

How to Safely Recover Food:

Local Education Agencies

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

Stop waste from the start!

- Conduct a food waste audit. Save money and be eco-smart by producing only the amount of food needed to serve students based on past history.
- Implement [Smarter Lunchrooms Movement](#) techniques like going trayless, scheduling recess before lunch, and employing the 'offer versus serve' option.
- Set up a [Food Share](#) Table where students and staff may return unwanted, unbitten, unopened items for others to take if they would like more food than what was provided. Consider offering second servings (when available) to allow for increased consumption and to prevent surplus.
- Educate students and staff about plate waste prevention and donation (e.g. with posters or trainings) and involve them in donation and waste reduction efforts.

Plan Your Food Recovery Logistics

- ★ Contract with a Food Recovery Organization or Service (FRO/S) that is a 501(c)(3) to comply with the CA Dept. of Education and USDA Guidance on donating surplus food. 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 a schedule that meets your storage space and operational needs while maximizing the freshness and amount of edible food for quick redistribution.
- Identify non-profits that already operate on your sites (e.g. after school programs or PTAs) and whether they would be interested in being a recipient or distribution site for donated food.
- Establish a dedicated area (in compliance with [CalCode](#)) for storing and labeling food designated for donation.
- ★ Be ready for inspections, if necessary.
- ★ You must recover the maximum amount of edible surplus food.

Secure Necessary Equipment

- Food-safe containers or transport bags*
- Food thermometers
- Dedicated refrigerator/freezer space
- Labeling and recordkeeping supplies
- [Food Share Station components](#)
- 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.

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.

Determine What to Donate

Confirm your FRO/S's specific donation policies. You may also use the information below as a guide:

Can Be Donated	Cannot Be Donated
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Surplus pre-packaged entrees that were selected but not opened, with labeling intact ● Surplus prepared foods kept at safe temperatures or cooled down (per CalCode protocol), and labeled with date and contents ● Unbitten, uncut fruits with a peel*, including lightly bruised or soft produce ● Fresh or frozen on or before the date on the package ● Near quality expiration dates ● Cut produce stored ≤ 41°F while awaiting pickup ● Unopened canned/dry-packaged goods, securely sealed and dated appropriately, with labeling intact 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Contaminated: bad odor, moldy or discolored ● Packaging is torn, contaminated, and has holes, dents, or broken seals* ● Food not in its original packaging and missing ingredient label and/or a date (N/A for produce) ● Entrees previously served ● Perishable foods that were not held at safe temperatures
<p>*Fruits with edible peels (e.g., apples, pears) must be washed prior to re-distribution. *Some dented cans are safe to donate. Scan the QR code below for a Canned Food Evaluation Guide, and more!</p>	

Ensure Food Safety

- Ensure that vendors are following standard safety and food handling protocol per [CalCode](#) for all food, whether it's intended for sale or recovery.
- Anyone packaging food donations should take a food safety course and/or obtain a Food Handler Card with an [accredited program](#).
- Regularly check the [temperature setting](#) of your fridge. Keep frozen foods ≤ 0 °F and hot foods ≥ 135° for no more than four hours while awaiting pickup.
- Perishable foods should not be left outside the [Safe Temperature Zone](#) (STZ) for more than two hours at room temperature (or one hour when the temperature is above 90 °F).
- Package donations in shallow, sanitary containers. Do not mix different foods.
- Label containers with type of food and date prepared/stored.
- Never put hot food directly into the refrigerator or freezer.
- Donate food nearest its expiration date first.

For specific questions, contact the Alameda County Department of Environmental Health at 510-567-6700.

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.

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



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