

How to Safely Recover Food

Large Event Organizers

Following these practices can help you safely recover your surplus food, in compliance with Senate Bill 1383 and local ordinances. Items marked with a ★ are necessary to comply with these laws.

Stop waste from the start!

- Conduct a food waste audit. Start the conversation with your vendors to ensure you're working towards the same goal. Encourage vendors to save money and be eco-smart by producing only the amount of food needed.
- Consider including in vendor contracts a requirement to prioritize prevention of wasted food and to prioritize bids that take initiative to reduce overproduction.
- Ask vendors to consider cutting prices on unsold food at the end of the day.
- Consider making surplus food available to staff or volunteers.
- Publicize your efforts through signage or by hosting a waste-cutting challenge for attendees (consider setting up a social media hashtag such as #NoWasteAt_____).

Plan Your Food Recovery Logistics

- ★ Contract with a Food Recovery Organization or Service (FRO/S) well in advance of the event and provide estimates about the amount of surplus food you expect to have so that the organization can prepare to collect and redistribute it. Please visit [Resource.StopWaste.org/food-recovery-organizations](https://www.StopWaste.org/food-recovery-organizations) for a listing of available organizations.
- ★ Work with FRO/S to set up a recovery plan that considers storage space, timing, and other operations so that you can maximize food freshness and have it quickly redistributed.
- Establish a staging area (in compliance with [CalCode](#)) for participating vendors. This can include: labels (for indicating date and contents), refrigerated and shelf-stable storage space, and packaging.
- Ensure that vendors properly depackage and compost any inedible food or food scraps that are not safe or suitable for food recovery.
- ★ Be ready for inspections, if necessary.
- ★ You must recover the maximum amount of edible surplus food.

Determine What to Donate & Ensure Food Safety

- Confirm your FRO/S's specific donation policies.
- Ensure that vendors are following standard safety and food handling protocol per [CalCode](#) for all food, whether it's intended for sale or recovery.

For specific questions, contact the Alameda County Department of Environmental Health at 510-567-6700. You may also use the information on side 2 as a guide.

This flyer is designed to support local efforts in edible food recovery and SB 1383 compliance. For more information about SB 1383, and a complete list of rules and resources in Alameda County, visit www.StopWaste.org/rules.

To request free assistance, go to www.StopWaste.org/request-help or call 510-891-6575 to leave a message for a call back.

Potential Foods from Commercial Kitchens	
Can Be Donated	Cannot Be Donated
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unsold and unserved produce, dairy, meats held at safe temperatures • Fresh or frozen on or before the date on the package • Unopened canned/dry-packaged, securely sealed and dated appropriately, with labeling intact • Near quality expiration dates • Lightly bruised or soft produce • Cut produce stored ≤ 41°F while awaiting pickup • Surplus unserved prepared foods kept at safe temperatures or cooled down (per CalCode protocol), and labeled with date and contents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contaminated: bad odor, discoloration, moldy and/or bulging packaging • Packaging is torn, contaminated, has holes, dents, or broken seals • Food not in its original packaging and missing ingredient label and/or a date • Foods previously served to consumer • Perishable foods that were not held at safe temperatures
Potential Foods From Mobile Food Facilities	
<p><i>Potentially hazardous food that is held above 41°F cannot be donated. Current laws prevent much of the food from mobile food facilities from being recovered. This may be updated over time.</i></p>	
Can Be Donated	Cannot Be Donated
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unopened canned/dry-packaged, securely sealed and dated appropriately, with labeling intact • Refrigerated product stored below 41°F • Fresh or frozen fruits and veggies (including slightly bruised or soft) • Cut produce stored ≤ 41°F while awaiting pickup 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potentially hazardous food held above 41°F (cold foods) • Contaminated: bad odor, discoloration, moldy and/or bulging packaging • Packaging is torn, has holes, dents, or broken seals • Food not in its original packaging and missing ingredient label and/or a date • Foods previously served to consumer

Keep Records

- ★ You must keep the following records onsite: a copy of your contract with each FRO/S, including types of food and frequency of collection or delivery, and pounds of food recovered per month.

Secure Necessary Equipment

- Food-safe containers or transport bags*
- Dedicated refrigerator/freezer space
- Labeling and recordkeeping supplies
- Scale, if you are tracking your weights (some FRO/S will track and/or weigh for you)

*Check the packaging preferences of your FRO/S partner. Ideally, find an FRO/S that will work with reusable containers. Reusable containers can be a significant cost-saver and are better for the environment.

Scan the QR code for more tips on tracking and preventing food waste.



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