey Hams, Smoked, Frz	3-4	–	–	–
Turkey Rolls, Frz 4/10#	4	–	–	–
Turkey Roasts, Frz	7	–	–	–
Turkey Sausage, Frz	3	–	–	–
Turkey, Ground, Frz	3	–	–	–
Turkey, Whole, Frz	9	–	–	–
VEGETABLES				
Beans, Green, cnd	–	48	24	12
Beans, Green, Frz	12	–	–	–
Carrots, cnd	–	60	30	15
Carrots, Frz	12	–	–	–
Corn, Kernel, cnd	–	72	36	18
Corn, Kernel, Frz	24	–	–	–
Peas, Green, cnd	–	72	36	18
Peas, Green, Frz	14	–	–	–
Potatoes, French Fried & Rounds, Frz	12	–	–	–
Potatoes, Instant or Sliced, dehy	–	12	6	3
Potatoes, Sweet, In syrup, Cnd	–	–	24	–
Salsa, Tomato, cnd	–	48	24	12
Spaghetti Sauce, Meatless	–	48	24	12
Sweet Potatoes, cnd	–	48	24	12
Sweet Potatoes, Frz	12	–	–	–
Tomato Paste, cnd	–	36	18	9
Tomato Sauce, cnd	–	48	24	12
Tomatoes, cnd	–	48	24	12
Vegetables, Mixed, Frzn	12	–	–	–
OTHER				
Almonds Natural	–	4-6	–	–
Almonds Roasted	–	4-6	–	–
Peanut Butter	–	36	18	9
Peanuts, Roasted	–	60	24	12
Salad Dressing, Reduced Calorie	–	8	5	2
Trail Mix	–	–	6	–
Vegetable Oil	–	24	12	6
Vegetable Shortening	–	48	24	12
Walnuts, Shelled	20	10	–	–

| | Recommended Maximum Storage Period In Months | | | |
| COMMODITIES | Frozen | Refrigerated | Dry Storage | |
	0° F or below (-18° C)	40° F (4° C)	70° F (21° C)	90° F (32° C)
Fresh Produce: Recommended Maximum Storage Period In Weeks/Days				
Apples, Fresh	–	6 weeks	–	–
Apples, Sliced	–	10 days	–	–
Avocados, Hass		2 days		
Carrots, Whole Baby, Bulk	–	3-5 days	–	–
Carrots, Whole Baby, Snack-pack	–	2-3 days	–	–
Cantalope, Whole		3-5 days		
Celery Sticks		10-14 days		
Grapes, Seedless, Fresh	–	3-5 days	–	–
Iceberg/Romaine Mix		10 days		
Kiwi Fruit, Fresh	–	5-10 days	–	–
Oranges, Fresh	–	3 weeks	–	–
Pears, Bartlett, Fresh	–	2 days	–	–
Pears, D'Anjou, Fresh	–	2-3 days	–	–
Pineapple Spears	–	8 days	–	–
Romaine Lettuce		10 days		
Salad-Lettuce Mix (3-way)	–	10 days	–	–
Spinach, Ready-to-Eat		10 days		
Strawberries, Fresh	–	2-3 days	–	–
Tangerines, Fresh	–	14-28 days	–	–

| | Frozen | Refrigerated | Thawed |
CHEESE COMMODITIES	0° F or below (-18°C)	32-35° F (0 - 1.65° C)	Frozen at 0° F or below, & thawed at 35 F or below (-18° C and 1.65 C)
Recommended Maximum Storage Period in Months For Unopened Packages			
Cheese, Am., Past., Process, block	–	12	–
Cheese, Am., Past., Process, sliced	–	6	–
Cheese, Am., Past., Process, shredded	–	5	–
Cheese, Cheddar, block	–	12	–
Cheese, Cheddar, shredded	–	6	–
Cheese, Cheddar, Reduced Fat, block	–	5	–
Cheese, Cheddar, Red. Fat, shredded	–	5	–
Cheese, Mozzarella, block	12	–	7–10 days
Cheese, Mozzarella, Lite	5	–	7–10 days
Cheese, Mozzarella, Unfrozen		Immediately	

Adapted from USDA Fact Sheets (http://www.usda.gov/fcs/commodities) and USDA Food and Nutrition Service
Other Sources: http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/BODY_HE5517 and http://www.dpi.state.wi.us/dpi/dfm/fns/commbest.html

Food product coding & dating guide

FOOD PRODUCT CODING & DATING GUIDE

Once a product is past code date, many manufacturers donate it to food banks as the food is still safe to eat! Food manufacturers use different date codes to ensure that consumers receive their product at peak quality. Use this reference to learn the shelf life of food products or how long these foods are good past the code date.

Common Types of Product Dating

SELL BY — A **Sell By** date tells the store how long to display the product for sale. You should buy the product before the date expires.

BEST IF USED BY — A **Best if Used By (or Before)** date is recommended for best flavor or quality. It is not a purchase or safety date.

EXPIRES ON — An **Expiration** or **Use By** date is the last date recommended for use of the product while at peak quality and is determined by the manufacturer.

What to do if the date has passed?

- A product should still be safe and of good quality if it has been properly handled. Keep refrigerated foods under 40°F at all times and frozen foods as close to 0°F as possible.
- Improperly handled food may sour, spoil or go stale and be of lower quality. Dairy products, for example, will still be of good quality for 10-14 days after their **Use By** date, but will sour or spoil within hours if not refrigerated.
- Do not eat food that has an off odor, flavor or appearance regardless of code date.

Shelf Life of Food Products

Product	Shelf Life
Baby Food (Jars)	Do not use beyond code
Baby Formula	Do not use beyond code
Bread/Bakery Products	3–10 days
Canned Goods	1–2 years
Rice	1 year
Yogurt	1–3 weeks
Aseptic Containers	1 year
Jars/Bottles	6–12 months
Cereal	6 months
Crackers	3 months
Dried Beans	1–2 years
Pasta	1 year
Freezer Products	3–12 months
Prepeared Salads	Do not use beyond code
Refrigerated Juices	1–4 weeks

FAQ's

✓ **How are the agency / store pairings made?**
- An agency expressing interest in grocery recovery will be paired with a grocery store based on several factors including location, capacity for expected volume, availability of requested pick up days/times, county equity for food access, etc.

✓ **How often will my agency be able to pick-up at the designated retail outlets?**
- Each store will have its own schedule for pick-ups. Some will be once a week, some three times a week and some even six times a week. A SFBFS PACE Coordinator will help you with each location's schedule.

✓ **How much product will each retail outlet provide to my agency?**

o Each store will have a different amount and type of donated product. You will receive an information sheet regarding the type of product each store will potentially donate.

✓ **What if our agency does not want some of the product this outlet is donating?**
   o We ask that you do not refuse any donated product. Refusing product can have unintended negative consequences. If the product is not usable, you will report the pounds in their food category and then discard as waste. Please report any recurring problems regarding product quality to a SFBFS PACE Coordinator.

✓ **How often does our agency turn in a Grocers Feed the Hungry report?**
   o Your agency will turn in a report on a weekly basis, for all of the retail pick-ups you have made in the previous week, per store. Reports are due by 8 p.m. every Wednesday for the previous week (Thursday – Wednesday time frame).

✓ **Who does the report get turned in to?**
   o Your report will not be turned in physically. You will use the online Primarius Web Window (PWW). This can be found by going directly to our web site. A blank report document (Bill of Lading) will be provided to help you keep track of each donation.

✓ **What if our agency cannot make our normal pick-up?**
   o Please contact a SFBFS PACE Coordinator as soon as you know you will not be able to make your scheduled pick up. Failure to do so in a minimum of 48 hours may result in the dismissal from the program. It is vital that you maintain consistent scheduled pick-ups with your retail outlets.

✓ **What happens if our agency is having trouble communicating with our retail outlet?**
   o A SFBFS PACE Coordinator will help to facilitate clear communications with your retail outlet, to maximize the success of your agency pick-ups.