



# FOOD BANKS CANADA NATIONAL DONATION GUIDELINES

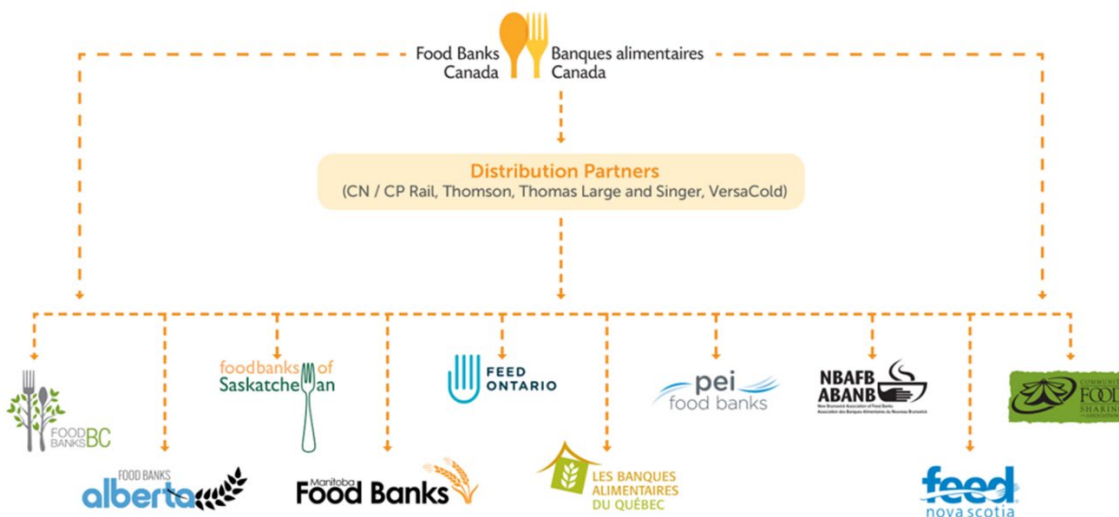
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# 1. Food Banks Canada Overview

**Food Banks Canada** works with corporate partners to acquire and share safe, quality, surplus products through our **National Food Sharing System**. In partnership with our distribution partners, the surplus product is shared to the provincial associations based on actual food bank use within Canada. The donated product is then shared by the province with the local food banks.



## National Food Sharing System:



## Food Bank Usage in Canada – Know the Statistics:

In one month (March 2022), there were **1,462,795** visits to food banks across Canada.

**1 in 7** food bank clients are currently employed

**33.1%** of food bank users in Canada are children, while only representing 20% of the population.

**Seniors** represent **8.9%** of food bank users, a significant increase from 6.8% in 2019.

**Single adults with children** represent **17.9%** of food bank users, while representing only 8.7% of the population.

Source: Food Banks Canada's HungerCount (2022)

## 2. Product Specific Acceptance Guidelines & Dates

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Food Banks Canada will endeavour to accept products that you would find in a grocery store including fresh, ambient, chilled/frozen food, and non-food items such as personal and home care products.

### Guiding Principles

#### Food Banks Canada is able to accept:

1. All safe, usable surplus food products, personal care and home care items.
2. Selected foods that may be close to or shortly after their best before dates to allow for logistics, food bank distribution and final consumption (see Guideline for Distributing Food Past the Best Before Date (Appendix A)).
3. Infant formula and meal replacement products at least 4 months before their expiry dates.
4. Refrigerated packed product where the cold chain has been maintained.
5. Bulk product (subject to type and quantity of product).
6. Dented cans if the rim or seam is un-damaged or the dent has not compromised the can lining.
7. Discontinued stock or any product that may have incorrect weight, packaging faults, damage, blemishes, or incorrect barcodes.
8. Product with labelling faults if accompanied by a letter clearly explaining the issue and confirming product usability. Where possible donors should provide corrected labels. Allergens must be clearly identified.
9. Product withdrawals - for above reasons.

#### Food Banks Canada can not accept:

1. Any product that does not meet our distribution guidelines. See Appendix A.
2. Infant formula within 4 months of its expiry date.
3. Any product where the seal has been broken, has visible mould, or where packaging damage has caused the product to be exposed.
4. Any product that has been subject to a product recall due to a food safety issue.
5. Any unlabelled product (unless the donor provides ingredient information and or labels).
6. Any product that has incorrect allergen information.
7. Prescription medications, tobacco or liquor products.
8. Any product with a DIN (Drug Identification Number) or NPIN (Natural Product Identification Number).
9. Hazardous chemicals e.g. fuel, chemicals utilised in agriculture.
10. Any refrigerated or frozen product where maintenance of the cold chain is in doubt.

## 3. Making a Donation – FAQ

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### Can Food Banks Canada Accept Chilled and Non-Food Products?

Food Banks Canada will endeavour to accept products that you would find in a grocery store including fresh, ambient, chilled/frozen food and non-food items such as personal and home care products. Items that cannot be accepted include alcohol, tobacco, cannabis, and any product with a NPIN or DIN.

### What Can Food Banks Canada Accept?

Food Banks Canada welcomes donations of product that is surplus, rejected, incorrect weight, packaging faults, damaged stock, deleted/discontinued stock, incorrect barcodes, incorrectly labelled or product intended for export.

### Can I Donate Private Label Products?

Food Banks Canada welcomes the donation of private label products without the need to repackage the product. If you have a private label product to donate please contact [food-donations@foodbankscanada.ca](mailto:food-donations@foodbankscanada.ca) for further information.

### Am I Liable for Product Donations?

Donors to Food Banks Canada are protected under the Good Samaritan charitable donation laws, which are active in each province and territory. This is a legal doctrine that protects from liability those who voluntarily help or rescue others, including those who donate and distribute food in good faith. A list of each provincial/territorial law is included in appendix B.

### What Happens With CHEP Pallets?

CHEP supports Food Banks Canada. The Food Banks Canada CHEP account number is 6110036579. Food Banks Canada will accept donations on CHEP pallets. CHEP provides reduced transfer rates for all donations made to Food Banks Canada.

### How is My Product Donation Shared?

Donations are distributed fairly to provincial distribution centers based on actual food bank use across Canada.

### How Do I Donate?

Simply email [food-donations@foodbankscanada.ca](mailto:food-donations@foodbankscanada.ca) with the following information:

1. Product description and individual unit size
2. Reason for donation
3. Best before date(s):
4. Number of pallets:
5. Number of cartons/cases per pallet:
6. Total donation weight:
7. Are the pallets stackable?: Y/N
8. Latest pick-up date:
9. Location of the donation (name of the facility, address and contact details):
10. Is the donation on CHEP or PECO pallets?:
11. Temperature setting required:

**Please note: Pallets should be shrink wrapped and properly secured for shipping as items may be transported nationally. Standard height pallets and combining product is recommended when possible to reduce transportation costs.**

## 4. Food Banks Canada Contact Details

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### Food Banks Canada

- Manages and facilitates large corporate donations on behalf of the network of 750+ food banks across Canada.
- Is the only national food support organization in Canada

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# 5. Appendix

## Appendix A – GUIDELINE FOR DISTRIBUTING FOOD PAST THE BEST BEFORE DATE

### GUIDELINE FOR DISTRIBUTING FOOD - PAST THE BEST BEFORE DATE



	TIME FRAME PAST BEST BEFORE	PRODUCE	JUICES AND SOFT DRINKS	BREAD & BAKERY	PACKAGED GRAINS, CEREALS & BAKED GOODS	MEAT & SEAFOOD	DELI MEATS	PREPARED FOODS	MILK AND NON-DAIRY ALTERNATIVES	CULTURED DAIRY	CHEESE	FATS	GENERAL GROCERY (SHELF STABLE)	NON-FOOD	INFANT FORMULA AND NUTRITIONAL SUPPLEMENTS
PRODUCT DESCRIPTIONS	Fruit / Vegetables - Whole, Uncut, Unpeeled, Undamaged	Fruit & Vegetable Juices & Soft Drinks	Loaves, Rolls, Bagels, Muffins	Granola, Flours, Ribes, Dry Pastas, Cookies, Crackers, Breakfast/Lunch Cereal Bars	Packaged and Bulk Meats, Poultry, Fish	Deli Meats, Sausages	Prepared meals, fresh pasta, cooked meats, Mixed Salads, Soups, Stews, Cut produce	Milk (Fresh, Powdered, Canned, UHT tetrapak), Soy & Almond Beverages	Yogurt, kefir, sour cream	Cottage cheese, cream & soft cheeses, hard cheeses	Butter, Margarine; Cooking Oils (most)	May include: Canned pastas, canned meats/fish, Tomato Sauces, condiments, etc.	Laundry Detergent, Mixed Product Pallets, Deodorants, Body Washes, Diapers, Infant Wipes	<b>Note:</b> These products contain Expiry Dates - not Best Before Dates	
ROOM TEMPERATURE	Fresh, whole 1-7 days	Less than 2 hours (if refrigeration needed)	Up to 1 Week	NA	Less than 2 hours	Less than 2 hours (if refrigeration needed)	Less than 2 hours	Less than 2 hours (if refrigeration needed)	Less than 2 hours	Less than 2 hours (if refrigeration needed)	NA	NA			
REFRIGERATED	Fresh, whole; leafy greens 1 day - 2 months (depending on produce and condition)	7 - 10 days (if refrigeration needed)	2 Weeks	NA	3 - 4 days whole pieces; 1 - 2 days ground; 1 - 2 days seafood/fish	3 - 5 deli counter; 7 days comm/daily package	2 - 3 days meal items; 3 - 4 days cut fruits and vegetables	1 - 2 Days (if refrigeration needed)	1 - 2 weeks cultured	1 - 2 weeks cottage cheese; 3 - 6 months hard blocks; 1 - 2 months soft blocks	1 - 5 Months	NA	NA		
FROZEN	1 Year	1 Year	3 Months	NA	Beef, lamb pork, veal, whole poultry 12 months; poultry pieces 6 months; ground meat 2-3 months; fish 2-6 months; and shellfish 2-4 months	2 - 3 Months	4 Months	6 months; texture may change	1 - 3 months cultured; texture will change	6 - 12 months hard cheese blocks; 3 - 6 month soft blocks	6 - 12 Months	NA	NA		
CANNED / JARRED / BOTTLED	NA	1 Year	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	1 Year	NA	NA	6 - 12 Months (shelf stable oils)	1 - 2 Year	1 Year		
BOXED / BAGGED	NA	6 - 12 Months	Up to 1 Week	6 - 12 Months	NA	NA	NA	UHT - 6 months, Powdered*	NA	NA	NA	6 - 12 Months	1 Year		

**DONOT  
DISTRIBUTE  
PAST EXPIRY  
DATE**

**\* Milk powder:** Temperature is a critical quality factor for milk powder. Keep milk powder cool.

**Best Before Date:** This gives consumer information as to when the product is at its best - with sensory qualities as acceptable as the day it was made when stored under appropriate conditions and packaging is intact. Best Before dates indicate the shelf life of foods. They are not indicators of food safety. Some manufacturers changed their wording in 2018 to "Better Before".

**Expiry Date:** Tells consumers that the product may not be providing them with the nutrients expected of the product and they should no longer consume it after that date. **Products with Expiry Dates must not be shared past the date on the packaging.**

**Products include:** Infant Formula (Canned or Boxed, Liquid or Powdered), and Many Nutritional Supplements and Meal Replacements (Canned, Boxed, or Ready to Use, Liquid or Powdered). Note that baby foods for older babies and toddlers have Best Before dates, not expiry dates.

#### Food Products and their ability to be shared should always be based on:

- 1) Ensuring the product has been handled safely (i.e. Chilled product is kept chilled).
- 2) Assessing all packaging for integrity (i.e., dents, creases, etc.) based on Food Banks Canada Safe Food Handling Standards.
- 3) That the product is at a level of quality (e.g., taste and smell) that is still worth sharing.
- 4) That the Manufacturer's Branding will not be compromised if the product is shared.

**NOTE:** This information is to be used as a guide only. It was developed based on general knowledge, industry practices and the understanding that best before dates are about sensory quality.

#### FOR REFERENCE:

- Canadian Food Inspection Agency, Date Labeling on Pre-packaged Foods, Date Modified: 2013-07-07, Available at: <http://www.inside-ef.gc.ca/food/information-for-consumers/information-fact-sheets/labelling-food-packaging-and-storage/date-modified/13329574-694-0713329574-6933>
- M.A. Freitas, J.C. Costa, Shelf life determination using sensory evaluation scores: A general Weibull modeling approach, Computers & Industrial Engineering, Vol. 51, No. 4, 2008, pp. 862-870.
- A. Giménez, F. Arés, B. Ares, Sensory shelf life estimation: A review of current methodological approaches, Food Research International, Vol. 49, No. 1, 2012, pp. 311-325.
- S. Ghemri, C. Lapizco, L. Marengo, et al., Risks and pitfalls of sensory data analysis for shelf life prediction: Data simulation applied to the case of coffee, Food Science and Technology, Vol. 41, No. 10, 2008, pp. 2070-2076.
- <http://www.fda.gov/oc/ohrt/> and <http://www.fda.gov/oc/ohrt/>
- Utah State University Cooperative Extension Service, Food Storage: Dried Milk, Available at: <http://extension.uzsu.edu/foodstorage/html/dried-milk>

## Appendix B – Food Donation Acts by Province – “Good Samaritan” Act

Province	Act	Link
Alberta	Charitable Donation of Food Act, RSA 2000, c C-8	<a href="http://www.qp.alberta.ca/documents/Acts/C08.pdf">http://www.qp.alberta.ca/documents/Acts/C08.pdf</a>
British Columbia	Food Donor Encouragement Act, SBC 1997, c 8	<a href="http://www.bclaws.ca/Recon/document/ID/freeside/00_97008_01">http://www.bclaws.ca/Recon/document/ID/freeside/00_97008_01</a>
Manitoba	The Food Donations Act, CCSM c F135	<a href="https://web2.gov.mb.ca/laws/statutes/ccsm/f135e.php">https://web2.gov.mb.ca/laws/statutes/ccsm/f135e.php</a>
New Brunswick	Charitable Donation of Food Act, RSNB 2011, c 124	<a href="https://www.canlii.org/en/nb/laws/stat/rsnb-2011-c-124/latest/rsnb-2011-c-124.html">https://www.canlii.org/en/nb/laws/stat/rsnb-2011-c-124/latest/rsnb-2011-c-124.html</a>
Newfoundland & Labrador	Donation of Food Act, SNL 1997, c D-26.1	<a href="https://www.assembly.nl.ca/Legislation/sr/statutes/d26-1.htm">https://www.assembly.nl.ca/Legislation/sr/statutes/d26-1.htm</a>
Northwest Territories	Donation of Food Act, SNWT 2008, c 14	<a href="https://www.justice.gov.nt.ca/en/files/legislation/donation-of-food/donation-of-food.a.pdf">https://www.justice.gov.nt.ca/en/files/legislation/donation-of-food/donation-of-food.a.pdf</a>
Nova Scotia	Volunteer Services Act, RSNS 1989, c 497	<a href="https://nslegislature.ca/legc/bills/63rd_1st/1st_read/b066.htm">https://nslegislature.ca/legc/bills/63rd_1st/1st_read/b066.htm</a>
Nunavut	Donation of Food Act, SNU 2013, c 8	<a href="https://www.canlii.org/en/nu/laws/stat/snu-2013-c-8/latest/snu-2013-c-8.html">https://www.canlii.org/en/nu/laws/stat/snu-2013-c-8/latest/snu-2013-c-8.html</a>
Ontario	Donation of Food Act, 1994, SO 1994, c 19	<a href="https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/94d19">https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/94d19</a>
Prince Edward Island	Donation of Food Act, RSPEI 1988, c D-13.1	<a href="https://www.princeedwardisland.ca/en/legislation/donation-food-act">https://www.princeedwardisland.ca/en/legislation/donation-food-act</a>
Quebec	Civil Code of Quebec, CQLR c CCQ-1991 Art.1471	<a href="http://legisquebec.gouv.qc.ca/en/showdoc/cs/CCQ-1991">http://legisquebec.gouv.qc.ca/en/showdoc/cs/CCQ-1991</a>
Saskatchewan	Donation of Food Act, 1995, The SS 1995, c D-32.01	<a href="https://www.canlii.org/en/sk/laws/astat/ss-1995-c-d-32.01/latest/ss-1995-c-d-32.01.html">https://www.canlii.org/en/sk/laws/astat/ss-1995-c-d-32.01/latest/ss-1995-c-d-32.01.html</a>
Yukon	Donation of Food Act, SY 2012, c 11	<a href="http://www.gov.yk.ca/legislation/acts/dofa.pdf">http://www.gov.yk.ca/legislation/acts/dofa.pdf</a>