In the United States, as much as 40% of food produced for people to eat is wasted along the food chain. Grocery stores, restaurants, and institutions are responsible for about 40% of this waste. Donating surplus food helps local agencies serve those in need, including children and seniors. Donating food also helps the environment. Wasted food is the most prevalent material in landfills by far, representing about 20% of the trash by weight. When food is wasted, the water, energy, fertilizer, and cropland that went into producing the food is also wasted.

**LIABILITY PROTECTION**

When you donate food, you are protected by the [Bill Emerson Good Samaritan Food Act](https://www.cnhd.org/privacy-policy), which was passed into federal law in 1996. Organizations that donate food in good faith to a nonprofit for distribution to people in need are not subject to civil or criminal liability that arises from the condition of the food.

**TAX SAVINGS**

According to the Federal Tax Code, eligible businesses can deduct the lesser of either (a) twice the cost of acquiring the donated food or (b) the cost of acquiring the donated food, plus ½ of the food’s expected profit margin, if it were sold at fair market value. Contact your tax professional to determine its application to your business.

**1 IN 6**

Residents in our region experience food insecurity*

**1 IN 5**

Children experience food insecurity or hunger**

**ONLY 10% OF SURPLUS FOOD IS BEING RECOVERED IN THE FOOD SERVICE AND RESTAURANT SECTOR LEAVING ABOUT 1.5 BILLION MEALS UNEATEN PER YEAR***

For questions regarding food safety, please call (513)946-7847 or visit HCPH.org
In order to ensure donated food is kept safe, donating facilities shall adhere to all applicable sections of the Ohio Uniform Food Safety Code and your local health department. Donated prepared foods and potentially hazardous foods must meet the temperature requirements as outlined below.

**PROPER COOLING**

- **COLD FOOD** must be kept at 41°F or below.
- **HOT FOOD** must be kept at 135°F or above.
- **HOT FOOD THAT IS COOLED AND DONATED COLD** must be cooled from 135°F to 70°F within 2 hours and then from 70°F to 41°F or below within 4 hours for a total of 6 hours.

If food is unable to be delivered at the proper temperature, is adulterated, or compromised at any time, it must be composted or discarded.

**EXAMPLES OF POTENTIALLY HAZARDOUS FOODS**

- Cut Leaf Greens
- Cut Tomatoes
- Cut Melon
- Dairy
- Meat
- Seafood

**IDENTIFY FOOD YOU CAN DONATE**

Licensed food establishments can donate food that has not been served including any raw, cooked, processed, or prepared edible food, ice, beverage, or ingredient used or intended for use, in whole or in part for human consumption, with the condition that the items be wholesome - this includes packaged and prepared foods.

**FOOD THAT CAN BE DONATED**

- **HOT FOOD** that was not served to a guest and kept at temperature and/or cooled properly (entrees, soups, etc.)
- **COLD FOOD** that was not served to a guest and kept at temperature (sandwiches, yogurt parfaits, salads, etc.)
- **PRODUCE** (strawberries, lettuce, onions, tomatoes, herbs, etc.)
- **BEVERAGES** (juice, bottled water, lemonade, tea, etc.)
- **PACKAGED ITEMS** (dry pasta, canned vegetables, pudding, etc.)
- **DAIRY PRODUCTS** (sour cream, milk, yogurt, cheese, etc.)
- **RAW MEAT** (beef, chicken, pork, etc.)

**FOOD THAT CAN’T BE DONATED**

- Previously served food such as from a buffet or that has been served to a guest and returned to the business
- Distressed foods that have been in a flood, fire, smoke, etc.
- Food in sharply dented or rusty cans
- Food in opened or torn containers exposing the food to potential contamination

**FOOD RECOVERY HIERARCHY**

1. **PREVENT**
   Reduce the amount of food that goes unsold.

2. **RECOVER**
   Donating surplus food to feed the hungry.

3. **RECYCLE**
   Diverting food waste from landfills through use as animal feed, composting, or anaerobic digestion.

Adapted from the EPA Food Recovery Hierarchy

**FIND A LOCAL ORGANIZATION**

Contact a hunger relief organization and schedule a pickup for your surplus food.

1. **LASOUPE**
   info@lasoupe.org

2. **FREESTORE FOODBANK**
   foodrescue@freestorefoodbank.org

3. **LAST MILE FOOD RESCUE**
   info@lastmilefood.org

Revised: March 15, 2021