



# FOOD DONATION GUIDELINES

To ensure that donated products are safe for consumption, please review the guidelines below on what food is and is not acceptable. This applies to donations made to North Country Food Bank, as well as its Partner Agencies in northwest Minnesota (i.e., local food shelves).

## What we CAN safely accept:

- Canned goods with minor dents
- Whole, fresh produce without significant decay
- Cut fresh produce packed separately in food-grade packaging
- Chilled perishable packaged foods in their original packaging (juices, cheese)
- Meat, poultry, seafood frozen on or before its sell-by date
- Dairy products held at 41°F or below. Can be donated up to date of expiration
- Unbroken shelled eggs held at 41°F or below
- Frozen foods in original packaging
- Baked goods (day old items, can be frozen)
- Canned and packaged goods in original packaging
- Sealed pet food items & Other non-food items (toiletries, paper goods, cleaning products, etc.)
- Excess clean totes or banana boxes

## What we CANNOT accept:

- Foods that have been served or put on a buffet table
- Foods that have been previously reheated
- Foods with damaged or compromised packaging, resulting in no sanitary barrier
- Foods that have not been temperature controlled for more than 2 hours
- Produce with significant decay or mold
- Frozen foods with severe freezer burn
- Sushi or any seafood intended for raw consumption
- Open, punctured, bulging, leaking, or seriously damaged canned goods
- Home canned or home jarred products
- Foods without an expiration date on the container
- Hazardous chemicals (antifreeze, rat poison, lighter fluid, etc.)
- Customer returns (returned food items, used personal items, broken furniture, etc.)

\*Discarding food that does not meet the above criteria is not a waste; you are protecting the at-risk community that we help feed.

If you have any questions, please contact Hannah Sieberg at 218-399-7363 or [hannah@northcountryfoodbank.org](mailto:hannah@northcountryfoodbank.org)