



DONATED FOOD CHECKLIST FOR SAFETY & QUALITY

Both **safety** (whether a food is free of disease-causing bacteria and their toxins) and **quality** (whether a food looks and smells acceptable to eat) should be kept in mind when examining donated food.

Signs that food may be **UNSAFE** to eat.
Discard these foods.

Foods stored at room temperature

Cans

- Crushed so they will not stack
- Crushed at the end seam
- Dents with sharp edges
- Dents deep enough to rest a finger in
- Severe rust pits
- Swollen or bulging ends
- Holes, fractures or punctures
- Evidence of leakage
- Signs of spoilage when opened (spurting; unusual odor or appearance)
- Baby food or formula past expiration date
- Missing label

Glass jars

- Home-canned foods
- Raised, crooked or loosened lid
- Damaged tamper-resistant seal
- Cracks or chips
- Signs of spoilage (discolored food or cloudy liquid)
- Dirt under the rim
- Baby food past the expiration date

Paperboard cartons

- Packages that are opened
- Evidence of insects
- Baby food past the expiration date

Plastic containers

- Damaged tamper-resistant seal
- Signs of spoilage (mold, off odor)
- Baby food past the expiration date

Foods stored in the freezer

- Evidence of thawing and warm-holding (ice crystals on food that is soft to the touch, leaking packages)
- Unsuitable packaging

Foods stored in the refrigerator

- Lukewarm food (above 40° F)
- Signs of spoilage (unusual odor or appearance, molds)
- Unsuitable containers (and/or covers)
- Uncertain handling "history" (questionable reputation of food source)
- Damaged tamper-resistant seals (commercially packaged foods)

IF IN DOUBT, THROW IT OUT!

- Don't rely on look or smell. Foods that cause food poisoning may look fine and smell acceptable. Never taste suspicious foods!
- **Never** accept food that is home-canned or prepared by an unlicensed food processor.
- **Never** place potentially unsafe food products on the 'free' shelf for guests to take if they wish. Products which do not meet distribution standards should be **discarded**.
- **Never** accept food that is home canned or homemade or not donated directly by a licensed business.