



POLICY FOR ACCEPTING AND TRANSPORTING FOODS

It's important to keep food safe while transporting it to the pantry. When you are picking up food from a food bank, a retailer, a community garden or a farmers' market, several steps will help keep the food safe to consume.

Accept foods which meet nutrition and food safety standards

Individuals who are responsible for transporting food for the food pantry—either by picking up food at a food bank or through gleaning in the community—may need to communicate what foods the pantry is able to accept.

- Provide your driver(s) with the Food Pantry Nutrition and Food Safety Policies. Ask them to refer to these documents, if needed, when making decisions about food that is gleaned from the community.
- Regardless of whether the food pantry has a food safety policy in place, you **should not accept**:
 - Home canned or home prepared foods
 - Foods left-over from a meal or catered event
 - Food from an unlicensed food processor—the **exception** is fresh produce from a grower
 - Packaged foods that are not in their original labeled, sealed package.
 - Prepared foods are not packaged to prevent contamination. (Unpackaged food should not be transported in garbage bags, even for a short period of time, and even if the food is dry, e.g. bread. If necessary, arrange for delivery when the food can be properly packaged.)

- Foods where the packaging is heavily soiled or damaged so as to put the contents at-risk.
- Obviously spoiled food.
- Hot/cold foods that are not temperature controlled.

Keep your transport vehicle and transport containers clean

A clean vehicle will help prevent the food that you transport from becoming contaminated.

- Keep your **vehicle(s) clean** of dirt, insects and animals.
- If you are using a car to transport food, consider using a clean tarp or plastic sheet to cover the area where food will be placed. This will protect both the food and your vehicle.
- If you are using a dedicated truck or van to transport food, set up a schedule to routinely clean the vehicle to prevent cross-contamination.
- **Containers** such as totes or bins that are used to transport bulk items such as produce or bread should be dedicated for food transport and should be **cleaned after each use** to prevent cross-contamination.
- **Separate** items such as raw meats from ready-to-eat foods like bread and fresh produce.
- **Do not reuse disposable containers** to transport food. Do not pick up food that is packaged inappropriately, i.e. fruit juice in a used milk container.



continued... POLICY FOR ACCEPTING AND TRANSPORTING FOODS

Maintain temperature control

Perhaps the most important thing to remember when transporting food is the importance of temperature control: **keep hot foods hot and keep cold foods cold.**

Check the temperature of foods that are being donated to the pantry.

- Frozen or refrigerated food should be cold (**40°F or below**) and labeled (sample on right)
- If your pantry can handle **hot foods**, these must be **kept hot at 140°F or higher** and **reheated to 165°F** prior to serving. **Hot foods** must be in a food-safe container and labeled with the date of preparation and retailer/donor.
- Use **insulated containers** to transport hot or cold food. The temperature of food should be checked upon receipt. Do not accept cold food that is above 40°F or hot food that is below 140°F.
- Be sure to **keep records** of perishable foods that you receive and their origin.

Personnel

- Individuals transporting or handling food should take care to **prevent contamination.**
- Practice proper hand washing and help out only when you well (not sick).

Fresh produce

- Fresh fruits and vegetables must be handled to **prevent contamination.**
- Use dedicated boxes or bins/totes for transporting fresh fruits and vegetables.
- Do not accept obviously spoiled or rotten produce.
- Fresh fruits and vegetables that are cut, peeled or sliced **are highly perishable and must be kept cold (below 40°F).**

Signed: _____
Food Pantry representative

Date: _____

NAME OF FOOD
DATE OF PREPARATION (or contain 'use by' date on package)
RETAILER/DONOR
"KEEP FROZEN" or "KEEP REFRIGERATED"